I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Environment Committee for their commitment to recycle and understanding that the Bottle Bill playing a major role.

Unlike other states with the bottle bill, CT’s bottle bill is ancient. It needs revisions. It needs to be modernized to reflect today not 38 years ago. This includes expansion of new containers into the bottle bill and most importantly increase of handling fees for redemption centers. Other Bottle Bill states receives up to 4 cent handling fee.

The redemption centers have a hard and dirty job of hand sorting and counting the containers by countless of brands. It’s not easy. We have been asking for support for past few years. Through this recent times, we have seen closure of numerous redemption centers due to the financial burden that our outdated bottle bill put on them.

With the minimum of $0.035 increase it would allow us to get the much needed raise to being investing in our business by creating more jobs, implementing technology, and most importantly increase recycling in our state. This increase would lead to more redemption centers throughout the state which would create more jobs, tax revenues, and recycling.

The increase in handling fee would be made possible through the split in Escheats between state and distributors. However, the state would still remain revenue neutral from the handling fee revenue increase of the new containers that would be coming into the stream from this expansion.

To address an issue that grocery and package stores tend to bring up is not having the space to accommodate the returnables. One way to address that issue is to not have them be liable to accept returnables if a redemption center is within a certain proximity of them. Some state have this language and they have no issues. Only an increase in handling fee will bring about more redemption centers in our state to address this issue. First, it has to be a viable business model.

I ask the committee to support the increase of handling fee and overall modernization of our bottle bill.

Thank you for your continued support!

RIDDHI GARALA (Co-owner)
Bottle & Can Return
77 Pierson Lane
Windsor, CT 06095