

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 984 (Delegate Hill, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation and
 Economic Matters

Mattress Stewardship Program - Establishment

This bill requires a producer of mattresses sold at retail in the State, or a representative organization acting on behalf of a producer, to (1) by July 1, 2031, submit a plan for the establishment of a Mattress Stewardship Program to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for approval; (2) pay a plan review fee to MDE; (3) implement the program within one year of plan approval; and (4) submit annual reports, and a related fee, to MDE for review. The bill also establishes (1) a related advisory board; (2) a uniform mattress stewardship assessment for mattresses sold in the State to cover program costs; (3) a prohibition on the sale of mattresses unless the producer is implementing, or participating in, an approved Mattress Stewardship Program; and (4) beginning January 1, 2035, restrictions on mattress disposal. MDE must adopt regulations, and specified legislative committees must review the program. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2029.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$54,800 in FY 2030 and by \$60,200 in FY 2031. Special fund expenditures increase by \$71,700 in FY 2032, by \$69,500 in FY 2033, and by \$72,400 in FY 2034; special fund revenues increase correspondingly. State expenditures (multiple fund types) increase beginning as early as FY 2032 to purchase mattresses. Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) expenditures may increase beginning as early as FY 2032 to comply with producer requirements.

| (in dollars) | FY 2030 | FY 2031 | FY 2032 | FY 2033 | FY 2034 |
|--------------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|
| SF Revenue | \$0 | \$0 | \$71,700 | \$69,500 | \$72,400 |
| GF Expenditure | \$54,800 | \$60,200 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| SF Expenditure | \$0 | \$0 | \$71,700 | \$69,500 | \$72,400 |
| Exp. (Mult. Funds) | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | - |
| Net Effect | (\$54,800) | (\$60,200) | (-) | (-) | (-) |

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Local government expenditures increase beginning as early as FY 2032 to purchase mattresses. Potential decrease in local waste management costs beginning as early as FY 2032. Local revenues are not directly affected.

Small Business Effect: Meaningful.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Mattress Stewardship Program

Mattress Stewardship Program Plan Development and Related Assessment: The Mattress Stewardship Program plan must meet a number of requirements, including that the plan must (1) identify the materials, entities, and responsible parties covered under the plan; (2) describe and provide for how the plan will meet numerous goals, action items, and other requirements for the operation of the program, as specified; (3) minimize public sector involvement in, and financial responsibility for, the management of mattress disposal by, among other things, providing for the reimbursement to collection sites for the increased costs of collection and negotiating and executing agreements to collect, transport, recycle, process for materials recovery, and dispose of mattresses as well as agreements to reimburse costs associated with tasks under existing public sector programs or agreements; (4) provide for the convenient and available collection of mattresses statewide, as specified; and (5) establish specified performance goals.

The plan may identify a retailer as a postconsumer mattress collection site if (1) the retailer volunteers and is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and (2) the site location is consistent with maintaining a cost-effective network of postconsumer mattress collection locations.

The plan must also establish a uniform mattress stewardship assessment for all mattresses sold in the State and a mechanism for participating retailers to remit, at the point of sale, payment of the assessment to the representative organization for each mattress sold in the State. The assessment may be tiered based on specified characteristics of the mattress or any other factor the producer or representative organization determines will distribute the assessment more fairly. The total amount of the assessment may not exceed the costs of implementing the program, but it may include a reserve sufficient to operate the program over a multiyear period. Assessments may be used only for program implementation.

The assessment must be evaluated by an MDE-designated independent financial auditor, as specified, and the cost of any work performed by an independent financial auditor must be funded by the program.

Maryland Department of the Environment Plan Reviews and Plan Review Fees: Each plan must be submitted to, approved by, and reevaluated every five years by MDE's Office of Recycling, and MDE may require a plan to be revised under specified circumstances. MDE must also review the work product of the independent financial auditor. The producer or representative organization that submits a plan for approval must pay a plan review fee to MDE. Plan review fees are deposited into the State Recycling Trust Fund to cover MDE's plan review costs and associated costs for compliance oversight of the program.

