

SEATTLE SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



February 7, 2013

Dear Rep. Steve Tharinger:

I am writing to express City of Seattle Solid Waste Advisory Committee's (SWAC) support for SB 5424 / HB 1579, which authorizes manufacturers selling paint in Washington to provide a take-back and recycling program for unwanted latex and oil-based architectural paint. This legislation is supported by the paint manufacturers who have been actively working with local governments on this bill.

Architectural paint is the largest and most expensive waste stream for our moderate risk waste (MRW) programs. Currently, local governments are the primary collectors of unwanted paint in Washington. In 2010, Washington local government programs collected more than 507,000 gallons of paint, which is only 38% of the unwanted paint available for collection, according to estimates by the Department of Ecology. The cost to Washington taxpayers and garbage ratepayers was approximately 3 million dollars.

Currently, 16 counties, which represent 60 percent of the state population, do not accept latex paint from residents. Those that collect latex paint are concerned that they cannot continue funding programs in the future. When managed improperly, unwanted paint poses risks to human health and the environment. Oil-based paint is toxic and flammable. In order to prevent spills curbside, in the street, in garbage trucks, and at transfer stations, latex paint, in liquid form, is prohibited from many residential garbage programs. Moreover, paint is made of materials that could be captured for reuse, recycling, or energy recovery.

SB 5424 / HB 1579 would establish a statewide recycling program, coordinated by paint manufacturers and funded through a small assessment on paint sold in Washington. The program would expand the number of collection sites for both oil and latex paint and would greatly boost the amount of paint collected and recycled. Residents, as well as painting and general contractors, could return their unwanted paint to convenient collections locations at no cost and the paint would be properly managed.

This legislation is supported by the American Coatings Association (ACA), which has collaborated with many local and state governments, businesses, and refuse and recycling companies across the country to create effective legislation. In 2009, "model" legislation was passed in Oregon as a demonstration project. Oregon consumers now have 102 paint collection sites, up from 15 sites in 2009 and 94% of residents live within 15 miles of a permanent collection site. Oregon local governments have seen direct cost savings, including approximately \$1 million per year in savings for Portland Metro alone. Since 2010, similar stewardship legislation has been enacted in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

The Seattle SWAC respectfully urges your support for SB 5424 / HB 1579 to provide for a convenient and safe return program for unwanted paints. This industry supported legislation would greatly reduce costs for local governments, increase collection opportunities, increase recycling and recovery, and reduce improper disposal of a hazardous material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JBR", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph Ringold, Co-Chair
City of Seattle Solid Waste Advisory Committee