



*City of Middletown Public Works Department  
Recycling Division  
245 Dekoven Drive  
Middletown, CT 06457  
860-638-4855 - [www.middletownct.gov](http://www.middletownct.gov)*

Testimony **opposed** to SB 312 AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO STUDY BOTTLE BILL BEVERAGE CONTAINER REFUND VALUES AND REDEMPTION FEES.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the above piece of legislation.

My name is Kim O'Rourke and I am the Recycling Coordinator for the City of Middletown. I have worked in this position for over twenty years.

It just came to my attention that SB 312, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO STUDY BOTTLE BILL BEVERAGE CONTAINER REFUND VALUES AND REDEMPTION FEES is up for a public hearing today.

I feel it important to express my opposition to this bill.

As a municipal recycling coordinator, I know the recycling community has struggled with the markets for recycling glass for years and it currently is one of the biggest challenges facing recyclers today. Broken mixed glass is a very difficult material to recycle. With the invention of single stream recycling, glass, more than ever, promotes a problem to find a use for and with contaminating paper and plastic. Most broken glass aggregate is used for landfill cover. Technologies do exist to sort pieces of broken aggregate, but it is expensive and is essentially remediating a problem caused by recycling technologies, such as single stream. In contrast, bottle bill glass is a high quality material that is great demand by manufacturers of bottles and fiber glass.

With that background of information, it is clear the bottle bill plays an important role in recycling in CT. Without it, our glass recycling would decrease significantly. Most glass going into single stream recycling is not getting recycled. Conversely, glass collected

through the bottle bill system is getting recycled. The value of bottle bill glass is much more than curbside glass.

Beside the importance of getting a quality end product, the deposit on the bottle bill helps increase recycling. A simple non refundable tax will do nothing to encourage recycling. The refundable deposit increases participation and reduces litter throughout our state. The State currently has a goal of recycling 60% by 2024. Eliminating the bottle bill system will move the State backwards, not forward.

A shift of this sort will result in higher costs to municipalities. The State has been moving towards more product stewardship and producer responsibility, which are voluntary and mandatory programs involving all stakeholders and using a stable financing system sustained by the manufacturer of the product. CT currently has product stewardship programs for e-waste, paint and mattresses. The Environment Committee is also discussing product stewardship programs for batteries and packaging, which actually could include beverage containers. If there was any sort of change, it should be with this sort of system, not a step backwards to taxation. Installing a tax and using it towards education and litter reduction will not be anywhere near as effective as the deposit legislation.

It is my understanding that Vermont considered something similar to this and after 3 years the state agency decided not to proceed. That should be researched before moving forward.

In my opinion, a study of this sort is not needed. It would be a waste of time and money. It does not follow modern material management principals. The bottle bill is effective in promoting recycling, providing a better quality material for recycling and decreasing litter. It was been effective for many years. I would hope the General Law Committee would not pass this misguided legislation.

Thank you for your attention please feel free to contact me at 860-638-4855 or [kim.orourke@middletownct.gov](mailto:kim.orourke@middletownct.gov) if you have any questions.