



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**  
**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD**  
**CONNECTICUT**

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MAYOR

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March 8, 2016

[envtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:envtestimony@cga.ct.gov)

Environment Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Room 3200  
Hartford, CT 06106

ATTN: Senator Ted Kennedy, Chair

Dear Committee Members:

**RE: RAISED S.B. 384 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE BOTTLE  
BILL TO WINE AND LIQUID BOTTLES FOR PURPOSES OF FUNDING STATE PARKS**

M&M Redemption Center is an important business located in the Town of Wallingford. The services provided by M&M Redemption Center encourage recycling of beverage containers in an environmentally appropriate manner and is an important source of revenue for many of our citizens who rely upon the money received at a redemption center. In order for these services to continue redemption centers need sufficient funds to keep their doors open.

We ask that the Environment Committee amend Senate Bill 384 to increase the handling fee to enable redemption centers to continue to operate as businesses. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

William W. Dickinson, Jr.  
Mayor

jms

My name is Amanda Pianka. My husband Mike and I are the owners of M & M Redemption Ctr. in Wallingford Ct.. We have owned the business since 2005.

We are struggling to keep our business afloat. We have put almost every penny we have towards staying open and trying to survive. We are doing everything in our power to stay in business and serve the people in the Wallingford /Meriden area.

The problem is the handling fee. For every bottle and can that is processed through one of our machines, we receive a handling fee of one and a half cents to two cents. That is it. A penny and a half to two cents. This fee has not increased in 34 years. When the handling fee was implemented, minimum wage was \$3.10. It is now \$9.60. All of our business expenses, rent, utilities, insurances, wages, etc. have increased over the years. Yet, the handling fee has stayed the same. I cannot think of any other business that could stay in operation for 34 years without increasing their profit margins to keep up with increased costs.

As I stated before, here in Connecticut we receive one and a half cents to two cents per container. In the state of New York, the handling fee is three and a half cents. In the state of Massachusetts, the handling fee is three and a half cents. In the state of Vermont, it is three and a half cents. In Maine, the handling fee is four cents.

Over the past 34 years, the lawmakers in New York, in Massachusetts, in Vermont, and in Maine, have all done the right thing, and increased the handling fee. It is time now for the lawmakers in Connecticut to do the same. Increase the handling fee to three and a half cents. We are not asking for anything outrageous or unreasonable. After 34 years, we just want to be paid equally with our counterparts in the Northeast.

Thank you,

Amanda Pianka  
M & M Redemption Ctr.

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman,

My name is Sandra Watts. I am a retired senior citizen living in Hamden CT. I go to M&M Redemption Ctr. almost once a week. Family and friends donate their cans to me.

This is how I supplement my income. This is especially needed since we did not receive an increase in our Social Security. We need this place to stay open.

Thank you.

Good morning State Representative Mary Mushinsky,

My name is Tina Gonyea and I am the girls' basketball coach at Platt High School in Meriden, CT. I am writing on behalf of M&M Redemption center in Wallingford, CT as well as on behalf of our team and many other clubs and organizations at Platt High School.

We have been going to M&M Redemption center for many years now with our basketball team as a fundraiser. We try to go to them two or three times a year with all of the bottles and cans the team collects so that we can raise enough money for the girls to not have to pay for summer leagues out of their own pockets. It's a yearly thing with our team. This is the simplest, easiest, most convenient way for us to raise hundreds of dollars. This would be devastating to us as well as the other athletic teams, clubs, and organizations from Platt that do the same thing to raise money. We have citizens in Meriden who wait for the notice in the paper to bring the redeemable items to us! They would be affected by this also. This was convenient for them to not have to figure out what they were going to do with them besides throw them away. They can recycle the items properly with us and they are making a donation to our program.

I hope that everyone looks at the big picture here as to how many people will be affected by this decision if it goes through.

Thank you very much for your time and understanding with this matter.

Regards,

**Tina Gonyea**  
**Varsity Girls' Basketball Coach**  
**Platt High School- Meriden,CT**  
**TLGHOOP@AOL.COM**  
**cell# (203)927-4476**

To Whom it may Concern

Due to a prior commitments I am unable to be here today.

My name is Sally Smith and I am president of the 501(c)3 non-profit foundation Seniors Have Dreams too, Inc. We grant wishes to seniors seventy and older at or below the poverty level.

I wanted to let you know how important M&M Redemption is to our foundation.

We are at M&M Redemption every month.

We have been using their services since we incorporated in 2007. Redeeming bottles and cans is the major way we take in money to grant the wishes.

I do not know what we would do without them.

From: mbrksconsulting <mbrksconsulting@aol.com>  
To: mary.mushinsky <mary.mushinsky@cga.ct.gov>  
Sent: Sat, Feb 20, 2016 11:33 am  
Subject: Handling Fee

Hi Representative Mushinsky

Please consider increasing the redemption handling fee so that M and M Redemption Center in Wallingford CT can stay open.

Our boys mentoring program relies on the center to redeem the bottles we collect as a fund raiser to support our program.

Michael Brooks

Director  
Boys To Men Mentoring Program  
(203) 288-9711

Mary,

I am sending this email in support of raising the handling fee for the redemption centers of Connecticut.

I was the Fundraising Chairperson (I just stepped down after 10 years) of Boy Scout Troop 13 of Chester, CT.

My husband is still the Scout Master of Troop 13 Chester.

One of our major fundraisers is the monthly bottle drive. We depend on M&M Redemption in Wallingford, CT to process our returns. There is no way we can go to the local stores and feed our bottles/cans into the machines. We average \$200.00 per month in returns. The money is used for each of the scouts to help pay for patches, local camping trips, etc. Money is tight for many families; this monthly fundraiser does make a difference to the scout families.

There would be an impact if the redemption centers were to close.

Thank you,

Steven and Kathy Merola

RE: Increase in compensation for recycled bottles and cans

M & M Redemption Center has been in business for almost twenty (20) years. It has provided a great service not only to the people in the surrounding towns but also to many of the local groups trying to raise money for their respective interests, such as the local high school athletic teams, drama clubs, Boy & Girl Scouts, etc. It provides a way for senior citizens to add a little extra money to their fixed incomes.

It encourages citizens to make and keep our environment cleaner and slow down the filling up of our landfills.

It provides employment not only to their employees but to other related businesses, such as truck drivers, recycle centers, etc.

They are seeking to get an increase in the amount they are reimbursed for providing this service. Over the years our economy has dictated an increase in the cost of doing business in our state. (Higher wages, increase in the cost of electricity, heating, just to name a few.) Yet, the amount paid as compensation for providing this service has remained the same! Without this increase, businesses such as M & M won't be able to meet their expenses and will be forced to close their doors. The State of Connecticut can not afford to have any more businesses cease to exist.

PLEASE GIVE THEM AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT THEY ARE COMPENSATED FOR PROVIDING THEIR RECYCLING EFFORT.

Elizabeth K. Pelatzky  
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