If MDE determines that the plan, including the assessment, complies with the bill's requirements, MDE must approve the program within 90 days of submission. If MDE determines that the program plan requires modification, the producer or representative organization has 30 days to modify the plan. MDE must list participating producers, brands, renovators, and retailers on its website.

Implementation of the Mattress Stewardship Program: Within one year of plan approval, a producer or representative organization must implement its Mattress Stewardship Program plan. Beginning one year after plan approval, (1) a producer or retailer is prohibited from selling or offering for sale a brand of mattress to any person in the State unless the producer of the brand, or a representative organization of which the producer is a member, is implementing an approved Mattress Stewardship Program and (2) each producer, retailer, and distributor must add the mattress stewardship assessment (described above) to the cost/purchase price of all mattresses sold/distributed in the State. Retailers and distributors must display the mattress stewardship assessment as a line item on the receipt for the purchase of the mattress.

A participating producer or a representative organization must provide consumers with educational materials regarding the program that include information about available end-of-life management options for mattresses offered through the program and information that notifies consumers about the assessment. Following the implementation of the program, a retailer must provide consumers with the educational materials provided by a participating producer or representative organization at the point of retail sale. Following the implementation of the program, a retailer complies with the bill's requirements if the mattress ordered was from a participating producer or producer's agent that is listed on MDE's website.

A postconsumer mattress collection site that is identified in the plan may not charge an additional fee for the disposal of mattresses when mattresses are offered for disposal or recycling under an approved Mattress Stewardship Program.

Annual Reports, Maryland Department of the Environment Review, and Annual Report Review Fees: Beginning March 1, 2033, or one year after plan approval, whichever is later, and annually thereafter, a producer or representative organization must submit a report to MDE, publish the report online, and pay a report review fee to MDE. The report review fees are deposited into the State Recycling Trust Fund and must cover MDE's costs associated with report review and program compliance oversight, as determined by MDE.

The annual report must include (1) a description of the methods used to collect, transport, and process mattresses in the State; (2) the amount by volume or weight, as specified by MDE, and type of mattresses collected in the State, sorted by type of collection site and the political subdivision where the mattresses were collected; (3) the amount by volume or weight, as specified by MDE, and type of mattresses collected in the State by methods of disposition for each county, as specified; (4) the total cost of implementing and administering the program, as determined by an independent financial audit funded by the mattress stewardship assessment; (5) samples of educational materials provided to consumers, a summary of public education efforts, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of these methods; (6) an evaluation of the reason that certain mattresses were not recycled; (7) the total number of mattresses sold to consumers in the previous year; (8) strategies to address postconsumer and discarded mattresses that are not included in the program and are illegally dumped; (9) reports on research activities, pilot programs, and any changes in mattress design; (10) the number of postconsumer mattresses received through collection that were not included in the program; (11) in coordination with local jurisdictions, and to the extent practicable, the number of postconsumer mattresses that were illegally dumped as reported to MDE; (12) an analysis of changes to the data required to be included in the annual report over time; (13) an evaluation of the effectiveness of methods and processes used to achieve the goals of the program, as specified; (14) recommended changes to the program, including information relevant to plan compliance; and (15) any other information required by MDE. Specified information reported to MDE is confidential and not subject to public inspection, but MDE is authorized to release summary data, as specified.

MDE's Office of Recycling must review each annual report and evaluate the total costs of the program, including all expenses and revenues, to determine whether the mattress stewardship assessment meets or exceeds the costs of the program. MDE must also determine whether the plan is being implemented according to the statutory requirements. MDE must approve the annual report if the report, including the mattress stewardship assessment, complies with the bill's requirements. The producer or representative organization must make the approved annual report available to the public.

If MDE determines that an annual report, including the mattress stewardship assessment, does not meet the bill's requirements, the producer or representative organization must submit a plan to MDE on how they will address the noncompliance in the upcoming year.

