

**City of Palo Alto**  
*Office of the Mayor and City Council*

June 21, 2018

The Honorable Bill Quirk  
Chair, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee  
LOB, 1020 N St., Room 171  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT for SB 212 (Jackson): Solid waste: pharmaceutical and sharps waste stewardship, as amended on June 18, 2018**

Dear Chairman Quirk:

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I write to express our Support for SB 212 (Jackson), which will establish a comprehensive, statewide pharmaceutical and sharps waste stewardship program (take-back program). The City of Palo Alto owns and operates a household hazardous waste disposal program and the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant, a wastewater treatment plant that serves approximately 230,000 people in the East Palo Alto Sanitary District and the cities of Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, and Palo Alto as well as Stanford University. Palo Alto is tasked with protecting water quality for our communities by collecting and treating wastewater and ensuring the proper disposal of hazardous waste, the subject of SB 212.

The City of Palo Alto has long been a leader in developing pollution prevention and source control efforts. These efforts include making it convenient for the public to safely dispose of unwanted medications and sharps, which reduces drug abuse, poisonings, medication mistakes, worker safety, and water contamination. We have established and currently manage multiple pharmaceutical drop-off locations around the City of Palo Alto and surrounding areas, including at the Palo Alto Police Department, the Regional Control Plant, and the Palo Alto Household Hazardous Waste Center.

SB 212 addresses the myriad of existing problems due to the lack of a unified statewide system to manage pharmaceutical and sharps at the end of their useful life. By requiring manufacturers of these products to create, fund, and participate in a statewide take-back system, this bill takes a groundbreaking step forward in ensuring that California residents have access to safe and convenient disposal methods of sharps and drugs, addressing important public health concerns. Additionally, SB 212 will help keep medical waste from polluting our public areas, including our waterways.

The take-back concept is built off well-functioning programs that exist locally and all over the world, where such programs are operated by manufacturers in Canada, Mexico, countries in Europe and South America, and 12 local jurisdictions throughout California.<sup>1</sup> Establishing a comprehensive statewide system will provide harmonization and clarity for manufacturers and consumers alike.


---

<sup>1</sup> For example, see the City of Santa Cruz's ordinance number 2016-09; San Mateo County's unnumbered ordinance adopted on April 28, 2015; information regarding Santa Barbara County's ordinance adopted on June 21, 2016; and Santa Clara County's ordinance number 90176.

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
650.329.2477  
650.328.3631 fax

California has debated this issue for long enough. We strongly urge you to take this logical next step to protect California consumers and workers. For these reasons, the City of Palo Alto is pleased to express our support for SB 212 and we urge your "aye" vote when the bill is heard in your committee, currently scheduled for June 26. For more information, please feel free to contact Karin North, Watershed Protection Manager at (650)329-2104 or [Karin.north@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Karin.north@cityofpaloalto.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liz Kniss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Liz Kniss  
Mayor, City of Palo Alto

cc:

Members of the Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee  
Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson  
Senator Jerry Hill  
Assemblyman Marc Berman  
Josh Tooker, Chief Consultant, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee  
Graciela Castillo-Krings, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Brown  
Palo Alto City Council  
James Keene, City Manager, City of Palo Alto  
Townsend Public Affairs