

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am writing in support of HB 5618, which updates Connecticut's bottle bill to bring it into the 21st century. With the current deposit structure, consumers pay a small deposit at the point of purchase, which is refunded 100% if the container is returned. Unreturned containers, whether recycled or trashed, becomes revenue for the State, generating nearly \$30 million annually.

There are three primary reasons I support expansion of the bottle bill:

1. Because of the low current handling fee, many redemption centers are finding it economically challenging to stay in business. The increase in these fees would enable many redemption centers to remain open or reopen.
2. Connecticut's current bottle bill, like those in other states, has increased recycling rates well above curbside collection rates. The update of the bill several years ago to include bottled water increased this rate, but the current bill is out-of-date and does not reflect 2017 drinks, which increasingly include juice, tea, sports drinks, wine, wine coolers, and liquor. When Iowa expanded its bottle bill to include wine, wine coolers, and liquor, they increased their redemption rate to 86 percent. Maine's bottle bill includes all bottled beverages except dairy and cider reaches a 90% redemption rate.
3. By including more types of bottles in this legislation, we will drastically litter, as was seen when the first bill was enacted, and ensure that bottles and cans are properly diverted and recycled into high-quality materials. Single stream recycling is highly contaminated and yields lower-quality recycling streams, such that theoretically endlessly-recyclable glass from single-stream is now almost exclusively made into low-grade road paving amendment and other downcycled products. Recyclables collected through bottle deposit streams are clean and pre-sorted materials - good for the environment and economy.

Although I am aware an increase in the bottle deposit rate is not currently being considered, I strongly encourage the General Assembly to increase the rate to 10 cents per bottle, to further increase recycling rates at no cost to the consumer and to the benefit of our beautiful state.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kleindienst

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