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February 2, 2016

The Honorable Louise M. Slaughter  
United States House of Representatives  
2469 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3225

Dear Representative Slaughter:

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) and the other signees of this letter strongly support the federal Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act. By establishing producer financed and managed collection programs, this bill provides proper disposal options for unwanted and expired pharmaceuticals—both controlled and uncontrolled substances—thus providing Americans with a convenient way to safely dispose of unused medications.

Mounting evidence demonstrates the need for safe and secure disposal options for pharmaceuticals that match the convenience of purchasing pharmaceuticals. Drugs improperly stored in the home or disposed in the trash may end up in the hands of children, teenagers, and potential abusers. This contributes to the national drug abuse epidemic that is now the leading cause of injury death in the US, ahead of car accidents. Moreover, when flushed or thrown away, many pharmaceuticals end up in waterways, causing harm to the ecosystem and potentially affecting sources of drinking water.

Over 90 laws in the U.S. require producers to finance and manage the collection of 12 types of consumer products, including electronics, paint, thermostats, carpet, mattresses, fluorescent lamps, and batteries. Producer financed programs save taxpayers money, fairly incorporate the true cost of managing these products in the purchase price, and provide a direct financial incentive to pharmaceutical companies to reduce unnecessary prescriptions. This financing mechanism is key to their sustainability and success.

Currently, six local jurisdictions have passed a law similar to that of the federal Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act, and many state and local governments around the country are considering introducing similar bills. It is important that these laws not be superseded unless they are less stringent than the federal bill, as is clearly stated in the current bill language.

Thank you for your strong leadership on this important issue.

*Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. • 29 Stanhope Street • 3rd Floor • Boston, MA 02116  
Telephone: (617) 236-4855 • Fax: (617) 236-4766 • [www.productstewardship.us](http://www.productstewardship.us)*

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Respectfully,

Product Stewardship Institute, Inc.

[other signees]