



CONNECTICUT FOOD ASSOCIATION

March 10, 2016

Statement of the Connecticut Food Association - Environmental Committee

Wayne Pesce, President, Connecticut Food Association

In opposition of raised bill 384: AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE BOTTLE BILL TO WINE AND LIQUOR BOTTLES FOR PURPOSES OF FUNDING STATE PARKS

The Connecticut Food Association (CFA) proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry. Its mission is to cultivate Connecticut's grocery industry through economic development, nutrition & wellness, environmental stewardship and community service. CFA membership covers the spectrum of diverse venues where food is sold, including single owner grocery stores, large supermarket chains, food distributors, food manufacturers, and specialty food purveyors.

On behalf of Connecticut's grocery retailers, I urge you to oppose SB 384 - To apply the bottle bill to wine and liquor containers and designate unclaimed deposit refunds from the sale of such containers for the operation, maintenance and repair of state parks.

We believe that expansion of existing bottle laws is a step back and may not align with our states 60 percent diversion initiative. Today, with automated garbage pick-up, high tech sort separation machines in trash facilities and the wide variety of beverages that are available to our customers, expansion is not the best option.

Options: Replacing the bottle bill with a comprehensive single stream recycling model, is in our opinion, the best way to move our state forward. There was a 4 cent fee as part of the replacement option in Delaware, as well as several important specifics that made it palatable there. First, the deposit (and fee) only applied to carbonated glass and PET bottles smaller than 64 oz. No cans or 2L bottles were subject to it; second it was implemented for a finite period of time for a dedicated fund, then sunset; third it was charged at the point of sale so it did not come out of the suppliers pockets. A study would be a better idea to focus the language of a comprehensive recycling policy endpoint and leave open options for funding it. For example: Conduct a study of the financial and institutional barriers to implementing universal recycling in Connecticut, to estimate the transition costs and savings of eliminating the beverage container refund and implementing universal recycling, and to examine funding options for those transition costs including eliminating the deposit while replacing it with a broader-based fee.

Improving Connecticut's comprehensive recycling infrastructure to be more cost-effective and simple is our ultimate goal. CFA's members are committed to sound environmental policies that balance sustainability initiatives without increasing costs of doing business in the state. We support our states 2024 – 60 percent diversion goals and are committed to doing our part to make Connecticut a better place to work, live and raise our families.

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WAYNE PESCE

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