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October 27, 2015

Greg Caput, Chair
Board of Supervisors, County of Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, California 95060

Re: SUPPORT - County of Santa Cruz Safe Drug and Sharps Disposal EPR Ordinance

Dear Chair Caput and Members of the Board,

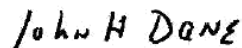
On behalf of the California Resource Recovery Association, we wish to express our strong support for the proposed extended producer responsibility (EPR) ordinance for the safe disposal of drugs and medical sharps. If adopted, the ordinance will require manufacturers of drugs and medical sharps covered by the ordinance to develop, implement, and fund safe and convenient programs for the disposal of home-generated pharmaceutical and sharps waste.

Similar ordinances for medicines have already passed unanimously in Alameda, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties in California. Los Angeles and Alameda Counties are preparing ordinances to include medical sharps, and more are sure to follow. A challenge by the pharmaceutical company associations to Alameda's ordinance was heard by the courts in 2012 and upheld in the U.S. Supreme Court in May of 2015. The court could not find any burden when there were almost a billion dollars of drugs sold into Alameda in one year and the program was estimated to cost about a tenth of a cent for every dollar of sales.

Most provinces of Canada operate producer designed and funded medicine and sharps take-back programs as well as many other countries including Columbia, Brazil, Mexico and most of Europe. Nowhere in the world has there been any noticeable increase in drug prices due to this program, but there has certainly been a noticeable improvement in ability for the public to safely dispose of medicines and needles to protect public health and the environment.

We hope you will approve the proposed ordinance. You will receive broad support for this measure as we have seen in other counties.

Respectfully,



John H. Dane
Executive Director

CRRA is California's state-wide recycling association. It is the oldest and one of the largest non-profit recycling organizations in the United States. A 501(c)(3) organization, CRRA is dedicated to achieving environmental sustainability in and beyond California through Zero Waste strategies including product stewardship, waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting. CRRA advances local, regional and state-wide waste reduction efforts which result in critical environmental and climate protection outcomes. Our members represent all aspects of California's reduce-reuse-recycle-compost economy. They work for cities and counties, as well as hauling companies, material processors, non-profit organizations, state agencies, and in allied professions.