

Container and Packaging Recycling UPDATE

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BPEC goes public

WASHINGTON, DC — Three years ago, the National Recycling Coalition (NRC) adopted the “Beverage Container Recycling Challenge.” It acknowledged that recycling had slipped despite increased curbside access, and said the private sector had not devised “effective nationwide strategies...to reverse these declines.” NRC pledged to “...work extensively with all stakeholders to research the issue; to devise and implement policies, programs and strategies to increase food and beverage container recycling; and to set measurable and verifiable targets to track progress.”

In 2003, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Anheuser-Busch, Miller and other major brand owners formed the Beverage Packaging Environmental Council (BPEC), presumably in response to the NRC Challenge. BPEC held two years of closed-door meetings. Kate Krebs, NRC executive director and BPEC facilitator said the secrecy was necessary to build trust among the corporate competitors.

On August 28, 2005, BPEC made its first public appearance--a slideshow presented by a consulting team at the NRC Congress in Minneapolis.

BPEC’s key finding was that contrary to popular belief, 68% of beverages are consumed at home, not on the go. The presentation made general recommendations to improve curbside recycling in non-deposit states, and to beef up workplace recycling in 15 metropolitan areas, but offered no programmatic or financial specifics.

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More than \$700,000 in campaign contributions helps sink bottle bill expansion in Connecticut in 2005



Campaign Contributions	2002	2004
Grocery Stores & Supermarkets	\$ 29,205	\$ 16,408
Coke & Pepsi	22,175	6,600
Beer Companies & Distributors	98,827	20,125
Lobbyists Against Bottle Bill *	131,230	80,822
Political Action Committees	122,330	176,750
TOTAL	\$403,767	\$300,705

* “Although lobbyists have several, if not dozens of clients, and thus [it] can be assumed that their campaign contributions cover a wide spectrum of interests, their involvement in the Bottle Bill issue carries a lot of weight with legislators.” (“The Sinking of the Bottle Bill,” Connecticut Common Cause, September 2005.)

HARTFORD — A report by Common Cause of Connecticut (“The Sinking of the Bottle Bill”) released in September, found that in the past four years, bottle bill opponents contributed at least \$704,722 to political campaigns and political action committees. “The death of the bottle bill is a case study of how campaign contributions have corrupted the legislative process,” said Andy Sauer, Executive Director of Common Cause.

The fight over Connecticut’s bottle and can deposit law is a perennial battle in the Connecticut General Assembly, according to Sauer, with proponents and opponents negating each other and the law remaining untouched. However, in the 2005 session,

President *Pro Tem* Don Williams took on the entrenched industry lobby, and on April 20 led the Senate in passing legislation (a.k.a. “the bottle bill”) that updated Connecticut’s beverage container deposit law to include bottled water, by far the

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Letter from the Executive Director



I'm writing this letter on a brisk autumn day in Washington, DC, where we have just relocated our office a few blocks from Dupont Circle. It's nice to be

back in my hometown again!

We've undergone other changes at CRI including losing a valued staff member, Kyle Paulson, our research associate and director of administration. Kyle had an opportunity to make a career change that would enable him to use his law degree. He will be doing landowner easement, acquisition/negotiations, community relations, and permitting process work at Clipper Windpower, Inc., a rapidly growing wind energy technology company (www.clipperwind.com.)

Kyle leaves a big void in our organization and he will be difficult to replace. I know that all of you who have gotten to know him over the past 4 years join us in wishing him well in his new career.

It's been a challenging year, financially, for CRI. But despite reductions in staff workweeks and other cutbacks, we continued to provide needed technical assistance to activists and policymakers in more than a dozen states; testified at three state legislative hearings; made presentations at six state and national conferences; generated more than three dozen news articles and opinion pieces; published one issue of our newsletter; maintained our two websites (www.container-recycling.org and www.bottlebill.org); and, served as an industry watchdog.

We are pleased to be getting our newsletter out again, for the first time since fall of 2004. We hope to be able to publish at least two issues in 2006. Many thanks to the many state activists and government officials who submitted articles for this issue.

I'd like to share some good news with you. We received a two-year grant from the Educational Foundation of

America to launch our "2020 Vision: Setting our Sites on Zero Beverage Container Waste" Campaign in 2006. You'll be hearing more about the campaign in the months to come. In the meantime, there are two important steps you can take to support Zero Beverage Container Waste. First, get your organization, business or local government to pass a resolution endorsing a goal of reducing beverage container waste by 25% by 2008, and achieving zero beverage container waste by 2020. Secondly, you can support the campaign with a contribution, using the enclosed "business reply envelope."

As always, we welcome your feedback on our newsletter.

Pat Franklin
pfranklin@container-recycling.org

P.S. As many of you know, the recycling community lost two valuable leaders earlier this year: Michele Raymond, founder of Raymond Communications and Mary Appelhof, a well-known vermicomposting specialist and author of "Worms Eat My Garbage." I had the pleasure of knowing and working with both of these women over the past 15 years. Their energy, enthusiasm and insights leave a huge void in the recycling movement.

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CRI is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to reducing container and packaging waste, thereby reducing pollution and energy consumption, conserving resources and supporting sustainable communities.

www.container-recycling.org
www.bottlebill.org

(Connecticut bottle bill continued from page 1)

largest sector of the non-carbonated beverage market. The bill passed the Senate by a 31 to 3 margin.

