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August 31, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Legislative Unit Staff
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

cc: The Honorable Catherine Blakespear, California State Senate

Subject: **Signature Request Letter for SB 955 (Blakespear) from the Container Recycling Institute**

Dear Governor Newsom and Legislative Unit Staff,

We are writing in support of Senate Bill 955, which would make improvements to the beverage container deposit return system in California. This bill contains several provisions that would modify the existing beverage container recycling program, as summarized below.

1. The bill would specify that a [single] Reverse Vending Machine (RVM) does not make an unserved convenience zone served. Additionally, the bill specifies that dealer cooperatives and mobile units would remain eligible to operate and receive program payments, and existing certified recycling centers would remain eligible for handling fees even when an RVM is located in the same convenience zone.

CRI's support: We support this provision because a single RVM simply cannot take as many containers as a typical, staffed redemption center which has more space and storage capacity. It would take several RVMs that were emptied as soon as they were full, to approach the capacity of a typical certified redemption center. Additionally, the clarification that dealer cooperatives, mobile units, and recycling centers would remain eligible to operate and receive payments ensures multiple redemption options in each area, helping maintain consumer convenience.

2. The bill updates the definition of a supermarket as having at least \$6 million dollars of gross annual sales, a metric that is currently at \$2 million.

CRI's support: We support this provision as a common-sense adjustment to a dollar amount that was first established in law several decades ago. This bill aims to reduce requirements on very smaller grocers.

3. The bill requires updates the definition of "supermarket."

CRI's support: CRI also appreciates how the bill updates the definition of "supermarket" (which was last updated in the 1980s.) In the past, many large beverage retailers were exempted from certain program requirements, due to the definition of "supermarket." We now have many types of supermarkets in the state, including discount grocers and big box stores.

4. The bill extends the current emergency regulations and methodology for calculating beverage container handling fees until 2032.

CRI's support: Extending the handling fee supports the financial integrity and security of the beverage container recycling program as innovative modes of redemption are in the process of being implemented throughout the state.

CRI appreciates that the intended purpose of this bill is to make redemption easier and convenient for the consumer. The more convenient recycling is, the higher the redemption rate will be, and the more equitable the system will be for all Californians.

CRI urges the Governor to sign SB 955 into law. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan V. Collins", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Susan V. Collins, President
CONTAINER RECYCLING INSTITUTE

Cc: Annika Olsen, office of Senator Blakespear