

California State Senate

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September 10, 2012

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 419 – Safe Needle Disposal

Dear Governor Brown:

This letter is to respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 419, which addresses issues with manufacturer's disposal plans for needles, syringes, and similar devices (sharps).

Senate Bill 419 simply requires pharmaceutical manufacturers, when submitting plans already required under existing law, to submit those plans in an electronic format as prescribed by the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) and to post the plan in a readily accessible location on their website.

As you know, in September 2008 it became illegal to dispose of sharps in the trash. Yet four years after the ban, we still do not have a convenient system for the collection and safe disposal of millions of needles generated by those who self-inject medications in their homes.

In California, approximately 1 in 12 households have someone who must self-administer injections to treat diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B & C, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, migraines, hemophilia, osteoporosis, serious allergies or other medical conditions. These uses generate approximately 389 million sharps each year.

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Unfortunately, many of these sharps end up in household trash and pose a significant risk of injury and/or infection to children, hotel workers, janitors and solid waste employees; not to mention making almost one million Californians violators of state law.

Some years ago, I authored Senate Bill 486, Chapter 591, Statutes of 2009, which established the disposal plan requirement. However, some pharmaceutical manufacturers have submitted these plans to CalRecycle in hard copy and/or posted them on difficult to discover locations on their websites. Senate Bill 419 simply requires these plans be more accessible and submitted to CalRecycle electronically, thus reducing administrative costs.

This bill has received bi-partisan support and has amassed a diverse group of supporters including the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, Clean Water Action, the Multiple Sclerosis Society and Waste Management, Inc. To my knowledge, **there is no opposition to the bill.**

I respectfully request your signature on this modest and reasonable measure to advance safe needle disposal.

Sincerely,



S. Joseph Simitian
State Senator, Eleventh District

SJS:pc

cc: Nancy McFadden, Executive Secretary
Gareth Elliott, Legislative Secretary
Martha Guzman-Aceves, Deputy Legislative Secretary