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March 1, 2013

Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
Senate District 14  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Representative Joseph M. Souki  
House District 8  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**RE: Hawaii SB 1133/HB 902 -- Support**

Dear Senator Mercado and Representative Souki,

On behalf of the Container Recycling Institute, we are writing **to express our support for SB 1133 and HB 902** which would expand the state's existing beverage container recycling program to include dietary supplements, including energy drinks, such as Monster and Red Bull.

Hawaii's container deposit law has been *a huge success*, and is supported by a majority of residents, according to the public opinion poll conducted in 2008. Hawaii's beverage container recycling rate is one of the highest in the nation, at 76%, while the average rate for the country is only 35%, and in states without container deposit laws, the average recycling rate is only 25%.

However, the existing program can be further improved by passing this legislation to add energy drinks and dietary supplements to the law. These containers are often very similar to or the same as other drinks sold in containers that are subject to the law, and consumers are understandably confused about why one container bears a deposit and another doesn't. This bill would reduce confusion, both for consumers and redemption center operators.

**Environmental Benefits of this Expansion**

- In Hawaii, 22 million energy drinks are sold each year (CRI estimate for 2006), and these drinks are packaged in aluminum containers. An additional quantity of dietary supplements are sold each year, for which we do not have comprehensive data.
- The empty aluminum energy drink containers weigh approximately 316 tons. At the state's current recycling rate of nearly 80%, approximately 253 additional tons of aluminum would be recycled under this program each year.
- The scrap value of the 253 tons of aluminum, at today's price of \$1,760 per ton, is over \$445,000. Adding these containers to the existing program would therefore add over \$445,000 per year to Hawaii's economy, and without this expansion, \$445,000 worth of containers will likely be needlessly buried in Hawaii's landfills each year instead.

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- Recycling 253 tons of aluminum each year saves the equivalent energy that would be used to power 516 homes for a year.

**Expanding the Law will Produce Other Benefits that Hawaii has Already Experienced with the Beverage Container Deposit Law**

- Beverage container recycling saves energy, natural resources, and reduces the production of toxic chemical emissions in the manufacturing process. Recycling significantly diminishes all of the inputs needed to make the replacement product from virgin materials.
- With energy savings comes a reduction in greenhouse gas production and other toxic emissions.
- Other recycling programs address the need for recycling, but don't provide a mechanism to reduce litter. Container deposit laws place a value on beverage containers, which encourages the public to pick up the beverage containers and turn them in to receive the deposit refund. Otherwise, beverage container litter fouls the land, waterways and beaches of Hawaii, and ultimately becomes debris in the ocean and a hazard to sea life. These littered items add to the costs of local government, including costs to pick up litter and clean litter out of storm drains. Hawaii has already seen tremendous decreases in beverage container litter on beaches, and these improvements have been documented by the State.

CRI is a nonprofit organization that studies and promotes policies and programs that increase recovery and recycling of beverage containers, and shift the societal and environmental costs associated with manufacturing, recycling and disposal of container and packaging waste from government and taxpayers to producers and consumers. CRI has served for nearly 20 years as the only national clearinghouse for information on beverage container sales, recycling and wasting in the United States. CRI plays a vital national role in educating policy makers, government officials and the general public regarding the societal and environmental impacts of the production and disposal of beverage containers and the need for producers to take responsibility for their packaging.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding this bill. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Susan V. Collins  
President  
Container Recycling Institute