



CONNECTICUT RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

The River Connects Us

Lower Valley: deKoven House, 27 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457

For the Environment Committee

Testimony of Alicea Charamut, Lower River Steward

March 10, 2017

The Connecticut River Watershed Council is the principal nonprofit environmental advocate for protection, restoration, and sustainable use of the Connecticut River and its watershed.

In SUPPORT of Raised Bill 5618 – AAC An Increase in the Handling Fee for Bottle Redemption Centers

In OPPOSITION to Raised Bill 996 – AA Establishing a Bottle Recycling Fee in Lieu of a Bottle Deposit

Thousands of volunteers deploy along the waterways in the Connecticut River Watershed to participate in the Connecticut River Watershed Council's Source to Sea Cleanup in order to remove 50 tons of trash each year. It is CRWC's goal to get out of the business of hauling trash out of our rivers by supporting legislation and policies that keep trash from ending up in our waterways. Passage of RB 996 will most certainly make achieving this goal impossible and passage of RB 5618 will help strengthen a program essential to meeting it.

Single-serve beverage containers are the most commonly found item at every river cleanup site. We expect to see this situation get worse if the Deposit/Return system is replaced with a recycling fee as proposed in RB 996. The Deposit/Return system gives value to common trash. If the litterbug doesn't appreciate the nickel tossed to the side of the road or in the river, there are plenty of people who do and will be willing to pick it up for its redemption value.

In addition, there is the quality of recovered materials for reuse to consider. Glass recovered from redemption centers is of higher quality than that of glass recovered from curbside single stream recycling. In order to prevent an increase in blight due to litter and to encourage a more effective circular economy, I ask you to vote against RB 996.

However, Connecticut's current Bottle Bill is in need of repair. Because the cost of doing business and providing services has certainly increased since the Bottle Bill was first enacted in 1980, the handling fee must be increased so that dealers and redemption centers can perform their responsibilities under the law. Please pass RB 5618.

HEADQUARTERS: 15 BANK ROW, GREENFIELD, MA 01301 WWW.CTRIVER.ORG

MASSACHUSETTS
413-772-2020

LOWER VALLEY
860-704-0057

UPPER VALLEY
802-869-2792

NORTH COUNTRY
802-457-6114