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My name is Mark Lathrop and I have worked at Lathrop Vending for 16 years. We employ 21 full time and 3 part time employees. The present economic situation has affected us all with factory shut downs, layoffs and the general lack of spending by our customers. We've lost revenue when the school nutrition bill was past and when the bottle bill was expanded. With the bottle bill expansion along came a recycle fee from the bottlers. A loss in revenue reduces our profitability. As business people we can only react by cutting expenses, raising prices or eliminating positions.

The potential benefits of this savings to Lathrop Vending and the State of Connecticut are:

- Helping us maintain our present level of staff.
 - Helps unemployment fund.
 - Keeps generating income tax revenue.
- Help us lift our wage freeze, giving our employee more spendable income.
- Help us invest in vehicles, equipment and technology
 - New vehicle sales tax revenue instead of keeping old trucks running
- Help us maintain our profitability and stay solvent

The vending industry is struggling with many issues such as gas prices, health care, manufacture price increases and the downturn in the economy. Our goals are to maintain our employees, pay them a fair wage and offer health care benefits. The passage of Raised Bill No. SB 177 would be a giant step in maintaining these goals.