Mattress Stewardship Advisory Board: The bill establishes a Mattress Stewardship Advisory Board, the stated purpose of which is to advise on the proper implementation and sustainability of the Mattress Stewardship Program. The advisory board must (1) review and evaluate the structure, financing, and other aspects of the program and (2) consult with and advise producers and representative organizations as they prepare the mattress stewardship plan. The advisory board must also review and evaluate each mattress stewardship plan before the plan is submitted to MDE for approval. Further, the advisory board must receive and review the mattress stewardship plans and annual reports submitted to MDE and make recommendations to MDE regarding plan approval or the need for any plan amendments. The advisory board must also review and comment on draft regulations relevant to the implementation of the Mattress Stewardship Program. MDE must provide staff for the advisory board. By April 1, 2031, the advisory board must report (and submit a minority report, if applicable) to the General Assembly on its findings and recommendations. The advisory board terminates June 30, 2034.

Penalty Provisions

A retailer that violates the bill's Mattress Stewardship Program provisions is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$100 per day for each day of a violation. A producer or renovator that violates these provisions is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per day for each day of the violation. Any penalty collected must be placed in a special fund to be used by MDE to ensure the implementation of approved Mattress Stewardship Programs.

Additional Authorizations and Requirements for the Maryland Department of the Environment: MDE is authorized to cooperate with departments, agencies, and other equivalent bodies in other states to further the bill's objectives. MDE must adopt measures to move the State toward a more equitable recycling and waste management system and to seek environmental justice for underserved communities, as specified. MDE must adopt regulations to enforce the bill's Mattress Stewardship Program provisions; the regulations must include a clarification of the authority and responsibility to inspect and enforce the program between local and State governments. Additionally, by December 1, 2030, MDE must, if necessary, request legislation to further implement the bill.

Relevant Definitions: "Mattress" means a resilient material or combination of materials that is enclosed by a ticking, issued alone or in combination with other products, and is intended for or promoted for sleeping on. It includes a foundation, but does not include (1) an unattached mattress pad or topper, as specified; (2) a waterbed, an air mattress, or any other product that contains liquid- or gas-filled ticking and does not contain upholstery material between the ticking and the mattress core; (3) a carriage, basket, dressing table, stroller, playpen, infant carrier, lounge pad, crib bumper or mattress, bassinet mattress, or any other product manufactured for young children; (4) a sleeping bag, pillow, futon, sleeper sofa, or fold-out sofa bed; (5) a car bed; or (6) furniture that otherwise does not

contain a detachable mattress. “Postconsumer mattress” means a mattress no longer wanted by a purchaser; it includes unused mattresses and mattresses that have been used and abandoned or discarded in the State. “Producer” means (1) a manufacturer of mattresses that sells, offers for sale, or distributes mattresses in the State under the producer’s own name or brand or (2) an individual who imports mattresses into the State to sell, offer to sell, or distribute in the State. “Producer” includes the owner of a mattress trademark or brand, whether or not the trademark or brand is registered in the State. A “representative organization” means a nonprofit organization created by producers to implement and operate a Mattress Stewardship Program.

New Requirements for the Maryland Department of the Environment’s Office of Recycling

In addition to reviewing plans and annual reports submitted in accordance with a Mattress Stewardship Program, as described above, MDE’s Office of Recycling must provide to local communities (1) the most up-to-date information on local and national programs for recycling mattresses and (2) examples of mattress recycling programs that create jobs for specified individuals. The bill also expands an existing reporting requirement for the office to include the State’s progress in diverting mattresses from disposal in landfills and incinerators.

Mattress Disposal Restrictions

Beginning January 1, 2035, a person may not dispose of a mattress in a landfill unless the mattress is deeply contaminated and poses a risk to personnel, new products, or equipment, as determined by MDE. The bill also prohibits a person from disposing of a mattress in an incinerator beginning January 1, 2035, unless the mattress is deeply contaminated, the mattress cannot be renovated, no parts of the mattress can be recycled, and the mattress poses a risk to personnel, new products, or equipment, as determined by MDE.