"Opponents sprang into action," said Betty McLaughlin, Environmental Affairs Director for the Connecticut Audubon Society. McLaughlin said an "all-points-bulletin" was sent out to lobbyists representing the various interests, and the State Capitol was inundated with roughly 30 lobbyists hoping to compel House leadership to bury the bottle bill.

"At a time when the legislature was grappling with issues such as the state budget, transportation, government ethics and campaign finance reform," said McLaughlin, "all the talk outside the House, generated completely by lobbyists, centered on the bottle bill." In the end, according to McLaughlin, the legislation was never voted on in the House, and the bottle bill died.

"With a large amount of contributions going to legislative races or PACs formed on behalf of legislators (a.k.a. "leadership PACs")," said Sauer, "it is easy to understand why state representatives would be wary of voting on the bottle bill. It doesn't take much money to destabilize a state House race, and no doubt House members were aware that those who fund their campaign could easily fund a competitor's."

"This year's bottle bill was one more example of the corrosive influences of money in politics," said Sauer. "The ability of bottle bill opponents to prevent a House vote, derived solely from excessive campaign contributions, on a bill that has overwhelmingly passed one chamber, represents a corruption of the legislative process."

In addition to more than \$700,000 in campaign contributions, the report revealed that regional Coca-Cola and Pepsi bottlers pay Connecticut lobbyists \$168,200 and \$50,000 a year, respectively, and Anheuser-Busch and Miller Brewing together pay a total of \$10,000 a month. Payments to lobbyists by convenience store owners, grocers and water companies will total at least \$250,000 in 2005.

State Update

Connecticut: Senate votes 31-3 to update state's bottle bill to include bottled water

HARTFORD — A bill to add water to the deposit law passed the Connecticut Senate, by a vote of 31-3 on April 20, 2005. The “Better Bottle Bill Coalition,” supported by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, and armed with data from CRI, demonstrated the enormous growth in plastic water bottle sales in recent years and the need for deposits to increase the recycling rate. Ultimately, the well-financed self-interests prevailed in the House, where the measure died.

The grocery store lobbyist even bragged that the House Speaker “was asked not to take up the bill so opposition forces could lobby House members.”

In September, Connecticut Common Cause reported that bottle bill opponents contributed over \$700,000 to campaigns in the last two election cycles, and suggested that these contributions helped

stall the bottle bill expansion. (see story on page 1) Two days later, Governor Rell called a Special Session to consider public financing of campaigns. The Common Cause exposé may have helped embarrass politicians into action.

Senate President Pro Tem and chief sponsor of the proposal, Don Williams, says he will introduce the bill again in 2006. *For more information, contact Betty McLaughlin at bmclaughlin@ctaudubon.org.*

NEW YORK: Assembly approves NY BBBB

ALBANY — The Bigger, Better Bottle Bill (A2517B/S1290B) swept through

the New York State Assembly in June with broad, bipartisan support just days before the legislative session came to an end. The final vote was 98-40.



Earth Day Lobby Day in Albany, April 2005

Assemblyman Thomas P. DiNapoli, the bill's champion, overcame significant concerns raised within his house by making further amendments, such as lowering the takeback requirements for smaller stores in New York City and creating a small business assistance fund.

In early June, opponents of the bill unveiled a counterproposal to repeal New York's bottle bill and replace it with a litter tax modeled after New Jersey's. Ironically, the industry proposal may have helped propel the expanded bottle bill to victory. Within a week of its introduction, ten newspapers across the state ran editorials condemning it and calling on the legislature to pass the Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill.

The day after the Assembly victory, the bill came to a screeching halt in the Senate, where Majority Leader Joe Bruno (who opposed the original bottle bill in 1982) declared it “one of the dumbest things that has happened this year.”

Supporters and opponents of the Bigger Better Bottle bill are gearing up for a major push in 2006.

For more information, contact Laura Haight at laurahaight@gmail.com or visit www.nypirg.org

Massachusetts: Hearings held on expansion and repeal

BOSTON — On October 18, 2005, Bottle Bill supporters gathered at a hearing before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy to urge the committee to support an update of the state's 22-year old law. Legislation sponsored by Representative Doug Petersen (D-Marblehead) and Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr. (D-Pittsfield) would expand the scope of the deposit system by including wine and liquor, as well as non-carbonated beverages which have entered the market since the 1980s: juices, sports drinks, iced teas, and bottled water.

Senator Robert O'Leary (D-Barnstable) and Representative Colleen Garry (D-Dracut) both filed legislation that would repeal the bottle bill, and replace it with alternatives systems. Senator O'Leary's proposal would repeal the bottle bill and impose a fee on manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of certain litter-producing products in the Commonwealth. The tax would fund

statewide and municipal waste reduction and recycling programs. His litter tax and “Clean Communities Program” is modeled after one operating in New Jersey. (See article on page 9 about New Jersey's litter tax.)

Representative Garry's proposal would repeal the Bottle Bill in exchange for a one-time payment from distributors, wholesalers, beverage container manufacturers and dealers to the state.

MassPIRG, the Sierra Club, the South Shore Recycling Cooperative, the Container Recycling Institute, Recycling Action, MassRecycle, and a number of concerned citizens presented testimony in favor of the proposed Updated Bottle Bill. The Joint Committee has yet to vote on these bills.

