



AN ACT UPDATING THE BOTTLE BILL

Lead sponsors: Representative Alice Wolf (D-Cambridge) and Senator Cynthia Creem (D-Newton)

The Bottle Bill is the state's most successful and effective recycling program. The Bottle Bill is not only good for the environment; it decreases litter, increases recycling, helps our cities and towns improve their recycling rates and decreases the need for litter collection.

This bill would (a.) expand the bottle bill to include water, sports drinks, flavored teas, juices, and other on the go beverages. (b.) re-establish the Clean Environment Fund, using forfeited deposits to improve recycling and other environmental projects (c.) provide relief to redemption centers, who have not had a raise in 20 years. This bill would not increase the 5¢ deposit, nor cost the state any money.

This update calls for a 5¢ deposit on beverage containers that were not included in the original bill because they did not exist at the time.

This important bill was given a favorable report by the Telecommunications, Utilities & Energy Committee in July 2010, and proceeded from the Senate Rules Committee to Senate Ways and Means. With the clock running out, it did not make it to the floor. Now, with the very strong support that this bill enjoys in the House and Senate, as well as with the public, we are hopeful that the legislature will enact this bill at the beginning of the session.

- **The Bottle Bill creates green jobs:** Job gains have been shown in nearly every state that updates their deposit system. Many of these jobs come in the recycling sector, which produces important – and sustainable – raw materials to be used in manufacturing.
- **Since the Bottle Bill's inception in 1983, over 30 billion containers have been redeemed,** contributing to a healthier environment, and cleaner and safer communities.
- **An amazing 80% of beverages that are covered by the bottle bill are redeemed/recycled.** Only 22% of non-deposit containers are recycled – the rest become litter, clog our storm drains, or are thrown in the trash.
- **Strong public support:** The public is very supportive of the bottle bill, seeing the positive effect that it's had on the environment.
- **Producer responsibility:** Bearing the cost of a product's waste should be the responsibility of beverage producers and consumers, not taxpayers and communities. The bottle bill is a model for this kind of sustainable financing.
- **Updating our bottle bill will boost recycling,** save our communities the cost associated with disposal and litter cleanup, estimated at 4-7 million annually.
- **Saves petroleum:** These plastic bottles are made of 99% petroleum - what an inappropriate waste to bury our valuable oil in landfills or burn it out or incinerators.
- **Endorsed by over 150 cities and towns, and by over 50 advocacy groups throughout the state.** Enacting the update would save our cities and towns significant amounts, from lowering disposal costs, litter collection costs, and storm drain cleaning.
- **Decrease landfill use:** The state is running out of landfill space. The 1.1 billion containers that we send to landfills every year would fill Fenway Park to overflowing.
- **Saves energy, saves oil:** Most of the containers under the update are made of PET plastic, 99% of which is petroleum. Recycled PET is badly needed for textiles.
- **Keeps current with consumer habits:** The original bottle bill was never meant to be non-reactive to consumer trends. Now that 1/3 of our containers are not covered by the 27-year old law, we need to update it.
- **Supports redemption centers:** The bill includes provisions to increase the handling fee (not paid by the state). These small family-owned businesses have not had an increase in handling fees in 20 years. Many of them have been forced to close due to increases in their costs.

Lead Supporters

Massachusetts Sierra Club, MASSPIRG, MassRecycle, Mass Audubon, Environmental League of Massachusetts, League of Women Voters, Massachusetts Surfrider Foundation

Supporters

Appalachian Mountain Club, Arborway Coalition, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, Blackstone River Watershed Association, Boston Building Materials Cooperative, Brookline GreenSpace Alliance, Building Materials Resource Center, Charles River Conservancy, Charles River Watershed Association, Conservation Law Foundation, Clean Water Action, Earth Circle Conservation & Recycling, Earth Emerson, Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Environment Massachusetts, Environmental League of Massachusetts, Fairhaven Sustainability Committee, Franklin Park Coalition, Friends of the Blue Hills, Friends of Mary Cummings Park, Green for a Change, Green Hanson, Greener Hull, Housing for All, Hull Land Conservation Trust, Jewish Alliance for Law & Social Action, Jones River Watershed Association, KAPOWW (Kids Advocating Protection of Our Waters and Wells), Lawrence Environmental Action, League of Women Voters, Massachusetts, Mass Climate Action Network, Mass League of Environmental Voters, Mass Municipal Association, Mass Redemption Coalition, Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, Massachusetts Municipal Association, Massachusetts Sierra Club, MASSPIRG, MassRecycle, Merrimack River Watershed Council, Metro Mayors Coalition, Advisory Board, Neponset River Watershed Association, New England Joint Board - UNITE HERE, North South River Watershed Association, Quincy Environmental Network, Responsible Energy Alternatives Coalition of Hingham, Salem Sound Coastwatch, SAVE (Saugus Action Volunteers for the Environment), Sharon Friends of Conservation, Sheffield Land Trust, Sherborn Recycling Committee, Somerville Climate Action, South Shore Recycling Cooperative, Sustainable Braintree, Sustainable Duxbury, Sustainable South Shore, Taunton River Watershed Association, The Esplanade Association, Toxics Action Center, Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee, Watertown Citizens for Environmental Safety

Endorsers

Governor Deval Patrick, Mayor Thomas Menino, City of Boston, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

For more information about this bill, contact Jack Clarke, Mass Audubon's Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, at 617-523-8448 or jclarke@massaudubon.org.

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