



WHEREAS:

Target Corp. is the fourth largest U.S. retailer of consumer electronics, and such devices contain toxic materials such as lead, mercury, cadmium, brominated flame retardants, polyvinyl chloride, and are difficult to recycle.

Less than 20% of discarded electronics are collected for recycling, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. E-waste is the fastest growing and most hazardous component of the municipal waste stream, comprising more than 5%. The estimated collection rate for e-waste lags the U.S. recovery rate for municipal waste of 34%.

Improper disposal of electronics can result in serious public health and environmental impacts. Analog TV sets and monitors with cathode ray tubes contain large amounts of lead, flat screen monitors contain mercury switches, and computer batteries contain cadmium, which can be harmful to human health if released to the environment.

Electronic goods collected for recycling in the U.S. are often shipped by recyclers to developing countries where they endanger health and the environment. *Reports by Basel Action Network* have revealed appalling conditions in China and parts of Africa where workers break apart and process old electronic equipment under primitive conditions. Workers openly burn toxic plastics and wires, and melt soldered circuit boards to extract gold, silver and copper. These activities threaten worker health and pollute nearby land and water.

Target's 2009 Corporate Responsibility report states that "being a responsible steward of the environment is one of the most important issues that defines Target's corporate reputation," yet the company does not offer take back for the full range of electronics it sells and its vendors lack adequate certification policies to ensure safe disposal of materials collected. The company takes back small devices such as music players and mobile phones but does not disclose substantive information about the disposition of electronics it collects, or information about whether waste vendors are complying with the standards it has set. Recent instances of fraudulent recycling demonstrate the need for stronger evidence the company is monitoring how collected goods are processed.

Proponents believe our company should develop a nationwide return program for all electronic devices it sells using stores or nearby locations convenient for customers. All electronics collected should be recycled or refurbished by responsible electronics recyclers who are independently verified to meet a superior standard such as the e-Stewards standard. Best Buy takes back a wide range of electronics for free and bars downstream service providers from exporting non-working equipment or components to developing countries, and requires third party provider audits. Staples and Office Depot also offer take back for large electronics.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That Target Corp.'s board of directors prepare a report, at reasonable cost and excluding confidential information, on policy options, above and beyond legal compliance, to minimize the environmental impacts of its electronics recycling activities by providing mechanisms for take back of all electronics sold, promoting reuse of working equipment and preventing export to non-OECD countries of hazardous e-waste and untested or non-working equipment or components.