

CONTROL OF E-WASTE OR TECHNO TRASH

- WHEREAS, The high-tech revolution has resulted in the production of millions of computers and other electronic devices that wear out or pass rapidly into obsolescence, thus requiring disposal of one kind or another; and
- WHEREAS, Electronic computer equipment is a complicated assembly of more than 1,000 materials; and
- WHEREAS, Many of the materials are highly toxic, including, but not limited to, lead and cadmium (in computer circuit boards), lead oxide and barium (in computer monitors' cathode ray tubes, mercury (in switches and flat screens), brominated flame retardants (on printed circuit board, cables and plastic casings), arsenic, chromium and zinc; and
- WHEREAS, The dumping of computers, or so-called e-waste or techno-trash into landfills is a potential environmental time bomb from leaching into the soil and groundwater of heavy metals and other toxins; and
- WHEREAS, These toxins are persistent once released into the environment, lodging in the fats of people and wildlife, with potential to cause birth defects and affect kidney, liver and central nervous system functions; and
- WHEREAS, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that computers and other electronic equipment account for about 220 million tons of waste per year in the United States alone; and
- WHEREAS, Presently, in all but rare instances, the expense of collecting, managing and disposing of discarded electronics, or techno-trash, including household hazardous waste collection and hazardous waste site cleanup, is borne by taxpayer-funded government programs, primarily at the local level; and
- WHEREAS, Other states, indeed, other countries have approved or are considering legislation requiring manufacturers to take financial and/or physical responsibility for their products throughout the entire product lifecycle, including take-back and end-of-life management for appropriate and effective domestic reuse, re-manufacturing, recycling and as necessary, disposal; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, its councils and units, support legislation calling for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) that would make manufacturers and distributors financially and/or physically responsible for their products when the products become obsolete; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That said EPR legislation should contain provisions requiring reduced use of hazardous materials in manufacturing, while also requiring collection, disassembly, reuse and recycling of discarded electronic equipment to the highest degree practicable, and environmental sound practices of recycling and when necessary, disposal; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That said EPR legislation should ban exports of hazardous materials from discarded electronic waste equipment and exports of computers at or near their end-life when export is being done as a means of techno-trash disposal.

Adopted 2003