Intent for Immunity for Participating Producers and Representative Organizations

The bill expresses the General Assembly’s intent that a producer or representative organization that organizes the collection, transport, and processing of mattresses in accordance with an approved Mattress Stewardship Program be immune from liability for any claim under State or federal law relating to antitrust and restraint of trade, or any unfair, abusive, or deceptive trade practice arising from conduct undertaken in accordance with the program.

Existing Mattress Recycling Contracts or Agreements

Beginning July 1, 2030, a contract or agreement for the recycling of mattresses in existence prior to the bill’s effective date (July 1, 2029), may not be renewed unless the contract or

agreement conforms (or is modified to conform) to the requirements of a Mattress Stewardship Program plan.

Review by Committees of the General Assembly

By December 31, 2033, the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment and the House Environment and Transportation Committee must jointly review the Mattress Stewardship Program to evaluate the program's implementation, effectiveness, and impact.

Current Law:

Solid Waste Management in Maryland

The solid waste infrastructure in Maryland consists of both permitted and nonpermitted facilities, and solid waste is managed through a combination of recycling, composting, landfilling, incineration, storage, and exporting for disposal or recycling.

Maryland's recycling policy is guided by the Maryland Recycling Act, which sets mandatory recycling rates for State government and local jurisdictions, as well as a voluntary statewide waste diversion goal of 60% and a voluntary statewide recycling goal of 55% by 2020. Each county (including Baltimore City), must recycle at least 20% or 35% of the county's solid waste stream, depending on the county's population. Each county (including Baltimore City) must also prepare a recycling plan that addresses how the jurisdiction will achieve its mandatory recycling rate.

The Office of Recycling

MDE's Office of Recycling, among other things, reviews county recycling plans and coordinates the efforts of the State to facilitate the implementation of the recycling goals at the county level. Counties are required to periodically report solid waste and recycling data to the department.

MDE submits a combined annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly that meets two statutory reporting requirements relating to solid waste management and recycling/waste diversion in the State ([*Maryland Solid Waste Management and Diversion Report*](#)).

Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment

Chapter 465 of 2023 required the Office of Recycling to hire an independent consultant to conduct a [statewide recycling needs assessment](#) (completed in February 2025), which was

required to, among other things, include (1) analysis of the costs and benefits, and potential environmental impact, of implementing an extended producer responsibility program for packaging materials (including beverage containers) and (2) recommendations on the best practices to follow from successful extended producer responsibility programs in other states and countries. The Act also established a producer responsibility advisory council to provide advice and recommendations regarding establishing and implementing a producer responsibility program in the State for packaging materials.

Producer Responsibility for Packaging and Paper Products

Chapter 431 of 2025 (1) establishes a producer responsibility program in statute for packaging and paper products; (2) retains the producer responsibility advisory council established under Chapter 465 to provide advice and recommendations to MDE, producer responsibility organizations, and producers on the implementation of the program; and (3) requires that a statewide recycling needs assessment be conducted again in 2034 and at least once every 10 years thereafter.

Chapter 431 requires producers of packaging and paper products to submit, individually or as part of a producer responsibility organization (a nonprofit organization created by a group of producers) a producer responsibility plan to MDE by July 1, 2028, and every five years thereafter, for review and approval. MDE must approve or reject the plan within 120 days, and implementation of the plan must begin no later than six months after the plan is approved. Both the needs assessments and MDE's administration of the producer responsibility program are funded by producers through the producer responsibility organization(s).

State Recycling Trust Fund

The State Recycling Trust Fund is a special fund, administered by MDE, that is used to:

- carry out the purposes of MDE's Land Management Administration;
- provide grants to (1) counties to develop and implement local recycling plans; (2) counties that have addressed methods for the separate collection and recycling of covered electronic devices; and (3) municipalities to be used to implement local covered electronic device recycling programs;
- cover specified costs of the Paint Stewardship Program (established under Chapters 587 and 588 of 2024); and
- cover costs of statewide recycling needs assessments (pursuant to Chapter 431); and
- cover costs of producer responsibility plan review, oversight, and enforcement (pursuant to Chapter 431).

