

connecticut

beer wholesalers association

The eight members of the Connecticut Beer Wholesalers would like to lend its opposition to **SB 384 AAC the Application of the Bottle Bill to Wine and Liquor Bottles for Purposes of Funding State Parks.**

We request that before we expand our current process, we take the time to determine if there is a better way to fund parks that are less costly to Connecticut business and consumers.

Presently, distributors and retailers are absorbing 100% of the current redemption program. 100%.

Up until a few years ago, small businesses, such as ours, were able to manage the cost of Connecticut recycling mandates with unclaimed bottle deposits. The last time the redemption system was amended, without studying the consequences, first... the entire cost of the bottle bill was shifted to distributors. We don't want the same fate for our fellow Wine & Spirit distributors.

In a genuine climate of concern regarding retaining Connecticut businesses I ask you to understand that business can not take on any more of this costly recycling program for the State of Connecticut- the cost is significant. Everyone supports the environmental benefits of recycling, but not everyone is participating in these costs.

Rather than expanding the bottle bill, we ask you to consider if there are other more efficient alternatives to achieving the State's goals without the ramifications of additional cost to business.

There has to be a better, more efficient and less expensive way to achieve Connecticut's goals. A desire to expand the bottle bill without observing the recycling process... or considering the costs to small business employers will have a long-term impact on an economy and an environment that are equally fragile.

Why? For two undeniable reasons — we are being inefficient and ineffective.

Let's begin with ineffective. In all of our households there are bins, where we carefully collect our rinsed glass bottles and return them with visions of that glass being recycled, renewed or repurposed.

I'm sorry to share with you that this vision is not a reality.

The self-service redemption machines... contaminates the glass... which means that all we achieve in the current process is a destruction of those glass bottles with chips of glass shipped to a landfill.

Under the category of inefficient... the eight small business wholesalers absorb nearly \$4 million in handling costs to meet the mandates of the current bottle bill. In addition to the handling fee, we absorb the cost of drivers, third-party vendors and more for a total of over \$6 million dollars in expenses... with the only relief of modest revenue from aluminum recycling.

We ask you to understand the cost, infrastructure requirements', and labor involved in operating the redemption law on small business – it's just not right. Further, the flawed premise of this bill is that wine bottles can be recycled - it's just not the case.