



February 19, 2020

Sen. Christopher Bray, Chair
Sen. Brian Campion, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-530

RE: Testimony regarding S 227, An act relating to the provision of personal care products by lodging establishments

Dear Chair Bray, Vice Chair Campion, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S 227, which will phase out the use of small plastic bottles for personal use products in lodging establishments.

PSI is a national organization committed to reducing the health, safety, and environmental impacts of consumer products with a strong focus on sustainable management from design through end-of-life. We promote product stewardship initiatives across North America. We have done this together with 47 state environmental agency members; hundreds of local government members, including ***nearly all the solid waste management districts in Vermont***; and over 120 partners from businesses, universities, organizations, and international governments.

Over the past 20 years, PSI and its members have played a significant role in passing most of the 119 U.S. extended producer responsibility (EPR) laws on 14 products in 33 states. This includes eight laws in Vermont for such products as electronics, paint, batteries, thermostats, and fluorescent lamps. We are also actively involved in the development of EPR bills at the federal and state level, including the federal Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act recently introduced by U.S. Senator Tom Udall and U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal to reduce packaging waste, particularly single-use plastics. We are also working closely with Maine, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and other states around the country to introduce EPR legislation for packaging.

S 227 will prohibit lodging establishments in Vermont from providing personal care products in small, single-use bottles in guest rooms, and instead encourage them to use bulk dispensers. The bill would go into effect at the beginning of 2021 for large establishments but will give smaller establishments another year to transition. Nationally, many hotels have announced a voluntary switch from single-use to bulk containers in response to public concerns about plastic pollution and

marine debris. This bill would level the playing field, save lodging businesses money over the long term, and significantly reduce the amount of plastic needing to be recycled or disposed. Even recycling creates impacts, which in this case are easily avoidable since there are readily available alternatives, such as bulk dispensers, which are effective and widely accepted by the public.

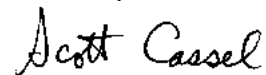
PSI believes that voluntary solutions are preferred if they work. Unfortunately, single-use plastics create external costs in terms of pollution that still have not yet been incorporated into consumer product sales. In other words, the full cost of using millions of tiny plastic bottles in hotel establishments has pushed the pollution problem and cost onto others. This bill would end that externality from single-use plastics and replace them with products that are more sustainable – reusable dispensers and bulk purchases of products. This is why California was the first state last year to ban single-use personal care products at hotels.

The one suggestion on text I have is to **strike the preemption clause**, which it is not necessary and could have unintended consequences. Preemption is not supported by our members.

Fewer than 10% of all plastics are currently recycled in the United States. While this measure would be a small step toward reducing the amount of plastic waste generated, it would add to the bold steps Vermont has already taken to reduce single-use plastic waste and continue its role as one of the leaders in the country on sustainably managing solid waste.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 236-4822, or Scott@ProductStewardship.US.

Sincerely,



Scott Cassel

Chief Executive Office/Founder