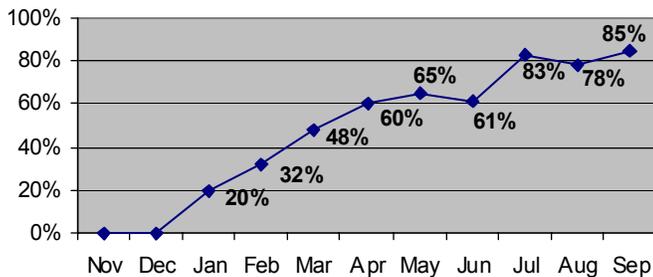
For more information, contact Jen Baker at jen.baker@masspirg.org or visit <http://www.massbottlebill.org/ubb/index.html>

State Update

Hawaii: Container returns reach 85% in September

HONOLULU — Hawaii, the most recent state to pass a Bottle Bill, began redeeming recyclable Deposit Beverage Containers (DBC) on January 1st, 2005. Despite a bumpy start, nearly a year into the program the results are encouraging. As of September, the redemption rate to date for overall DBCs redeemed by consumers was 54%. This redemption rate is expected to increase by year's end, as monthly rates show a steady climb from 20% in January to 85% in September.

Redemption Rates of Deposit Beverage Containers in Hawaii: Nov. '04* - Sep. '05



* Some deposit containers were sold before redemption services began 1/1/05
Source: Hawaii Department of Health, Office of Solid Waste Management

Redemption rates will also continue to climb as new redemption center sites open. The program began with 46 sites statewide and now has 74 certified locations. A limited number of retailers have allowed recyclers onto store property to set up redemption center services, but most retailers have chosen not to participate in the redemption process, limiting the number of locations where people can redeem their deposit containers.

The public has requested additional sites and longer hours of operation. In response, the State is working to improve the convenience of redemption services through funding incentives and policy changes.

For more information, contact Jennifer Tosaki at JTosaki@eha.health.state.hi.us and visit www.hi5deposit.com (City/County website is <http://www.opala.org/>)

California: Redemption rates up in 2004 for first time in ten years

SACRAMENTO — California's beverage container recycling program continues to evolve. Water and other non-carbonated beverages were added to the program in 2000 bringing the total number of containers sold annually to more than 20 billion. Of that 20 billion, 59% were redeemed in 2004, up from 55% the year before. This is the first increase in the annual recycling rate since 1995.

The jump in recycling rates coincides with a higher CRV mandated by Assembly Bill 28.

As of January 1, 2004, the CRV increased to 4¢ for containers under 24 ounces, and to 8¢ for containers of 24 ounces or more. The previous CRVs were 2.5¢ and 5¢, respectively. AB 28 also earmarks \$10 million each year for Market Development and Expansion Grants to support processing

and manufacturing with recycled materials—the “demand” side of recycling. Now in its third cycle, the program is funded from unredeemed CRV containers.

As in other areas of the country, PET bottles are capturing an ever-larger share of beverage sales in California. More PET water bottles were purchased in 2004 than any other category of CRV beverage except soda in cans. But the growth in PET returns, measured in billions of units recycled, has finally overtaken PET unit sales growth. The PET recycling rate increased to 39% in 2004, up from 36% in 2003. Year 2004 CRV recycling rates were also up for other materials; aluminum cans came in at 75% (up from 70% in 2003), glass at 56% (up from 51%) and HDPE at 47% (up from 34%).

While these recycling gains are promising, California has not yet achieved its goal of 80% CRV recycling. Under the law, if the overall rate does not reach 75% in calendar year 2006, the CRV will increase again on July 1, 2007 to 5¢ for small containers and 10¢ for large containers.

For more information, contact Jim Hill at jhill@consvr.ca.gov.

Oregon: Consensus approach being considered

SALEM — The Association of Oregon Recyclers is exploring the possibility of a voluntary agreement-seeking process with stakeholders, in an effort to modernize the state's deposit law. Oregon's bottle bill, the nation's first, has seen few substantive changes since it was enacted in 1972.

An initial report by the Portland State University's Oregon Consensus Program (OCP), the group hired by AOR, states that a collaborative process would be more likely to achieve an agreed upon piece of legislation than would an initiative petition, or a legis-

lative battle. Information about OCP is available at www.orconsensus.pdx.edu.

The next steps could involve stakeholder discussions and consensus building before Oregon's legislative session begins in January 2007.

In the meantime, AOR is participating in the USEPA's Beverage Container Recycling Stakeholder process. Alex Cuyler, AOR's president, attended EPA's first meeting for NGO's held in Washington, DC in July. (See related article on page 8 for more information on EPA's efforts to increase beverage container recovery.)

For more information, contact Betty Patton at EPractices@spiretech.com and visit www.aorr.org for information on the Association of Oregon Recyclers.

State Update

Iowa: Retailers fail to comply with deposit law

DES MOINES — A record number of bills were introduced in the 2005 legislative session, including proposals to expand the law, overhaul the law, or simply increase the 1¢ handling fee -- the lowest of any of the states that have a handling fee. None of the bills were passed.

Over the past year the state's two largest grocery chains, Hy-Vee and Fareway, have led attempts to sabotage the 27-year old container deposit law. In November 2004, they began refusing to accept deposit containers. Later, though generally complying with the law, retailers have diligently worked to make redemption as inconvenient as possible for consumers. Retailers continue to commit unpunished infractions to both the law

and the administrative rules on a daily basis.

In addition to the dozens of retailers that are refusing to accept containers, many redemption centers have closed, saying that they cannot make a profit with such a low handling fee. Consumers are confused and angry because they can't conveniently return their bottles and cans and redeem their deposits.

Several legislators have promised to make the issue a top priority for the upcoming session, which begins on January 9, 2006.

