



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 11, 2011

The Honorable John Reagan, Chairman
Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs
Legislative Office Building, Room 205
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 71, establishing a pharmaceutical drug take-back program

Dear Chairman Reagan:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 71, which would authorize the establishment of a pharmaceutical drug take-back and disposal program for New Hampshire. The bill amends existing statutes to clarify that pharmaceutical drugs may be collected for proper disposal by entities working in cooperation with a law enforcement agency. The bill also requires that the Department of Environmental Services (DES), Board of Pharmacy, and Department of Justice collaborate in the development of guidelines and rules regarding the collection and disposal of pharmaceutical drugs. DES supports this bill.

DES recognizes the need to ensure unused pharmaceutical drugs do not contaminate New Hampshire's surface water or groundwater resources and the need to improve upon existing disposal practices. For this reason, we have collaborated with other state agencies, business and industry, and environmental, drug abuse and poison control stakeholder groups to develop resources that assist with and promote proper pharmaceutical drug collection and disposal. These resources are available on a state website at www.nh.gov/medsafety.

The provisions in existing statute regarding the possession of pharmaceutical prescription drugs were historically developed when the benefits associated with proper drug disposal were generally not recognized. Consequently, existing state statutes do not explicitly allow for the collection and disposal of dispensed pharmaceutical prescription drugs. The proposed language in the bill will update our state laws to require the establishment of safe and legal procedures that enable the proper collection and disposal of pharmaceutical drugs. The bill also contains provisions intended to ensure that these activities occur in compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to comment on this bill. Please feel free to call me at 271-2958, or Brandon Kernen at 271-0660, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Representative Nevins
Representative Schlachman
Representative Case
Representative Butynski
Representative Cebrowski
Senator Stiles
Senator Odell
Senator Houde

DES Web site: www.des.nh.gov

P.O. Box 95, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0095

Telephone: (603) 271-2513 • Fax: (603) 271-5171 • TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964