



Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor

Testimony Senate Bill No. 67

Chairman Meyer, Chairwoman Gentile and Members of the Environment Committee:

I am Pedro E. Segarra, Mayor of the City of Hartford. On behalf of the citizens and businesses of Hartford, I thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today in support of proposed Senate Bill No. 67: An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks Under Connecticut's Bottle Bill.

The Bottle Bill was originally implemented in 1980 to decrease litter comprised mainly of bottles and cans. Connecticut led the nation in this effort and, during the last three decades of implementation, the Bottle Bill has proven it is an effective tool in decreasing litter and increasing recycling.

However, the beverage market has changed greatly since 1980. Many new bottles and cans now on the market are not covered by the Bottle Bill. In Hartford, litter analyses show that the composition of roadside sweepings and public spaces litter principally include tea, juice, sports, energy drinks, and liquor bottles.

Nearly 300 million bottles are not covered by the Connecticut Bottle Bill. If these are not recycled, they are found in parks, public areas, and roadways. When swept up or tossed in litter barrels, these bottles are incinerated rather than recycled. It appears the time has come for all manner of bottles to be added to the Bottle Bill.

Hartford is poised to launch a litter elimination campaign starting in April of 2014. Called #CLEANHARTFORD, the campaign will target residents, businesses and visitors and attempt to change behavior and encourage all to keep public places clean and litter-free. I believe an updated and expanded Bottle Bill will go a long way in supporting this initiative and in helping all of us reach Connecticut's laudable recycling goals.

As Senate Bill No. 67 develops, I suggest that the language be modified to be all encompassing. That is, the bill should refer to all single serving beverage containers, rather than listing out each type of container. This will ensure that the law will not require updating as new single serve products enter the market in the future. In addition, to ensure that redemption centers continue to be viable and profitable, please consider raising the handling fee to match regional standards and to promote ease of redemption for consumers.

I thank you for the opportunity to support Senate Bill 67 and believe its expansion is a prudent adjustment to an environmental bill that has proven effective in keeping public spaces clean and in upholding high standards for quality of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pedro E. Segarra", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor

550 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Telephone (860) 757-9500
Facsimile (860) 722-6606