



# CONNECTICUT RECYCLERS COALITION

Testimony in support of

Senate Bill No. 67

AAC the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under  
Connecticut's Bottle Bill

February 28, 2014

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Dear Senator Meyers, Representative Gentile and member of the Environment Committee,

Formed in 1989, The Connecticut Recyclers Coalition is a statewide organization comprised of businesses, municipalities, individuals, haulers, processing centers and others interested in promoting recycling throughout the state. We are pleased to have this opportunity to support this piece of legislation and offer suggestions for improvements in the future.

Expanding the state's bottle bill is an important opportunity to reduce litter and increase recycling throughout Connecticut, especially in areas where traditional recycling collection is a challenge. An expanded bottle bill, as outlined in SB 67, will increase the amount of high quality material available to secondary markets.

Based on data from the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services DEEP estimated, the average redemption rate of bottle bill containers at 56% (from the first quarter of 2009 through the third quarter of 2013). The average redemption rates in other bottle bill states are much higher than this, i.e. most are higher than 70% – so the accuracy of the CT DRS bottle bill data needs to be assessed. The average recycling rate of recyclables in typical curbside collection programs is 25%-30%. Regardless of possible DRS data shortfalls, the bottle bill provides for much higher beverage container recovery rates.

We also support the suggested expansion because the quality of recyclables is typically much higher through bottle bill programs. The material is cleaner and less contaminated and produces a higher quality raw material which is more desirable to companies producing new products.

Members of the CT Recyclers Coalition feel it is important that with this expansion, important other issues be considered. These are as follows:

- Analysis is necessary to determine the impact on local curbside recycling programs and existing materials recycling facilities.
- The handling fee for the redemption centers should be increased to 3.5 cents to make it a more economically viable business in the State.
- The system for redeeming containers must be examined and improved. The current system is inconvenient in some areas, discouraging for some, and should be analyzed and improved to make the system more user friendly to both consumers and retailers.

- Data regarding material collected through the bottle bill must be made available and included in the state recycling rate, as recommended by the US EPA, so the statewide recycling rates reflects the efforts of both professional recyclers and private citizens.
- Emphasis must be made to improve and increase efforts to raise awareness and participation for both redemption and other recycling programs.
- The State is moving forward on Product Stewardship as a solid waste and materials management strategy. It is important to evaluate how the bottle bill program fits in with this movement.

These are important issues that we believe should be addressed to help improve our efforts to increase recycling in the State.

Again we appreciate having the opportunity to support expansion of the state's bottle bill legislation. Thank you for your consideration and attention. Should you have questions, please contact Kim O'Rourke, CRC President, at 860-638-4855 or [kim.orourke@middletownct.gov](mailto:kim.orourke@middletownct.gov).