

THE PROBLEM

The five-cent refundable deposit on carbonated beverage containers and bottled water has proven to be an effective incentive for recycling, preventing millions of containers from ending up in streets, oceans, and landfills each year. With roughly 1,065 miles of total coastal shoreline in Connecticut, the Bottle Bill plays a critical role in keeping these materials out of Long Island Sound, lakes, and rivers.

Unfortunately, the handling fee for containers has not kept pace with the expense of recycling them, and redemption centers continue to close their doors across the state as a result.

A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

Connecticut's Container deposit law (aka "*the Bottle Bill*") urgently needs modernization, including expanding the program to include more container types, increasing the deposit value, providing much needed upgrades to our state's recycling infrastructure, and addressing concerns about cross-border fraud and other challenges. Connecticut can address these issues individually, or by transitioning towards a more modern, stewardship-style approach, such as what is currently in place in Oregon, Maine, or British Columbia, Canada. This would require a central system operator, which would be responsible for administering the program, establishing performance standards, increasing efficiency and public access to convenient collection points.

Regardless of the policy approach taken by the CT General Assembly, modernizing Connecticut's bottle bill program will require a portion of unclaimed deposits to be earmarked for administering the program. Additionally, container redemption centers and other authorized collectors must also be paid a fair-market price for each container collected. Adding more materials to the deposit system without raising the handling fee or investing in infrastructure could put an undue burden on redemption centers and retailers who already struggle to cover rising overhead costs.



FAST FACTS

- Increasing the deposit value to 10-cents and the redemption rate to 75% could deliver an additional **\$5.4 million** in unredeemed deposits from additional non-carbonated beverages.
- Expanding the Bottle Bill to noncarbonated beverages (such as juices, teas, sports drinks etc.) could add an additional **193 million containers** to the program each year.
- Currently, beverage containers account for 40% of litter. Deposit systems are a proven, effective solution that have the potential to reduce beverage container litter by up to 84%.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

BOTTLE DEPOSIT

Each retailer in Connecticut pays a beverage distributor a 5-cent deposit on each carbonated beverage containers and water bottle they purchase. Consumers then pay this deposit for each beverage container they purchase. The consumer can return the empty containers to the retailer or a redemption center to redeem their deposit. The distributor reimburses the retailer or redemption center 5-cents for each beverage container.

HANDLING FEE

In addition to the deposit, retailers and redemption centers also receive a handling fee of 1.5 cents per beer container and 2 cents per beverage container. This fee is paid by the beverage distributor and baked into the original cost of the beverage. In light of the diverted escheats, the handling fee is essential for redemption centers and retailers to cover their overhead cost to keep the system running.

IS CURBSIDE GOOD ENOUGH?

Curbside is **NOT** a compatible solution with all beverage containers. Glass containers are especially problematic for recycling facilities. The Bottle Bill is currently the **ONLY** effective program for recycling glass containers and preserves the quality of plastics.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Bottle Bill creates **1,272 jobs** throughout the state and adds about **\$92 million** annually to the local economy.

The Bottle Bill has generated more than **\$133 million** in revenue for Connecticut over the past ten years from unclaimed deposits.

MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the Bottle Bill, contact:

Louis Rosado Burch

CT Program Director/Government Relations
Citizens Campaign for the Environment
lburch@citizenscampaign.org | 475-434-1606