For more information, contact Dewayne Johnson at djohnson@iowarecycles.org.

Illinois: "I-CAN"

CHICAGO — Illinois Lt. Governor Patrick Quinn introduced a bottle bill in April 2005. Nicknamed "I-CAN," it calls for a 5¢ deposit and a 2¢ handling fee. Rep. Marlow H. Colvin (D-Chicago) sponsored the bill, but it only got as far as the Rules Committee. The Chicago Recycling Coalition has played an active role in promoting a bottle bill, and encourages others to join the effort.

For more information, contact Hope Whitfield at hopedwhitfield@yahoo.com or visit <http://www.state.il.us/lsgov/cleanwater/bottlebill.htm>.

Washington: Impact of bottle bill studied

TACOMA — A report titled "Economic and Environmental Benefits of a Container Deposit System in the State of Washington" found that a beverage container deposit law would result in a loss of \$222,214 in market revenue to Tacoma's municipal curbside recycling program. The report also found that the city would save a total of \$297,996 in reduced recycling costs, garbage collection costs, and disposal costs. The city would realize a net savings of \$75,782.

The report by Sound Resource Management Group, Green Solutions and the City of Tacoma, analyzed three types of return systems: retail take-back, reverse vending machines, and the use of a third party organization established and financed by the beverage industry, the most costly for industry being retail take-back using manual sorting. The report noted that industry costs could be cut in half with the use of reverse vending machines.

The Northwest Product Stewardship Council is currently in a dialogue with food and beverage industry representatives to discuss the report's conclusions.

For more information, contact Bill Smith at BSmith@ci.tacoma.wa.us.

The report can be downloaded at http://www.bottlebill.org/geography/usa_nonbb-WAstate.htm

Utah: Litter spoiling the state's landscape

MOAB — Moab is a small town that Sara Melnicoff, president and founder of the nonprofit group Solutions, says is "smack dab in the middle of some of the most spectacular scenery on earth." "But," she says, "hidden among the red rocks, wrapped around the cactus, and strewn along the banks of the Colorado River, are tens of thousands of littered bottles and cans and other trash."

Solutions is bringing public attention to the need for container deposits to prevent beverage container litter and working to get a bottle bill passed in Utah.

For more information, contact Sara Melnicoff at moab_solutions@hotmail.com or visit www.moab-solutions.org.

Arkansas: Bill would escheat refunds to state

CHEROKEE VILLAGE — Save Our Spring River (SOS) is the lead group promoting the "Beverage Container Litter Reduction Act" (HB 2692) proposed by Rep. David Cook (D-Williford). The bill, which would require a 5¢ refundable deposit on almost all packaged beverages, is currently under interim study.

Under the bill, unclaimed deposits would escheat to the state to pay out refunds, fund a 1¢ per container handling fee, and cover administrative expenses. Remaining money would be deposited in the state's General Fund.

For more information, contact Ruth Reynolds at ruthreynolds@centurytel.net.

GAO asked to assess recycling

WASHINGTON — Five U.S. Senators have called upon the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to "evaluate the health of the recycling industry in the U.S." The joint letter to the GAO was sent by Senators Jim Jeffords (I-VT), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Barack Obama (D-IL), Thomas Carper (D-DE) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME).

The letter included a number of specific research requests, including an assessment of current recycling rates for various materials, an evaluation of single-stream recycling collection, a study on the effect of deposit systems on curbside recycling programs, and a review of the effect of export markets on domestic end users of recyclables.

State Update

West Virginia: Bottle bill under study

CHARLESTON — In 2005, West Virginia Citizen Action Group (WVCAG) decided to revamp the proposed “Container Recycling and Litter Control Act,” removing retailers and distributors from the redemption loop. With this change, legislative support increased and the bill was selected for interim study. “The bill will be reintroduced in the 2006 legislative session,” said Linda Frame of WVCAG, “with more sponsors than ever.”

At WVCAG’S 2nd Annual Deposit Day in the Capitol Rotunda, 10¢ “refunds” were given out for each of the

4,000 containers brought to the booth. Students from West Virginia University rented a U-Haul and delivered the containers to the Capitol lawn.

Governor Manchin has made litter reduction and job creation two of his legislative priorities, and the bottle bill has gotten his attention on both of these fronts. WVCAG will continue to work with the governor, county commissions, solid waste authorities, the WV Farm Bureau, and with citizens statewide to move the bill forward.

For more information, contact Linda Frame at linda@wvcag.org.

Tennessee: Bottle bill attracts media attention

NASHVILLE — Co-sponsors Rep. Russell Johnson (D-Loudon) and Sen. Randy McNally (R-Oak Ridge) will introduce a new version of their proposed container deposit legislation when the legislature reconvenes in January 2006.

Although the bill was not voted out of committee in 2005, it attracted widespread media attention and triggered an aggressive response by opposition interests including an anti-bottle bill website. (see article on page 11).

The bill recently made the AP wires when Rep. Johnson offered to spend his own campaign funds to take fellow legislators and state officials to Maine to observe that state’s bottle bill firsthand. Among their planned stops: a tour of the largest redemption center in the state.

Unfortunately, owing to travel budget restrictions and a major ethics scandal that rocked state government earlier this year, the proposed study trip is not likely to happen. But Marge Davis, coordinator of the TN Bottle Bill Project for Scenic Tennessee, plans to make the trip herself and videotape the meetings.

For more information, contact Marge Davis at margedavis@comcast.net, or visit www.tnbottlebill.org.



Members of the Overmountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited in east TN display the 21 bags of litter they collected as part of "X Marks the Spot," a statewide litter cleanup. Of the 21 bags, 13 bags (60%) were beverage bottles and cans.

(BPEC continued from page 1)

In late September, CRI expressed its concerns in letters to Kate Krebs and the NRC Board; and to Scott Vitters, Environmental Manager for Coca-Cola, and BPEC point person. In the letters, CRI:

- * **inquired about the fiscal and legal relationship** between NRC and BPEC. (Coke and other industry leaders are large contributors to the NRC;)

- * **noted the limited stakeholder involvement** in the two-year study period—contrary to the pledge in NRC’s Container Challenge;

- * **asked to see BPEC’s point-of-consumption data**, and suggested that it be aggregated, or have company names blacked out, to protect their privacy;

- * **denounced the absence of numerical recycling goals**, dates, and concrete programmatic recommendations; and,

- * **questioned** the omission of a discussion about “who pays.”

On November 2nd, a BPEC page was added to the NRC’s website: <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/partnerships/bpec/>. While some of CRI’s questions were addressed in two documents posted there, others were not. Most notable was that NRC has still not disclosed its fiscal relationship with BPEC, renewed its pledge to include *all* stakeholders in future discussions, made concrete recommendations to increase recycling, or explained who will foot the bill for new programs. BPEC also reiterated that they would not release their point-of-consumption data.

In addition to the questions CRI still has about the BPEC research, we are concerned about the lack of transparency in the process. These concerns were expressed in another round of letters to Kate Krebs and Scott Vitters on November 14, 2005, in which CRI requested to meet with BPEC and NRC.

In an effort to involve members of the recycling community and other interested parties, CRI has developed a BPEC page on our website (www.container-recycling.org/bpec) that will be updated as BPEC evolves.

PET bottle recycling rate, volume rise

By Steve Toloken
PLASTICS NEWS STAFF

SONOMA, CALIF. (Sept. 30, 1:50 p.m. EDT) -- The PET bottle recycling rate rose in 2004, going up for the first time in nearly a decade.

The rate rose to 21.6 percent in 2004, up from 19.6 percent the previous year, and the amount of PET bottles collected for recycling jumped dramatically to a little more than 1 billion pounds, according to a Sept. 29 report from the National Association for PET Container Resources.

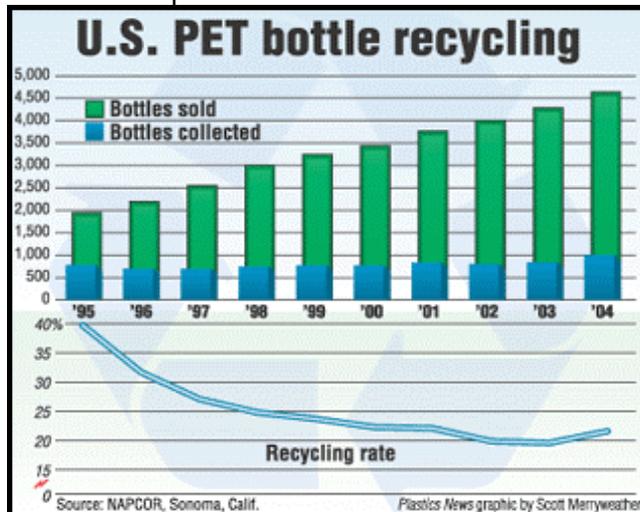
The Sonoma, Calif.-based trade group pointed to a number of factors for the reversal of fortunes for PET recycling: increased demand, especially in the carpet industry, more pressure from government in California to use recycled plastic in containers and a better competitive position with virgin materials.

"The biggest news is the amount of PET collected jumped significantly, which is a good sign, and it looks like we're going to be able to maintain that," said NAPCOR Chairman Gerry Claes. "The other side of the coin is that demand for PET continues to grow."

Environmental groups said the increased recycling rate should be put in perspective: It's still well below the PET industry's high-water mark of 39.7 percent in 1995, and it means four of five containers were thrown out, said Jenny Gitlitz, [research director] with the Container Recycling Institute in Arlington, Va.

NAPCOR's numbers show that 160 million more pounds of PET was recycled in 2004, but conversely, the growth of PET packaging to 4.6 billion pounds meant that 183 million more pounds of PET bottles were thrown away last year.

"Is that progress?" Gitlitz asked. NAPCOR reported that a record level of PET was collected — 1.003



Can trashing continues, despite industry efforts

WASHINGTON, DC — Data released in May 2005 by the Aluminum Association showed a slight increase in the aluminum can recycling rate--the first in 8 years. The 2004 rate, excluding imported scrap cans, was 45.1%, less than one percentage point above the 2003 rate of 44.3%, and 20 percentage points lower than the peak rate of 65% reached in 1992.

In an Aluminum Association press release, Bill Barker, chairman of Can Manufacturers Institute said, "We are

very pleased in the increase in the recycling rates. But there is still much work to do. We are looking forward... to promot[ing] the values of recycling to consumers to keep this momentum."

Jenny Gitlitz, CRI's research director, says the focus on the small rate increase obfuscates the environmental repercussions of can wasting that has continued largely unabated. "In 2003 we trashed 820,000 tons of cans; in 2004 we trashed

(continued on page 8)

billion pounds, or 19 percent more than 2003, which was also a record. That's a much faster rise than the 8 percent growth in general PET use in the bottle market, the first time that's happened since at least 1995.

Except for last year, the PET [recycling] industry had been dogged by a familiar story. The use of PET packaging soared in things like 20-ounce soft drink bottles, water bottles and specialty containers, but recycling remained flat or declined.

NAPCOR pointed to several factors in the growth in collection last year:

- * New York returning to collecting plastic in its city recycling programs.
- * Materials-recovery facilities installing better equipment to sort plastic bottles.
- * California increasing the value of its container deposits.
- * Other factors like growth in PET, previously unreported export volumes sold domestically and new commercial volumes from increased scrap sales.

NAPCOR Chairman Gerald Claes said California and New York City were the biggest reasons why more PET was collected.

CRI's Gitlitz said her group is "pleased that NAPCOR has acknowledged the additional PET recycling" that came from California increasing its container deposits. CRI supports bottle bills.

Industry groups like NAPCOR traditionally oppose bottle bills. Gitlitz said CRI calculations show 30 percent of the increase in PET collected in 2004 in the United States came from California.

As in previous years, the report showed strong growth in exports, with Chinese and Canadian companies buying more. The report also showed record levels of recycled PET flowing into the United States, with Mexico being the largest supplier, replacing Canada.

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Shareholder resolution filed with Coca-Cola Co.

BOSTON — The socially responsive investment firm Walden Asset Management has filed a shareholder proposal with Coca-Cola requesting that the board of directors review the container recycling program and report on a recycling strategy that includes a publicly stated, quantitative goal for enhanced rates of beverage container recovery. As You Sow (AYS), a San-Francisco-based foundation, co-filed the shareholder proposal.

Walden, a division of Boston Trust & Investment Management, and AYS hold shares of Coca-Cola stock on behalf of clients whose portfolios seek to achieve social as well as financial objectives.

Walden and AYS believe that Coca-Cola Company has made substantial progress toward its goal to incorporate 10% recycled content resin into its plastic beverage containers in North America by year-end 2005. However, Coca-Cola Company has resisted adopting a publicly stated, quantitative goal to increase beverage container recovery rates. Walden and AYS believe both recycled content and container recovery goals are essential to an effective recycling strategy.

Walden and AYS noted, based on technical assistance from CRI, that U.S. recycling rates for beverage containers have declined significantly in recent years. Nevertheless, Coca-Cola actively opposes container deposit systems *without* putting forth a solution capable of achieving comparable recovery rates. In response to inquiries from CRI, Walden noted that a similar shareholder proposal may be filed with PepsiCo.

Germany's deposit law upheld

BERLIN — After more than 10,000 court cases filed by the retail and beverage industries, Germany's mandatory deposit law remains on the books. Chancellor-elect Angela Merkel has stated that in her opinion the debate is over and that the deposit issue is not on the list of her political targets.

The law, created by the German Packaging Ordinance, requires a 25-cent refundable deposit on beer, water and carbonated drinks. The Packaging Ordinance was amended in 2004, repealing the refillable quota that had been in effect for over a decade and expanding the law to include non-carbonated soft drinks.

As of May 2006, retailers must take back all packaging made of the same material they sell (glass, plastics, and cans) including brands they don't sell.

EPA seeks to boost beverage container recycling

WASHINGTON, DC — In an effort to increase recovery and recycling of beverage containers, and to increase falling container recycling rates, the US Environmental Protection Agency held a series of stakeholder meetings in 2005 involving state government officials, NGO's (including CRI), and companies engaged in processing and/or recycling rigid containers.

As of this writing, the beverage producers have not yet agreed to a meeting with EPA, but officials are hopeful that they will participate in the ongoing dialogue on beverage container recycling in 2006.

(Can trashing, continued from page 7)

810,000 tons. That improvement is almost inconsequential on a global scale," she said. "If we want to really curtail environmental damage—reduce bauxite mining, dam fewer rivers, build fewer smelters—aluminum can wasting needs to decrease by *hundreds* of thousands of tons, not tens of thousands."

Container Deposits Work

Data acquired by CRI linked 42% of the rate increase to a rise in the California deposit value from 2 to 4 cents, and 30% of the increase to a rise in scrap can imports.

CRI executive director Pat Franklin said, "The industry insists that curbside recycling and public relations campaigns can increase recycling, but they ignore the fact that the only program proven to recycle 70-90% of the cans sold in any given market is the deposit system."

Environmental Consequences

According to Gitlitz, "The direct and indirect environmental impacts of replacing cans trashed in 2004 include about 3.5 million tons of greenhouse gases; tens of thousands of tons of SOx and NOx emissions; strip mining over 3 million tons of bauxite; and a host of other industrial activities and pollutants in sensitive habitats worldwide."

Economic Consequences of Inadequate Recycling:

Franklin said that there are also many lost business opportunities from the failure to recycle 55 billion cans a year. "At today's prices, the cans trashed in 2004 could have fetched about \$940 million. It's money down the drain, energy down the drain, and resources down the drain. We call on the aluminum and beverage industries to implement dramatic efforts to increase recycling to 75% or above—rates that are common in deposit states—and a goal the industry set for itself in 1993."

Save time! Save paper! Save a stamp!
Donate to CRI by credit card online! Simply go to

www.container-recycling.org

or

www.bottlebill.org

click on the "Donate Now" button (upper right side) and follow directions!

Deposits vs Litter Taxes

Deposits stop beverage container litter before it starts

By Pat Franklin

Cigarette butts, polystyrene cups, beer bottles and soda cans are among the items that litter our nation's roadways and denigrate the natural beauty of our beaches, parks and waterways. Furthermore, surveys show that beverage containers represent a significant portion of roadside, park and beach litter. One approach is to clean up litter after the fact; another is to prevent litter from happening in the first place.

Deposit laws have proven effective at *preventing* beverage container litter, but beverage producers and grocers have mounted a campaign to replace deposit laws with a "New Jersey-style litter tax" aimed at *cleaning up* litter—an approach much like mopping up the floor while the sink is overflowing. Money generated by the tax is used to fund recycling programs, litter cleanup efforts, and public relations campaigns.

Deposits vs Litter Taxes

Hundreds of litter surveys conducted over the past 35 years have measured the composition of the litter stream and compared litter abatement programs. Seven government funded studies showed declines in total litter ranging from 30 to 50 percent after implementation of a deposit law.

The *Final Report of the Temporary State Commission on Returnable Beverage Containers* found that New York's deposit law reduced beverage-container litter by 70 to 80 percent. The 1979 Michigan Department of Transportation found that the deposit law reduced beverage-container litter by 84 percent and total litter by 41 percent.

Beverage producers have hired high-powered lobbyists and consultants to speak at recycling conferences, testify before legislative committees and lobby elected officials. Their message: don't pass new or expanded deposit laws, repeal existing deposit laws, and replace these programs with a New Jersey-style litter tax.

But the litter tax is no match for a

deposit law. Last year the New Jersey Clean Communities Council, which is funded by the state's litter tax, paid Gershman Brickner and Bratton to conduct a study titled *A New Jersey Litter Survey: 2004*. The study revealed that litter in New Jersey is 35% higher than in other states, and urban street litter is 41% higher than the national average.



Rock Creek, Montgomery County, Maryland

Beyond the litter things

Beverage container deposit laws are not only effective in reducing beverage-container litter, they recover beverage cans and bottles at a higher rate than all other recycling programs combined. According to a 2002 study by Businesses and Environmentalists

Allied for Recycling (BEAR) for their Multi-Stakeholder Recovery Project, *Understanding Beverage Container Recycling: A Value Chain Assessment*, states with container deposit laws recycled an average of 490 beverage containers per capita in 1999, while non-deposit states recycled an average of 191 per capita. The BEAR study further found that the 10 deposit states with 28 percent of the U.S. population recycled 38.2 billion beverage containers (49 percent of the U.S. total) and the 40 non-deposit states with 72 percent of the population recycled 40 billion (51 percent of the total.)

Finally, the study revealed that system costs to recycle beverage containers through a deposit system averaged 1.53 cents per container, while costs for recovering through curbside and drop-off programs averaged 1.25 cents per container.

States that rely on small refundable deposits get consistently high recycling rates and substantial reductions in beverage container litter – all at no cost to taxpayers.

Portions of this article appeared previously in an article titled "Litter things cost a lot," Resource Recycling, July 2005.

New Jersey Litter Tax

The state levies a **tax** on 15 categories of "litter-generating products" sold in New Jersey. The litter tax (paid by manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, and retailers of these products) **requires a government bureaucracy**.

Revenue from the tax funds litter clean-ups and municipal recycling programs.

The NJ DEP reports the following recycling rates for glass and plastic bottles and aluminum cans in 2001:

Plastic Containers	20.6%
Glass Containers	53.2%
Aluminum Cans	49.5%

A Typical Deposit Law

Consumers pay a small deposit of 5 or 10 cents on beer and carbonated beverage containers. When they return the empty containers to stores or redemption centers they get their deposit back.

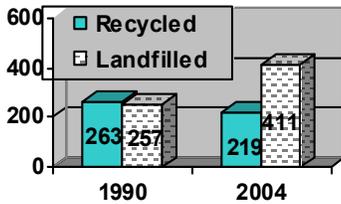
The deposit law is a prime example of producer responsibility.

Today, approximately 70% of the deposit containers sold in states with a nickel deposit are returned for the refund and recycled, and CRI estimates that another 10% or more are recycled through curbside programs. In Michigan, where the deposit is a dime, containers are returned at rates above 90%.

20/20 Vision: Setting our Sights on Zero Beverage Container Waste by 2020

Millions of consumers who recycle every day think because they recycle their bottles and cans, everyone else is recycling too. In fact, we landfill twice as many beverage containers as we recycle: 411 per capita per year.

Beverage Containers Recycled & Landfilled (per capita)



Upstream environmental impacts of this wasting include: energy consumption equivalent to 36 million barrels of crude oil per year, annual generation of 4.5 million tons of greenhouse gasses, emission of a host of toxics to the air and water, and damage to wildlife habitat. Downstream impacts include landfilling and littering of more than 135 beverage cans and bottles each year.

In an effort to reverse this wasting trend and make beverage consumption more sustainable, CRI will launch a campaign in 2006 we are calling *2020 Vision: Setting our Sights on Zero Beverage Container Waste*. We can't get to Zero Waste overnight, so we are setting an interim goal of cutting beverage container waste by 25% by 2008.

We invite consumers, state and local government agencies, recycling businesses, public and elected officials, socially responsible investors, beverage producers, and retailers to join us in bringing national attention to the global environmental impacts of making more than 135 billion new beverage containers each year from virgin materials.

Please get your organization, local government, public agency or company to pass a resolution in support of Zero beverage container waste (see sample resolution on this page) and send a copy to CRI.

