

**Testimony of Saman Azimi**

**UconnPIRG**

**in support of**

**Proposed Senate Bill No. 67:**

**An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under Connecticut's Bottle Bill**

I would like to thank the Environment Committee, and Chairs Senator Edward Meyer and Representative Linda Gentile for permitting me to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 67, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under Connecticut's Bottle Bill.

My name is Saman Azimi and I am a student at the University of Connecticut.

The Bottle Bill in its current state covers beer, soda, and water with a 5 cent redeemable deposit that incentivizes recycling. Water was added to the list of beverages covered by the bill in a 2009 update, but that update unfortunately neglected a catalog of increasingly popular beverages like juices, teas, sports drinks, energy drinks, and coffee-based beverages. Senate Bill 67, as it has been proposed, would include some of those beverages, but, while that is a good start, the bill should be made more inclusive.

I support updating the bottle bill because it is the most effective recycling program both in our state and nationwide. Connecticut has set a goal of recovering 58% of municipal solid waste by 2024, but we've been lingering around the 30% mark for over a decade now. It makes sense to update what is already our most effective program and give it as much potency as possible to help reach our so far elusive recycling goals.

As it is currently, Senate Bill 67 would add only 3 types of beverages to the update, but we should push to add all single serving beverage containers based on size alone, or else we'll be forced to update the bill again in the future. To implement important change now, we should pass this bill in a state as inclusive and final as it could possibly be.

To conclude my testimony, I wish to encourage the Environment Committee to bolster Senate Bill 67 and pass it on to the Connecticut General Assembly so that we can see significant and effective change in our state's recycling programs.

Thank you again for this opportunity to give testimony.