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Martin Mador, Legislative Co-Chair

Environment Committee  
March 13, 2017

Testimony in Support of **HB 5618**  
AAC An Increase in the Handling Fee for Bottle Redemption Centers

Testimony In Opposition to **SB 996**  
An Act Establishing a Bottle Recycling Fee in Lieu of a Refundable Deposit

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Co-Chair for the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

We clearly understand that maintaining our quality of life depends in part on effective handling of post consumer solid waste. Empty beverage bottles comprise a significant part of that waste. We must ensure they are collected and appropriately processed.

Since the late 1970s, we have used a small refundable charge on bottles to ensure they are captured and appropriately processed. Originally only applicable to carbonated drinks, it was expanded to include water. Further expansion to other bottles has been unfortunately stalled.

As we said in 2014 testimony:

Single stream will certainly help boost residential recycling rates. It will do nothing, however, for litter collection. That's why we need the Bottle Bill. Provide a small reward for people who take the trouble to collect redeemable bottles littering the landscape, at parks and outdoor events, along the roadways.

The principle works. We know this. We should not replace this system with an unproven one offering nebulous advantages. A recycling fee has not worked for Delaware, and we have no expectation it will work for Connecticut. It provides no incentive for ensuring that bottles are placed in the single stream recycling bins. It does nothing to give people an incentive to collect and deposit loose bottles littering the landscape.

The Sierra Club strongly opposes **SB 996**.

There is a small fix that is needed now. Redemption centers collect and process a significant amount of bottle litter. Many organizations have bottle collection drives and rely on the redemption centers to accept the collected bottles. However, we are convinced they are not paid enough per bottle to keep their doors open. Therefore, we support an increase in the handling fees to keep them in business.

The Sierra Club supports **HB 5618**.

