

July 3, 2020

The Honorable Bill Quirk, Chair
Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 171
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted Online via [CA Leg Advocacy Portal](#)

RE: AB 818 (Bloom): Support

Dear Chairman Quirk:

The undersigned organizations are pleased to support AB 818(Bloom). We urge the committee to move AB 818, a straightforward bill that will encourage pollution prevention through clear and consistent consumer information.

AB 818 would establish labeling requirements for wet wipes packaging so that Californians will know how to properly dispose of these popular consumer products. In recent years, wet wipes have become widely available as they're designed for a variety of daily household purposes. Despite voluntary industry labeling guidelines, proper disposal information is inconsistent on wipes product labels, and some wipes are advertised as "flushable," which can lead to confusion about what products can be flushed down the toilet and which are instead intended for the trashcan. Because many wet wipes are made from plastic they are not compatible with sewer systems and infrastructure. Improperly flushing these incredibly durable products results in their getting caught in pipes or accumulating with fats, oils, and grease and becoming larger obstructions that cause costly backups and sometimes result in raw sewage overflows. Further down the sewer line, wipes tend to weave together and create giant rags which get stuck in pump systems and motors and damage expensive public infrastructure. Additionally, environmental harm can come from flushing wipes since they shed microplastics into the wastewater system that can ultimately be discharged to the aquatic environment.

Over the last decade, wet wipes have been an increasing problem for property owners, sewer systems, and ratepayers. A recent national analysis indicates California wastewater agencies spend nearly \$50 million annually on operations and maintenance alone to manage this problem which could be much more easily and affordably managed if consumers knew to dispose of wipes in the trash instead. AB 818 would ensure wet wipes packaging clearly communicates the appropriate disposal method for the products not intended to be flushed, and further requires wipes manufacturers to conduct education and outreach about the "Do Not Flush" symbol and label notice. This straightforward bill has been mutually agreed to by the wipes manufacturers and wastewater and product stewardship representatives. If enacted, it will establish the strongest wet wipe labeling requirements in the country.

For these reasons our coalition supports AB 818, and we respectfully request your support when the bill is heard in the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee.

Sincerely,

cc: Assembly Member Richard Bloom
 Jessica Gauger, California Association of Sanitation Agencies