



Leaders in Resource Renewal

A non-profit association that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services.

May 24, 2017

Representative John Nygren
89th Assembly District
State Capitol 309 East
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Dear Representative Nygren:

On behalf of the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) Board of Directors and its members, I would like to extend our appreciation for your work to promote and advance legislation related to the management of pharmaceutical waste. As you are aware, getting unwanted or outdated medications into safe and convenient disposal is an important tool in fighting the growing opioid addiction problem.

What you may not be aware of is that Wisconsin's recycling and waste resource management professionals have been working with community partners, since 2005, to conduct medication collections. The early programming was driven by a need to keep pharmaceuticals from harming the environment. Programs across the state have grown since then to be a perfect marriage of sound environmental protection and important public health and safety programming. However, with the growth in programming, comes a growth in costs.

AROW is extremely grateful that Attorney General Schimel has targeted medication collections as a priority. The attorney general's program moves to the state, from local collection events and permanent programs, the cost of incineration disposal. This program is critically important in helping local jurisdictions afford conducting programs. Yet this is really a shifting of costs from one place to the next.

Amendment 3 of 2017 January Special Session Assembly Bill 8 contained verbiage that would have moved that cost burden for managing old pharmaceuticals from taxpayers to "companies that develop or manufacture prescription drugs for sale in this state". Unfortunately, this amendment was defeated. AROW endorses this type of "Product Stewardship" model for managing pharmaceutical waste and asks that you consider a Product Stewardship approach in future policy initiatives.

As you continue to work on addiction issues and related pharmaceutical waste management, please know that AROW and its waste management professionals are a resource for you. We are the "boots on the ground" when it comes to reducing waste.

With best regards,


Meleesa Johnson
President-AROW

About the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW)

Founded in 1990, AROW is a 501(c)(3) association representing Wisconsin's recycling, waste reduction and sustainability professionals with members from local government, businesses and non-profit groups. The organization provides leadership through education, advocacy, and collaboration and promotes effective, efficient and sustainable material recovery initiatives. For details on AROW, its positions and programs visit www.arow-online.org.