

SMART Making Full Court Press in States to Spread Word about Textile Recycling

The first week in April was one of the most active in recent memory for the SMART Board, members and staff in spreading the word out about textile recycling in a variety of states and in advocating on behalf of SMART members involved in clothing collection bin business.

Advocacy Efforts in California and Missouri

On April 3, SMART President, Lou Buty spoke in opposition to California SB 450 (a bill sponsored by Goodwill California), which aims to impose new requirements on clothing collection bins used to capture people's unwanted clothing, shoes, household textiles and other items. With the help of SMART Government Affairs Consultant, Jessica Franken, SMART's PR Firm, The Fallston Group and SMART staff, Mr. Buty read a prepared statement at a press conference called by groups opposed to SB 450 in Sacramento including SMART members ATRS and USAgain. SMART also submitted a letter in opposition to the bill. SMART's concerns were heard and ultimately the bill failed to pass through the legislative committee where it was being considered.

Below is a link to a video of the entire press event. See Lou at 11:45 of video.

<https://new.livestream.com/accounts/3481085/pressconference>

[Click here to view Lou's statement](#)

[Click here to view the letter](#)

On April 2, SMART submitted a letter expressing opposition to Missouri bill SB 466 (sponsored by Goodwill Missouri). This measure would establish new labeling requirements on collection bins operated by for-profits but not on non-profit collection bins and would also limit civil liability for property owners who remove bins that have been authorized by a prior contract with a clothing collection bin company. SMART member USAgain also opposed the bill and has worked with SMART to draft revised legislative language that applies equally to for profit and non-profit entities and complies with the SMART Donation Drop Box Code of Conduct. Dr. Jana Hawley of the University of Missouri and author of a SMART study on textile recycling also wrote a letter in opposition to the bill supporting SMART's position.

[Click to view SMART letter here](#)

[Click here to view Jana Hawley letter](#)

Textile Recycling Conference

On April 2, SMART Immediate Past President Larry Groipen and SMART 2nd Vice President, Eric Stubin participated in a one-day Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) symposium at the University of Connecticut entitled “*Collecting Textiles: Make It Work for Your Community*.” The event, which drew more than 40 people from five states, opened with remarks from Mr. Robert Isner, Connecticut DEEP, and Vice President of NERC’s Board of Directors. There was a panel discussion on getting to know the available markets for recyclable textiles and how to implement clothing recycling in schools districts, colleges & universities that included SMART member Paul Curry of Bay State Textiles and Parris Hicks of Leigh Fibers. In addition to the SMART leaders, other presenters included representatives of Easter Seals-Goodwill Industries of Connecticut and various companies within the clothing and textile recycling industry. Heather Lester, SMART’s Director of Meetings and Member Services, also attended the symposium to help gain greater insights into how to encourage similar programs in other states and to develop relationships with the major stakeholders in the textile recycling industry.

SMART is excited about having the chance to spread our message about the importance of textile recycling during such high-profile events and looks forward to many similar opportunities in the future. Special thanks to Lou Buty, Larry Groipen, Eric Stubin, and Paul Curry for going above and beyond to make SMART and our industry proud. SMART members are encouraged to reach out to their local communities about developing textile recycling programs and to spread the word through the media by using SMART’s videos and radio PSAs which can be found on the SMART website at <http://www.smartasn.org/about/videos.cfm>.

If you should have any questions, please contact Jackie King, Executive Director at 443-640-1050 x105 or email her jackie@kingmgt.org.