Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity to speak on a few key environmental issues which will affect the City of Waterbury, other municipalities and our State of Connecticut. My name is CJ May, I have worked in the recycling and environmental fields for 30 years, and represent Waterbury today as its recycling coordinator.

Concerning HB No. 7294, “An Act Concerning Bottle Redemption in the State”

This legislation, if enacted, will be a win-win-win for municipalities, businesses and environment. By adding other beverage containers to the current narrow “bottle bill” list of soda, beer and water, we will reduce litter and divert many of these containers from costly curbside trash and recycling collection to redemption at markets and other locations. The increase in the handling fee, needed after years without an adjustment, will support the struggling businesses such as redemption centers and markets, in providing this valuable service. This will also reduce litter, save energy and make for a cleaner Connecticut.

Concerning bills aimed at eliminating, taxing or reducing the use of single use plastic bags

Our planet produces approximately 1 billion plastic bags every year. These plague our waterways, litter our streets, entangle and kill wildlife, add to municipal litter collection costs and catch basin cleaning costs and jam up expansive sorting machinery at recycling centers....all for a life span of perhaps 60 minutes from grocery store to home. Let us move away from a throw-away economy to one in which we reuse. Please support measures which will reduce our alliance on wasteful, damaging and economically-hurtful single use bags.