26 May 2017

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 349, “An Act To Facilitate the Recycling of Discarded Mattresses.”

Mattress-stewardship programs are only operating in three high-population density states: California, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Maine is a predominantly rural state with our population spread over a wide geographic area, where waste-collection strategies designed for cities do not work.

I understand illegal dumping of mattresses is a problem, but let’s use our litter-control laws and make the polluter pay, rather than applying another tax on the citizens and businesses of this State. This law would put our border retailers at a further disadvantage to their New Hampshire counterparts. The additional tax would give more incentives to consumers to buy their mattresses over the border. Not only would we not get the mattress tax, but we would lose the sales tax revenue from the sale of the mattresses.

I will not support a bill that takes us in the wrong direction. For these reasons, I return LD 349 unsigned and vetoed. I urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor