



# CRI 2004: The Year in Review

Dear Friends and Supporters of CRI,

The Container Recycling Institute continues to be a leader in shaping the public policy debate on container recycling and producer responsibility. Through successful media outreach, education, and coalition building in 2004, we brought public attention to declining beverage container recycling rates and the need for producers to take responsibility for the environmental impacts of their product packaging.

- ❖ **Education:** CRI's success in generating media coverage in 2004 was the result of a convergence of carefully planned media events and press releases, and several unexpected media opportunities. More than 50 news stories sourced CRI or quoted staff, reaching hundreds of millions of Americans. We took our message to a broader audience with four presentations at state, national and international conferences and meetings. Our on-line "Bottle Bill Toolkit" was completed and posted on our website in June and we published a 12-page newsletter in the fall.
- ❖ **Coalition Building:** In November, CRI's second Beverage Container Recycling Summit brought together business leaders, environmental activists, and government officials, in an effort to maximize our collective strengths, minimize our weaknesses and grow and strengthen our coalition of groups supporting increased recovery and recycling of beverage containers.
- ❖ **Technical Support:** By supplying state and local organizations, policymakers and the media with fact-based information, we contributed to more effective public participation in the decision-making process. CRI played a leadership role in several key statewide bottle bill campaigns in 2004, testifying at public hearings and providing technical support throughout the year.
- ❖ **Research and analysis:** CRI continues to be recognized as the most credible source of information and analysis on beverage container sales, recycling, and deposit legislation in the U.S. Although we completed our second comprehensive Beverage Market Data Analysis (MDA) of beverage sales in the United States in December 2003, we expanded the scope of the data in 2004, adding a section on environmental benefits of recycling beverage containers at various rates of recycling. Our MDA continues to be an indispensable tool for activists as well as public and elected officials as they make their case for new and expanded bottle bills.
- ❖ **Advocacy:** With the help of an on-line advocacy tool ([www.citizenspeak.org](http://www.citizenspeak.org)), CRI succeeded in generating 250 emails over a 6-week period to then USEPA Director Mike Leavitt, asking him to urge President Bush to support Sen. Jim Jeffords' "Beverage Producer Responsibility Act." We subsequently met with EPA's Acting Assistant Director in September to discuss declining beverage container recycling rates.

We continue to provide technical and strategic support to activists advocating updated bottle bills in New York, Connecticut, Vermont, Oregon, and Massachusetts; and to activists and officials seeking to pass new bottle bills in Illinois, Mississippi, Colorado, Washington, West Virginia, Tennessee, Texas and New Hampshire.

We would like to thank *The Ben and Jerry's Foundation, The Cohen Foundation, The Merck Family Fund, The New York Community Trust, The Overbrook Foundation, Patagonia, Inc., The Switzer Foundation, and The Weeden Foundation*, and our many hundreds of individual donors, for making our work possible in 2004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat Franklin".

Pat Franklin  
Executive Director

## Educating the Public, Elected Officials, and Our Recycling Colleagues

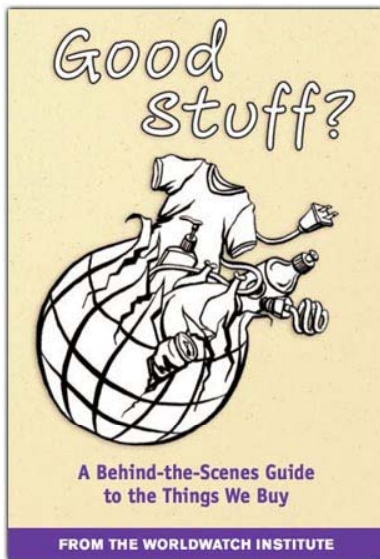
### ➤ CRI communications:

- [www.bottlebill.org](http://www.bottlebill.org) and [www.container-recycling.org](http://www.container-recycling.org) enjoyed increased traffic in 2004, receiving more than 4 million hits and 200,000 visits. CRI responded to 235 inquiries submitted to our websites from people in 40 US states and 16 countries. We have also added pages for state deposit campaigns to [www.bottlebill.org](http://www.bottlebill.org), with links to those that have their own websites.
- Our 12-page summer/fall newsletter included the usual state and international updates, as well as features on special interest money thwarting deposit efforts in New York, and on recyclers' need for more PET bottles.
- Our Bottle Bill Action Network (BBAN) listserv grew to over 200 subscribers in 2004. They hail from 32 U.S. states, 5 Canadian provinces, and 10 other countries. Informational postings are made almost daily.



*Reverse vending machines standing alongside a cola vending machine, from Pat's Hong Kong presentation.*

- **Presentations:** Pat Franklin made several high-profile appearances in 2004: the quarterly meeting of the Association of Post-Consumer Plastic Recyclers in Albuquerque (February); the International Symposium on Producer Responsibility in Hong Kong (May), the Colorado Recycling Association's "Bottle Bill Forum" in Denver (August), and the National Recycling Coalition's Annual Congress in San Francisco (September).



- **Partnering with Worldwatch:** The Worldwatch Institute's on-line report about consumption, "Good Stuff? A Behind-the-Scenes Guide to the Things We Buy" was released on March 31, 2004. CRI research director Jenny Gitlitz contributed a segment on beverage containers called, "The Price of Quenching Our Thirst." This section, and the book as a whole, can be viewed and downloaded at: [www.worldwatch.org/topics/consumption/](http://www.worldwatch.org/topics/consumption/).

- **Media:** CRI was quoted or cited in dozens of articles, editorials, and op-eds in the trade press and mainstream media. Among the more noteworthy articles were "Recycling efforts dropping off," an exploration of declining public interest in recycling nationwide (*USA Today*, July 7, 2004, A3), and an Associated Press story that was picked up by more than 30 news outlets. CRI's "Trillionth Can" campaign, highlighting the consequences of landfilling a trillion aluminum cans from 1970-2003, also generated press. Jenny's article, "Are Bottle Bills Still Relevant?" (*Resource Recycling*, Sept. 2004) concerned the stalemate between efforts to expand and repeal bottle bills, and her op-ed "Can Script Getting Old," (*Waste News*, July 2004) expressed frustration with

industry campaigns which have failed to raise the aluminum can recycling rate.



## Beverage Container Recycling Summit: Expands Network, Energizes Activists

In early November, CRI held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Beverage Container Recycling Summit at the Blue Mountain Center in New York's Adirondacks. The Summit was made possible by grants from Patagonia, the Overbrook Foundation, the Cohen Foundation, the Merck Family Fund, and an in-kind grant from the HKH Foundation. Thirty people representing public interest organizations, recycling associations, government agencies, and recycling businesses gathered together to discuss strategies for increasing beverage container recycling. The group also included several consultants who have been engaged in beverage container recycling related work, and one state legislator. Activists and public officials from Illinois, Tennessee, West Virginia, Michigan, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Oregon and New York who participated in the Summit returned to legislative battles in their home states with renewed enthusiasm and energy.



*Summit participants listen to a presentation on the obstacles businesses face in promoting deposits.*

The Summit provided a forum to discuss the realities of pursuing new and expanded bottle bills, and to analyze the power of the opposition as well as our own collective strengths and weaknesses. One very important result of the conference for CRI was our realization that we need to broaden our network by bringing beverage container recycling into the growing international sustainability and Zero Waste movements. We are currently seeking funding for a campaign to achieve a 50% reduction in container waste by 2008, and zero waste by 2020.

## Working with Environmental Leaders on State Bottle Bill Campaigns

CRI continued to provide technical support and tactical advice to environmental leaders, legislators, committee staffers, and public officials seeking to pass new or expanded bottle bills and/or thwart repeal efforts. CRI was a key member of coalitions in Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. Our data and analysis on beverage sales and recycling, and our rebuttals to industry arguments, proved invaluable to activists and policymakers alike.

- **Crafting Legislation:** CRI was asked to review and comment on bills in several states considering new deposit laws or expansion of existing laws to include non-carbonated beverages, and/or to increase the handling fee to better offset costs incurred by retailers and redemption centers.
- **Providing Expert Testimony:** Jenny Gitlitz testified in New York, Connecticut and Mississippi at the request of legislative committee chairs.
- **Special Projects:** At a February press conference in Albany, New York, CRI joined NYPIRG, Environmental Advocates of New York, and NRDC in releasing a public opinion poll conducted by Public Policy Associates. The poll revealed that 84% of New York voters support the existing bottle bill, and 70% support expanding the law to include non-carbonated beverages. CRI also provided NYPIRG with background information used in its June 2004 report: "Bottled Up in Albany," which documented how lobbying efforts on the part of the beverage and retail industry influenced votes on the New York "Bigger Better Bottle Bill" at critical moments in the legislative process in 2002 and 2003.





## Bottle Bill Toolkit

### CRI Publishes the “Bottle Bill Toolkit”

In July CRI debuted the “Bottle Bill Toolkit,” an on-line resource containing hundreds of campaign documents CRI and colleagues have developed over the years. It is designed to help activists, legislators, and concerned citizens increase the professionalism of their bottle bill campaigns, and avoid re-inventing the wheel. With three main sections on getting the facts, developing support, and knowing the opposition, the Toolkit is already being used by activists in campaigns for new and expanded bottle bills, as well as those seeking to thwart industry-sponsored repeal attempts. The Toolkit is viewable at [www.toolkit.container-recycling.org](http://www.toolkit.container-recycling.org), and contains documents in html and downloadable formats. The Toolkit is a work in progress and will be updated periodically.

### Expanded Scope of CRI’s Beverage Market Data Analysis

In late 2003, CRI completed its second market data analysis (MDA), in which we analyzed commercially available beverage industry data to generate a series of state-specific spreadsheets on total sales and market share for various beverages and packaging types. In 2004, we expanded the scope of the MDA significantly to include information on potential revenues to state agencies from unclaimed deposits, and on the energy and environmental benefits of different recycling levels in deposit and non-deposit states. Prototypes were distributed free of charge to activists, journalists, and public and elected officials in more than a dozen states. Our goal in 2005 is to market our MDA and generate revenue for CRI.



The MDA is being marketed aggressively through targeted email, and our website, as shown.

### Grassroots Effort Pays Off

Last spring, CRI seized an opportunity to communicate with the public and the EPA about the environmental and economic consequences of beverage container wasting. In a speech at the National Press Club on April 14, 2004, USEPA Administrator Mike Leavitt referred to the “emergence of a new environmental consciousness” in the 1970’s. Living in Oregon at the time, Leavitt said he had “a clear memory” of Governor Tom McCall of Oregon proposing the nation’s first bottle bill. “It was controversial,” he said, “but I got it. It resonated with me.”

CRI used [www.CitizenSpeak.org](http://www.CitizenSpeak.org), a free advocacy service for grassroots organizations, to launch an email campaign enabling people to write Mr. Leavitt asking him to urge President Bush to back Sen. Jeffords’ “National Beverage Producer Responsibility Act.” The letter also noted that bottle bill states recycle twice as many beverage containers per capita than non-deposit states, saving energy, conserving natural resources and reducing litter.



Logo and photo courtesy of [www.CitizenSpeak.org](http://www.CitizenSpeak.org).

Over 250 people emailed Mr. Leavitt, and about a quarter of them included personal statements. In July we contacted the EPA to request a meeting. On Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, CRI’s executive director and research director met with Acting Assistant Administrator Tom Dunne, head of the EPA’s Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, and five other staffers, to discuss the declining beverage container recycling rates and to urge the EPA to show leadership on this issue. CRI has since been invited by the EPA to participate in multi-stakeholder meetings this spring that will focus on beverage container recycling.