

March 11, 2016

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Rm 3200
300 Capitol Avenue,
Hartford, CT 06106

To: Senator Ted Kennedy, Co-Chair Environment Committee
Representative James Albis, Co-Chair Environment Committee
Honorable Members of the Connecticut Environmental Committee

Subject: Raised Bill No. 384

AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE BOTTLE BILL TO WINE AND LIQUOR BOTTLES FOR PURPOSES OF FUNDING STATE PARKS.

My name is Frederick Miers. I own and operate the largest redemption center in the state of Connecticut, located in Stratford. I am in favor of Raised Bill No. 384.

In addition, I ask you to amend the *current* Bottle Bill statutes to increase the handling fee for all existing containers under the law from 1.5 and 2 cents to at least 3.5 cents per container.

Dealers and redemption centers have never had a "raise" under this law, which was enacted in 1980. Dealers and redemption centers are in dire need of relief to offset the ever-rising cost of running a business in Connecticut.

I urge each of you to push for an amendment to the Connecticut Bottle Bill to include an increase to the handling fee, similar to bills that were amended in 2009 in the states of Maine, Massachusetts, and New York. I have attached a chart showing the bottle bill details for each of these states.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely yours,

Frederick P. Miers
President
Soda Stop Plus Thrift, LLC
1255 West Broad St
Stratford, CT 06615
203-870-9722

Fred Miers owns Soda Stop Plus Thrift, LLC (SSPT) and has been servicing the Connecticut State Beverage Container Redemption law for the past 23 years. He has personally been in this industry for 33 years. SSPT currently operates out of a 40,000 square foot facility, located in Stratford, Connecticut. We employ 27 people. We accept bottles and cans from the general public over the counter (no reverse vending machines).

Request Amendment to: Raised Bill No. 384 - Session Year 2016

AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE BOTTLE BILL TO WINE AND LIQUOR BOTTLES FOR PURPOSES OF FUNDING STATE PARKS, AND AMEND THE HANDLING FEE UNDER CONNECTICUT'S BOTTLE BILL.

Purpose of Amendment:

- To increase the handling fee for dealers and operators of redemption centers in the amount of at least 3.5 cents for each container of beer or other malt beverage, mineral waters, soda water and similar carbonated soft drinks or noncarbonated beverage returned for redemption.
- Dealers and redemption centers are in desperate need of relief under the current law to offset the ever rising cost of business operations associated with the processing and accounting of deposit containers.
- Dealers and redemption centers have not had an "increase" under this law since 1983 (33 years ago).

Suggested Amendment Language:

(d) In addition to the refund value of a beverage container, a distributor shall pay to any dealer or operator of a redemption center a handling fee of at least ~~[one]~~ three and one-half cents for each container of beer or other malt beverage, ~~[and two cents for each beverage container of]~~ mineral waters, soda water and similar carbonated soft drinks or noncarbonated beverage and five cents for each beverage container of sparkling wine, champagne, wine or liquor returned for redemption. A distributor shall not be required to pay to a manufacturer the refund value of a nonrefillable beverage container.

Further Discussion:

The Connecticut Bottle Law currently creates jobs for tens of thousands of people throughout Connecticut. The deposit and handling fee provides incentive for people to work on the front lines collecting billions of containers every year. They range from businesses such as distributors, dealers, redemption centers, recycling facilities, trucking companies to charitable fundraisers, unemployed and displaced workers who clean our parks and streets.

Increasing the handling fee will allow job growth in Connecticut and help spur the economy by:

- Creating new business opportunities
- Creating new jobs
- Increasing wages and payroll taxes
- Increasing personal spending
- Equipment and merchandise spending at local business
- Providing required medical coverage
- Increase town property taxes
- Employing more people increases taxes paid to the Fed, State and local governments

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State Bottle Bill Comparisons

State	Name	Dates	Beverages Covered	Containers Covered	Amount of Deposit	Handling Fee	Reclamation System	Unredeemed Deposits
Connecticut	Beverage Container Deposit and Redemption Law	Enacted 4/12/78; Implemented 1/1/80	Beer, malt, carbonated soft drinks, and bottled water	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¢	Retail stores and redemption centers	Returned to the State
New York	New York State Returnable Container Law	Enacted 6/15/82, Implemented 7/1/83	Carbonated Soft Drinks, Soda Water, Beer and Other Malt Beverages, Wine Products and Water which does not contain sugar (including flavored or nutritionally enhanced water).	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¢	Retail stores and redemption centers	80% to the state General Fund; 20% retained by distributor
Massachusetts	Beverage Container Recovery Law	Enacted 6/4/81, Implemented 1/1/83	Beer, malt, carbonated soft drinks, & mineral water	any sealable bottle, can, jar, or carton of glass, metal, plastic, or combo. Excludes biodegradables	5¢	3.25¢	Retail stores and redemption centers	Property of state general fund
Maine	Maine Returnable Beverage Container Law	Enacted 1/1/76, Implemented 6/1/78	All beverages except dairy products and unprocessed cider	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)	Retail stores and redemption centers; Dealers may refuse containers if they have an agreement with a nearby redemption center	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.

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