I would like to thank the entire Environment Committee, and Co-Chairs Senator Christine Cohen and Representative Mike Demicco, for allowing me to testify in support of House Bill 7294. My name is Carole Gallo and I work for Soda Stop Plus Thrift, LLC. in Stratford, Connecticut.

I ask all of you to support this amendment to the current Beverage Container Redemption law.

1. Under Sec. 22a-245. (Formerly Sec. 22a-79), I fully support the increase in the handling fee, however, it must be increased by **July 1, 2019**, to at least 3.5 cents per container. Dealers and redemption centers have never had an “increase” under this law, which was enacted in 1980. Dealers and redemption centers are in desperate need of relief to offset the ever rising cost of inflation and business operations that have been endured over the last 38 years.

2. Under Sec. 22a-245(d). (Formerly Sec. 22a-79), I fully support that the law should be modernized to include additional types of noncarbonated beverage containers (lemonade, iced tea, power / sports drinks and fruit juice containers) by July 1, 2020. This will increase the current revenue that escheat to the State by 15% ($7 million). Please remember to **specifically identify and include a handling fee** for each lemonade, iced tea, power / sports drink and fruit juice container.

3. I fully support the proposal of the state sharing 20% of all escheats with the distributors. Distributors cannot cover their costs associated with participating under this bottle law. This will provide distributors the incentive and funds necessary to run their redemption recovery program and continue to fully participate in their responsibilities under the Bill.

All of the other Northeast states have modernized their bottle bills. I urge each of you to push for this amendment to the Connecticut Beverage Container Redemption law, to include items 1-3 cited above.

Please, fix the law.

Sincerely yours,

Carole Gallo,
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