State Expenditures:

Maryland Department of the Environment – General Program Administrative Costs

MDE advises that it needs two regular full-time positions to implement the bill. However, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) advises that the added responsibilities incurred by this legislation alone do not justify hiring permanent staff; thus, contractual employees may be used instead.

General fund expenditures increase by \$54,757 in fiscal 2030, which accounts for a 90-day start-up delay from the bill’s July 1, 2029 effective date, and by \$60,201 in fiscal 2031. Once fee revenue is available from the State Recycling Trust Fund to cover MDE’s costs, general funds are no longer needed. Thus, special fund expenditures increase by \$71,744 in fiscal 2032, by \$69,456 in fiscal 2033, and by \$72,414 in fiscal 2034, as discussed below. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one contractual natural resource planner in fiscal 2030 and one contractual environmental compliance specialist in fiscal 2032. The natural resource planner is hired in fiscal 2030 to begin implementing the bill by (1) conducting outreach, identifying affected producers, and designating the independent financial auditor; (2) developing and providing local communities with required information and examples of mattress recycling programs; (3) assisting to develop the regulations; (4) developing and adopting measures to improve equity and environmental justice related to mattress recycling; (5) reviewing the work product of the independent financial auditor; (6) staffing the advisory board; and (7) reviewing the initial mattress stewardship plan. The environmental compliance specialist is hired in fiscal 2032 to (1) conduct compliance oversight and enforcement activities; (2) assist with reviewing initial annual reports; (3) staff the advisory board as necessary; and (4) generally oversee initial implementation of the program. The estimates include salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

| | <u>FY 2030</u> | <u>FY 2032</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Contractual Positions (New) | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Salaries and Fringe Benefits (Total) | \$45,616 | \$61,854 |
| Operating Expenses | <u>9,141</u> | <u>9,890</u> |
| Total MDE Expenditures | \$54,757 | \$71,744 |

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State’s implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover, annual increases in ongoing operating expenses, and termination of the natural resource planner in fiscal 2032. Although it is beyond the scope of this analysis, it is assumed that

the environmental compliance specialist is terminated at the end of fiscal 2034. It is also assumed that any staffing-related costs for the advisory board beyond fiscal 2034 are minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Maryland Department of the Environment – Plan and Report Review

It is anticipated that MDE is able to use existing staff to conduct the required out-year plan reevaluations every five years as well as the annual reports. Further, although producers may participate individually or jointly through a representative organization, similar programs in other states are generally only carried out by a single representative organization (the Mattress Recycling Council) under a single program plan. As such, MDE assumes, and DLS concurs, that it is likely that MDE reviews only one plan (in fiscal 2032) and one annual report each year. It is assumed that the contractual employees discussed above review the initial plans and annual reports; those costs are included in the estimates above. Although it is beyond the scope of this analysis, special fund expenditures from the State Recycling Trust Fund increase minimally for MDE to review the annual reports beyond fiscal 2034.

Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) advises that it needs to hire an additional assistant Attorney General – at a cost of approximately \$138,500 in fiscal 2030, increasing to approximately \$189,300 by fiscal 2034 – to assist and advise MDE in creating the program, drafting regulations, and enforcing the bill. DLS disagrees, as the contractual employees MDE plans to hire should be sufficient to handle these responsibilities. To the extent additional OAG support proves necessary, OAG can request additional resources through the annual budget process.

State Agencies as Consumers of Mattresses

State expenditures (multiple fund types) increase, beginning as early as fiscal 2032, for any State agency that purchases mattresses due to the assessment established under the bill. The overall impact depends on the number of mattresses purchased by State agencies annually, which is unknown. However, based on similar programs in other states, the fee is likely no more than \$22.50 per mattress.

