



February 28, 2024

Senator Fount Hawj, Chair
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
Minnesota State Senate
95 University Avenue W.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Joint comments regarding SF 3889, relating to the labeling of certain nonwoven disposable products

Dear Chair Hawj and Members of the Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we thank you for taking an interest in the important issue of wipes labeling and share the goal of conspicuous labeling to encourage proper consumer disposal habits of wipes products. Our organizations represent a wide swath of the wipes manufacturing industry from the producers of wipes fabrics to brand owners throughout North America.

Given the current state of comprehensive disposal labeling of wipes, we urge you to consider amending SF 3889 to align with Do Not Flush labeling legislation that has passed in six states to date and is pending at the federal level.

Much has changed in the wipes marketplace in recent years, following the enactment of Do Not Flush labeling laws in six states ([California](#), [Washington](#), [Oregon](#), [Illinois](#), [Colorado](#), and [New Jersey](#)), there is now essentially 50-state compliance with Do Not Flush labeling for non-flushable wipes. Such legislation covers all wipes containing plastic and likely to be used in a bathroom setting, as well as all wipes marketed as baby or diapering wipes.

INDA, the association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry, has collaborated with municipal wastewater stakeholders to ensure that the wipes comprising 98-99 percent of items found in wastewater systems are prominently labeled. The six existing state laws are the result of a successful collaboration between the wipes industry and wastewater operators. This success has since led to the introduction of the bipartisan Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPEs) Act ([H.R. 2964/S. 1350](#)), currently pending in the 118th Congress, which recently passed unanimously out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Formal forensic studies of sewer systems in [New York City](#), [Jacksonville, Florida](#), and the [United Kingdom](#) have repeatedly shown that 98-99 percent of the materials accumulating in treatment plants are hygiene products not labeled as flushable. Specifically, these studies show that consumers are

improperly flushing non-flushable products like baby wipes, surface/sanitizing wipes, as well as non-wipes products like paper towels, feminine hygiene products and fats, oils and grease.

Additionally, INDA and the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) is in the process of finalizing the report on a [similar formal collection study](#) that was required by California law to assess consumer flushing habits. We hope this study, which represented the most comprehensive sampling of flushed item to date, will also provide valuable information to Minnesota lawmakers regarding consumer flushing habits.

Given that the inappropriate consumer disposal of non-flushable wipes is 98-99 percent of the source of sewer system challenges with flushed items, the wipes industry-municipal wastewater collaboration has extended beyond the enactment of Do Not Flush labeling laws in those six states to educate consumers about the need to spot the labeling and make better disposal decisions to protect their plumbing and community infrastructure.

The [Responsible Flushing Alliance](#) was formed in 2021 as a 501(c)(6) trade association committed to nationwide consumer education on what not to flush and has worked extensively with wastewater agencies in California and other states to promote proper disposal behavior on wipes.

Our organizations welcome the opportunity to facilitate a technical conversation with wastewater operators in Minnesota about this issue. In the interest of addressing the 98-99 percent of the problem, we would respectfully urge the Senate to consider labeling legislation similar to that has been enacted in California, Washington, Oregon, Illinois, Colorado, and New Jersey.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important legislation. If you or other members of the legislature have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact Wes Fisher, INDA Director of Government Affairs at wfisher@inda.org.

Sincerely,

INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry

CHPA, Consumer Healthcare Products Association

Personal Care Products Council

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