

Written Testimony of Lisa G Miers, Easton, CT
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee
February 28, 2014

Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 67:
An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under
Connecticut's Bottle Bill

Thank you Senator Meyer and Representative Gentile, Senators Maynard and Chapin, Representatives Albis and Shaban and the entire Environment Committee for providing me with the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 67. My name is Lisa Miers and my husband owns MLI Redemption Services in Stratford, Connecticut.

- **First, I agree that the law should be updated to include additional types of non-carbonated beverage containers (lemonade, iced tea, power / sports drinks and fruit juice containers).**
 - a. I've heard some views that the bottle law should be discontinued as single stream recycling expands. However, the bottle bill is a huge factor in keeping Connecticut's environment clean.
 - b. People go out of their way to pick up the containers that have the deposit because they are worth money. Many people are subsidizing their income with the money they receive from collecting bottles and cans off the roadways. You rarely see deposit containers on the roadway. You do see containers that do not have a deposit all over the place, despite the curbside recycling program.
 - c. Additionally, the bottle bill material is CLEAN. There is no residue factor and the material can be marketed at a much higher rate and be recycled into better products. The curbside program has a high residue factor. The high residue from cross contamination realizes a significantly lower market value and lower quality end product.

- **Second, the Connecticut bottle law handling fee must be increased as soon as possible, to at least 3.5 cents per container. The other northeast states with bottle laws updated their laws several years ago, recognizing that their handling fees were insufficient for all of the manual work involved with processing and handling the containers** (see Attachment A).
 - a. **Dealers and redemption centers have never had a handling fee increase** since the law was enacted in 1980. Redemption centers are in desperate need of relief to offset the ever rising cost of inflation and business operations that have been endured over the last 34 years. The current handling fees of 1-1/2 cents and 2 cents per container do not come close to covering the costs associated with processing and handling the containers for the distributors. As we've already seen, redemption centers in Connecticut are closing their doors. Without a handling fee increase, redemption centers will cease to exist in Connecticut.
 - b. I understand the "Dealer" (mostly the grocery stores') view of opposing the law. However, they will be able to handle the new volume and types of containers, just like they handled the water bottles when they were added to the law. The grocery stores and other dealers will benefit from the increased handling fee, which will offset any additional costs associated with adding the iced tea, etc. containers to the bill.
 - c. If you increase the handling fee, you will create significant small business opportunities in Connecticut. New redemption centers will open up all over Connecticut, creating jobs AND relieving the pressure on the grocery stores and other dealers.
 - d. The state will not have to foot the bill for the increased handling fee. The handling fee is the responsibility of the distributors.

I respectfully urge each of you to vote in favor of Senate Bill 67 along with an added amendment to increase the handling fee.

Lisa G Miers, Easton, CT
Attachment: Northeast State Handling Fees

ATTACHMENT A

NORTHEAST STATE HANDLING FEES

State	Name	Dates	Containers Covered	Amount of Deposit	Handling Fee	Unredeemed Deposits
Connecticut	Beverage Container Deposit and Redemption Law	Enacted 4/12/78; Implemented 1/1/80	Any individual, separate, sealed glass, metal or plastic bottle, can, jar or carton containing a beverage. Excluded are containers over 3L containing noncarbonated beverages, and HDPE containers.	5¢	Beer 1.5¢, other beverages 2¢	Returned to the State
Maine	Maine Returnable Beverage Container Law	Enacted 1/2/76, Implemented 6/1/78	all sealed containers made of glass, metal or plastic, containing 4 liters or less, excluding aseptics	Wine/liquor: 15¢ All others: 5¢	4¢ (.5¢ less if part of qualified commingling agreement)	Most containers are under a commingling agreement, and unclaimed deposits are property of distributor. If not under a commingling agreement, then unclaimed deposits are property of State.
Massachusetts	Beverage Container Recovery Law	Enacted 6/4/81, Implemented 1/1/83	any sealable bottle, can, jar, or carton of glass, metal, plastic, or combo. Excludes biodegradables	5¢	3.25¢	Property of state general fund
New York	New York State Returnable Container Law	Enacted 6/15/82, Implemented 7/1/83	An individual, separate, sealed glass, metal, aluminum, steel or plastic bottle, can or jar less than 1 gallon or 3.78 liters.	5¢	3.50¢	80% to the state General Fund; 20% retained by distributor
Vermont	Beverage Container Law (1972), Solid Waste Act (1987)	Enacted 4/7/72, Implemented 7/1/73	Any bottle, can, jar or carton composed of glass, metal, paper, plastic or any combination (Biodegradables excluded)	liquor: 15¢ All others: 5¢	4¢ for brand-sorted containers and 3.5¢ for commingled brands	Retained by distributor/bottlers