For more information on this campaign call (202)263-0999.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

In support of cutting beverage container waste by 25% by 2008 and attaining Zero Waste for beverage containers by 2020

WHEREAS, the number of beverage containers "wasted" (not recycled) annually in the United States grew from 72 billion units in 1993 to 127 billion in 2003 (a 76% increase); and

WHEREAS, the tonnage of aluminum beverage cans wasted (landfilled, littered or incinerated) in the U.S. increased from 641,000 tons in 1993 to 820,000 tons in 2003 and the aluminum can recycling rate declined from an all-time high of 65% in 1994 to 44% in 2003; and

WHEREAS, PET plastic beverage bottle waste increased from about 460,000 tons in 1993 to 1.4 million tons in 2003—a trend which shows no signs of slowing; and

WHEREAS, more than 6 million tons of glass bottles and jars are landfilled annually, and thus not used for beneficial purposes such as making new bottles or fiberglass; and

WHEREAS, the local environmental effects of this beverage container wasting include increased burdens on county landfills and possible future threats to groundwater; toxic emissions from combusting containers in municipal solid waste incinerators; and bottle and can litter which is an aesthetic nuisance as well as a threat to public safety and to domestic and wild animals; and

WHEREAS, the global environmental impacts of beverage container wasting include the unnecessary energy consumption of more than 35 million barrels of crude oil equivalent and a host of natural resources which are used to make new containers from virgin materials to replace those wasted, thereby contributing to habitat loss, air and water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the economic effects of this beverage container wasting include an increased burden on the local taxpayer who must pay to landfill, incinerate, or otherwise pick up these wasted or littered containers, with no benefit accruing therefrom; and

WHEREAS, economic effects of this beverage container wasting also include a shortage of available, high quality feedstock for various recycling companies, particularly in the plastic reclamation industry, but also in the glass and aluminum recycling industries; and

WHEREAS, if the business infrastructure is damaged and market opportunities are reduced, the burden of managing discarded consumer goods will be much heavier for municipalities; and

WHEREAS, it is technically and economically feasible to achieve recycling rates in excess of 80% with various policy measures; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That [] does hereby endorse a goal of reducing beverage container waste by 25% by 2008, and of achieving zero beverage container waste by 2020; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the [Clerk, Secretary/Other] of [] is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution by mail to:

Zero Beverage Container Waste Campaign
c/o The Container Recycling Institute
1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036
or by email to cri@container-recycling.org

Who's behind www.tnbottlebill.com?

By Marge Davis, PhD, Coordinator
Tennessee Bottle Bill Project

When Tennessee legislators and citizens launched a bottle bill campaign last spring, they fully expected opposition from the beverage and grocery industries. They even expected some subdued grousing from the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful (KAB) since Keep Tennessee Beautiful (KTB) gets a large share of its funding from the beverage distributors through a pair of spe-

cialty taxes on beer and soft drinks. But even the most seasoned observers have been a little surprised by the vehemence of the KTB response.

cialty taxes on beer and soft drinks. But even the most seasoned observers have been a little surprised by the vehemence of the KTB response.

The board of Keep Blount Beautiful, for instance, has taken a position opposing the proposed bottle bill, while the executive director of Keep Knoxville Beautiful has publicly questioned not only the merits of the bill, but also the ethics of its supporters. And now, there's

www.tnbottlebill.com. If the name sounds familiar, it should. It's a knockoff of the bottle bill supporters' own website, www.tnbottlebill.org. The information it contains ranges from the questionable ("take-out food packaging is the largest single type of item found in litter") to the flat-out wrong ("the bottle bill will eliminate an existing program that cleans up litter in every Tennessee county".) Though it's true that the two specialty taxes will be eliminated, the

proposed bill will replace that funding—in fact will more than double it!—with \$10 million of the unclaimed deposits.

What is most below-board about this site is its ownership. It's supposedly the work of a group called "Citizens for a Fair Hearing on the Tennessee Bottle Bill", but there's no contact name, phone number, or email

address. The only way to contact them is through an online feedback form.

A "WHOIS" search for the registrant of record revealed only that the site had been registered through a proxy domain service. But thanks to a member of CRI's Bottle Bill Action Network who knows his HTML, we learned that the site is registered to none other than Keep Knoxville Beautiful's executive director, Tom Salter. (In fact, Salter sent a congratulatory feedback to the www.tnbottlebill.com website, saying "thanks for putting this website together"!)

Now we know that KTB is behind the knockoff website. But we've always known who's behind KTB and other Keep America Beautiful affiliates. It's none other than the beverage producers themselves--Coke, Pepsi, Anheuser-Busch--and a host of other corporate giants who oppose bottle bills because they don't want the cost of recycling to eat into their profits.



Plastic bottles dominate a flood of trash about to enter Third Creek, an urban waterway in Knoxville, Tennessee. Photo by Mark. C. Campen.

Join the Zero Beverage Container Waste Campaign!

The goal of the Campaign is to cut beverage container waste by 25% by the year 2008, and reach Zero beverage container waste (or darn close) by 2020. You can help by getting your organization, local government or company to pass a resolution in support of Zero beverage container waste (see sample resolution on page 10) and mail it to CRI.

If you're not for Zero beverage container waste,
how much beverage container waste are you for?



1776 Massachusetts Avenue NW Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 263-0999 Fax: (202) 263-0949
www.Container-Recycling.org
www.BottleBill.org

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A jagged, starburst-shaped graphic with multiple points, containing text.

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