

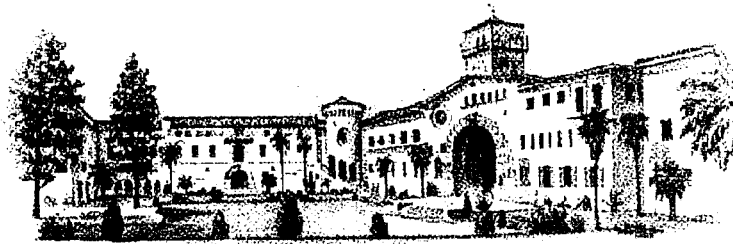
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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

April 8, 2013

Senator Jerry Hill
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax: (916) 322-3519

Re: SB 727 (Jackson) - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Hill,

The County of Santa Barbara strongly supports SB 727 (Jackson), which will require producers of pharmaceuticals, as defined, to create, finance, and manage an extended producer responsibility (EPR) system for California consumers to safely and conveniently dispose of expired and unwanted pharmaceuticals.

Prescription drug abuse in California has skyrocketed in recent years, as have hospitalizations for overdoses. These abused pharmaceuticals are most often stolen from the medicine cabinets of friends and relatives, and this epidemic has led to an increase in crime in many communities in California. With no consistent or convenient disposal option for unwanted pharmaceuticals, the household medicine cabinet continues to be the source that fuels the prescription drug abuse epidemic that is sweeping California and the nation.

For too long, local government, by default, has carried the burden of financing and managing pharmaceutical take-back programs, broadly financed by taxpayers or utility ratepayers. Despite these efforts, pharmaceuticals are either being stockpiled in medicine cabinets, a prime target for drug abusers; or flushed down the toilet, threatening our water quality, as even the most advanced wastewater treatment processes cannot remove these pharmaceutical compounds from the water. It is time for the producers that make and profit from pharmaceuticals to share in the responsibility of properly managing this dangerous and problematic waste, and remove this financial burden from the public.

Santa Barbara County developed its own household pharmaceutical collection program, Operation Medicine Cabinet, in January 2010. Jointly managed by the Public Works Department and Sheriff's Office, the program collects literally tons of medications each year. Last year, approximately 4,500 pounds were collected from the public. Due to overwhelming use, the Sheriff's Office has had to increase the frequency of servicing the collection boxes,

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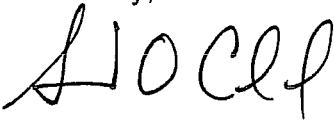
in some locations up to once daily. In Sheriff's staff time alone, the program costs the County nearly \$154,000 annually.

SB 727 is the right solution because it creates a privately managed and financed system to allow consumers to properly and conveniently dispose of their unwanted pharmaceuticals with the appropriate oversight and enforcement by CalRecycle.

SB 727 also outlines requirements for proper financing, public outreach, and clear performance goals tied to specific dates. This EPR system will ultimately lead to less illegal diversion, reduce the ongoing pharmaceutical drug abuse epidemic in California, and reduce the environmental impacts of pharmaceuticals in waterways, by simply making it easier and more convenient for consumers to empty their medicine cabinets of unwanted and unused pharmaceuticals. For these reasons, the County of Santa Barbara strongly supports SB 727.

If you have any questions about our position, please contact Leslie Robinson with our Public Works Department at (805) 882-3615 or lrobin@cosbpw.net.

Sincerely,



Salud Carbajal,
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Das Williams
The Honorable Katcho Achadjian
Monica Miller, Legislative Advocate
Cliff Berg, Legislative Advocate
Members of the Board of Supervisors

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Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, fax (916) 324-7544
Senator Mark Leno, fax: (916) 445-4722
Senator Fran Pavley, fax: (916) 324-4823

Senator Tony Strickland, fax: (805) 965-0701
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