MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT (WITH CONDITIONS)
Increases Handling Fees Paid to Redemption Centers and Retailers

HB 5457- AAC Bottle Redemption Centers

BACKGROUND
Connecticut’s refundable container deposit (AKA the Bottle Bill) is a proven, effective system for incentivizing recycling of single-serve bottles and cans. Since its implementation in 1980, the program has successfully captured millions of tons of recyclable beverage containers, creating an efficient market for recycled aluminum, glass and PET plastic. Additionally, the program creates millions in avoided solid waste management costs that would otherwise be borne by taxpayers and municipalities.

The Bottle Bill’s finances have unfortunately not been updated in decades, and the handling fees paid to redemption centers have fallen significantly below the fair market values paid to redemption centers in our neighboring states. As a result, redemption centers and retailers have struggled to cover the overhead and administrative costs associated with container collection and recycling. Both are paid a meager 1.5 cents on every beer/malt liquor container, and 2 cents on every soda/water beverage recycled. This has led to the closure of multiple family owned container redemption centers in our state in recent years; there were 21 redemption centers in Connecticut as recently as four years ago, while there are currently fewer than 16 in operation across the state.

Bottle redemption is a critical piece of CT recycling infrastructure and as centers continue to close, CT residents will be left with fewer convenient options to return beverage containers.

HB5457 currently reduces the redemption value for containers returned to a redemption center from 5 cents to 4 cents per container. This would serve to discourage residents from returning containers to redemption centers, adding more hardship on our struggling redemptions centers. Reducing the redemption value also reduces the incentive to recycle, which adversely impacts the environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Adopt a strike-all amendment to:

- Remove the reduction of the redemption value of containers returned to redemption centers
- Increase the handling fees paid to redemption centers and dealers to 3.5 cents per container.

This would bring Connecticut’s handling fees in line with our neighboring states, creating a more sustainable framework for redemption centers charged with collecting and managing recycled glass, aluminum and plastic beverage containers.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS INCREASING HANDLING FEES PAID TO CT REDEMPTION CENTERS AND DEALERS

Citizens Campaign for the Environment is an 80,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment.

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