Senators Todd Kaminsky, Phil Boyle, and Rachel May  
Environmental Conservation Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 307  
Albany, NY 12247  
By email: kaminsky@nysenate.gov, pboyle@nysenate.gov, may@nysenate.gov

February 11, 2019

Dear Chairman Kaminsky, Ranking Member Boyle, Senator May, and Members of the Committee,

The Container Recycling Institute (CRI) is a national nonprofit organization and a leading authority on the economic and environmental impacts of beverage container recycling. We are writing in support of S2828 “An Act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to the requirements for lead agency.” This bill would place a deposit on hard cider.

It makes sense to place a deposit on hard cider because it is packaged in glass bottles and aluminum cans just as deposit-bearing beer and carbonated soft drinks are. According to the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, two thirds (65%) of beer cans and soda bottles were redeemed in 2017. CRI estimates that an additional 10% of sales were recycled through curbside and drop-off programs, for a total recycling rate of 75%. This is in comparison to estimated recycling rates of only 46% for non-deposit aluminum cans, and only 12% for non-deposit glass bottles.

In CRI’s most recent “Beverage Market Data Analysis” (2017), we estimated that 40 million packaged units of hard cider were sold in New York in 2015: 4 million in aluminum cans and 36 million in glass bottles. We further estimated that about 2 million of those non-deposit aluminum cider cans and more than 30 million of those non-deposit glass cider bottles and were trashed: landfilled, littered, or incinerated. Laid end-to-end, those trashed cider bottles and cans would stretch over 4,000 miles. Wasted, they are lost natural resources that could have been recycled: saving materials and energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants.

Non-deposit containers are also more prone to being littered than containers bearing a 5¢ deposit. Bottle and can litter is not only an aesthetic nuisance, but poses significant cleanup costs to local and state government and private business. Container litter is also a source of injury to pedestrians, marine and terrestrial wildlife, and farm animals. The nickel deposit encourages consumers to recycle, and provides a financial incentive to combat littering.

New York State’s bottle bill was implemented 35 years ago. CRI estimates that since 1983, 150 billion bottles and cans have been redeemed, saving more than 11 million tons of aluminum, plastic and glass. We urge the Committee to build on this success by passing S2828 and adding hard cider to the deposit law.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Susan Collins  
President, Container Recycling Institute