Maryland Correctional Enterprises

Among other products, MCE produces and sells mattresses. Thus, as a producer of mattresses, MCE is subject to the bill's requirements to (1) add a mattress stewardship assessment to the cost of all mattresses sold by MCE and (2) account for those assessments and remit them to the representative organization. MCE must also (1) verify that all of its

mattresses are in compliance with an approved program and (2) submit required reports. MCE advises that, based on the assumption that it needs to develop and implement its own Mattress Stewardship Program, it anticipates costs of more than \$100,000 annually to hire two additional employees to develop and implement the program. However, as discussed above, since it is assumed that there will likely be a single representative organization that acts on behalf of all Maryland producers, DLS anticipates that it is more likely that MCE works with a representative organization. Even so, MCE operations are affected, and costs may increase, to fulfill the bill's requirements beginning as early as fiscal 2032.

State Revenues: MDE is required to set the plan review fee at a level to cover MDE's plan review and program compliance oversight costs. Similarly, the annual report review fee must cover MDE's costs to review the annual reports and for program compliance oversight. Thus, this analysis assumes that MDE's costs to implement the bill (as described above) are fully offset by plan review and annual report review fees beginning in fiscal 2032 (when the initial plan must be submitted for review). Accordingly, special fund revenues to the State Recycling Trust Fund increase by \$71,744 in fiscal 2032, by \$69,456 in fiscal 2033, by \$72,414 in fiscal 2034, and by a minimal amount annually thereafter.

The bill's penalty provisions are not anticipated to materially affect special fund revenues; to the extent any penalties are collected, they are deposited into a special fund to be used by MDE to ensure the implementation of approved Mattress Stewardship Programs.

Local Expenditures: Waste management costs at landfills may decrease beginning as early as fiscal 2032 as a result of the diversion of mattresses under the Mattress Stewardship Program. According to MES, mattresses are undesirable for landfill disposal and currently difficult to recycle because of lack of viable recycling options. Further, local governments that currently collect mattresses may benefit from any reimbursement provided for existing mattress recycling efforts.

The Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (NMWDA), a regional service organization that assists with waste disposal services, advises that it holds a regional master service recycling contract for the benefit of its members, and that Baltimore City and Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington counties contract with NMWDA for mattress recycling services. For reference, estimated fiscal 2027 costs for the existing program total \$1.9 million, with individual jurisdiction costs ranging from approximately \$14,600 (for Howard County) to approximately \$1.4 million (for Montgomery County). Under the bill, the members of this regional master service agreement may be eligible for reimbursement for their existing mattress recycling costs.

In addition, as a consumer of mattresses, any local government agency that purchases mattresses must pay the mattress stewardship assessment established under the bill. Thus,

beginning as early as fiscal 2032, local expenditures for the purchase of mattresses increase.

Small Business Effect: The bill results in potentially significant additional operational responsibilities for producers and retailers of mattresses in the State, as they are required to (1) add a mattress stewardship assessment to the cost of all mattresses sold and (2) account for those assessments and remit them to the representative organization. Producers and retailers must also (1) verify that all mattresses sold in the State are in compliance with an approved program and (2) submit required reports. On the other hand, retailers who volunteer to act as mattress collection sites may benefit if they are able to attract additional customers to their stores as a result. Several retailers affected by the bill are likely considered small businesses. As consumers, small businesses that purchase mattresses incur additional costs to pay the mattress stewardship assessment established by the bill. On the other hand, small businesses may benefit from having viable options for disposing of and managing end-of-life mattresses.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 858 of 2025; HB 1355 of 2024; and HB 930 of 2023.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Environmental Service; City of Annapolis; Calvert, Howard, Kent, Washington, and Worcester counties; Baltimore City; Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); University System of Maryland; Morgan State University; Maryland Department of the Environment; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Juvenile Services; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Office of the Attorney General; Department of Legislative Services

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