

# THE 10¢ INCENTIVE TO RECYCLE

## Bottle Bills improve our quality of life!



Plastic bottles in Rock Creek near Cedar Lane, April 2005



The rapid growth in packaged beverages consumed on the go, especially plastic water bottles, is polluting our streams and rivers. The eleven states requiring small, refundable deposits on beverage bottles and cans have less litter and broken glass in streets, parks, streams, and beaches, making them safer, cleaner, and more attractive. Bottle and can litter dropped by 70-85% after the laws were implemented.

## Bottle bills provide an incentive to recycle!

The bottle bill is the nation's most successful recycling and litter prevention program. The eleven deposit states (Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont, Maine, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, and Massachusetts) recycle more beverage containers than the other 39 states combined.

A 2002 multi-stakeholder report by Businesses and Environmentalists Allied for Recycling (BEAR) found that an average of 490 beverage containers per capita are recycled annually in the 11 deposit states compared to just 190 per capita in the 39 non-deposit states.

**Decreased Energy Use:** Recycling the estimated 40 billion PET bottles, 55 billion aluminum cans and 27 billion glass bottles trashed in 2005 could have saved the equivalent of about 35 million barrels of oil: enough to meet the total residential energy needs of over 2 million American homes.

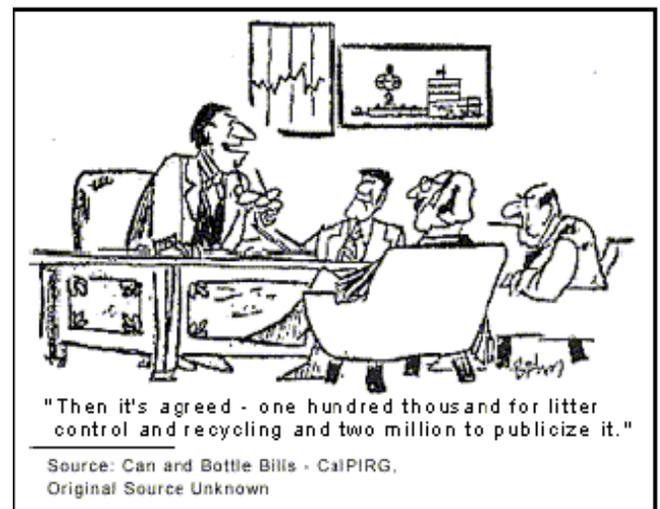
**Enhanced curbside recycling:** When deposit laws and curbside recycling programs are combined, more containers are recycled at a lower cost to taxpayers. Bottle bills continue to work in areas where curbside recycling is less effective, and it is the best solution for the billions of beverages consumed on the go.

Container deposit laws have been beneficial in other ways: saving taxpayer money by reducing waste disposal costs, reducing our reliance on foreign oil, and creating new jobs in the recycling sector.

## Bottle Bills make producers responsible!

In many countries producers are responsible for their beverage packaging waste. Here in the United States, producers are getting a free ride, and the ride's on us, the taxpayers. We pay for containers that are landfilled, incinerated or littered.

Beverage producers don't want to take responsibility for their packaging waste. Instead, they want to replace deposit laws with "litter taxes" that would raise money to fund litter cleanups and public relations campaigns—an effort that is much like mopping the floor while the sink is overflowing. New Jersey has a litter tax, yet urban street litter is 41% higher than the national average, according to the New Jersey Clean Communities Council, an organization that is funded by the litter tax.



# What can you do to help?

## Advocate!

Join an existing campaign for a new deposit law. Activists and public officials are working to pass container deposit laws in Tennessee, West Virginia, Utah, Illinois and other states. Go to CRI's Bottle Bill Resource Guide at [www.bottlebill.org](http://www.bottlebill.org). If there is no campaign in your state, you can serve as a catalyst for a new campaign.



**Bottle Bill Toolkit**

Contact us at 202.263.0999 for more information or to join our Bottle Bill Action Network (BBAN) listserve and look for our Bottle Bill toolkit at [www.toolkit.container-recycling.org](http://www.toolkit.container-recycling.org).

## Update!

Ten of the eleven deposit laws were passed in the 1970's and 1980's – before the advent of bottled water, sports drinks, iced tea, juices, spirits, and other non-carbonated beverages sold in single-serve bottles and cans. Tens of billions of these containers are not recycled—even in deposit states. Deposit law advocates are working to update existing deposit laws in New York, Michigan, Oregon, Iowa, Vermont, Connecticut, and Massachusetts Connecticut. Maine and California have already updated their laws to include non-carbonated drinks.

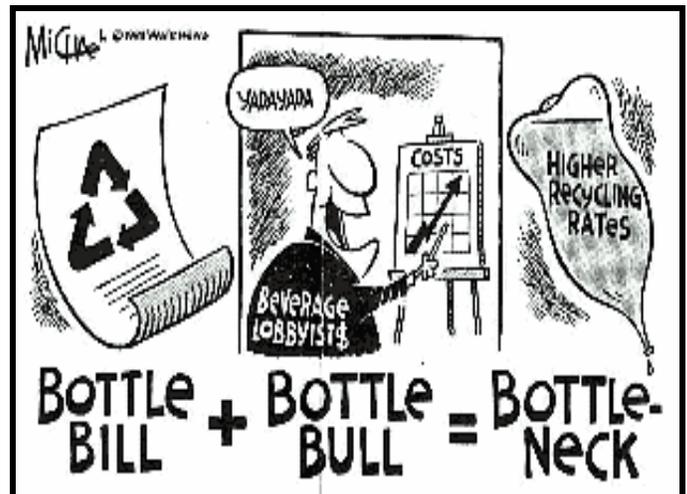
## Don't wait 'til it's too late!

While environmentalists, farmers and recyclers are promoting new and expanded container deposit laws; the politically powerful beverage and retail industry lobbies are spending millions of dollars to roll back these successful and popular laws. Four years ago they succeeded in repealing the nation's only local bottle bill in Columbia, Missouri. We are fighting a politically powerful and well-funded lobby.

## Donate!

You can also help by making a contribution to the Container Recycling Institute (CRI), the nation's only clearinghouse for information on beverage container recycling and container deposit legislation

For decades, the beverage industry's high-powered lobbyists have succeeded in keeping bottle bills bottled up, with their half-truths and "bottle bull." CRI helps debunk these industry myths for activists and policymakers trying to pass new and expanded bottle bills. Your contribution will help us help them!



Waste News, September 19, 1998, Reprinted with permission of Crain Communications and Leo Michael, cartoonist.

- Yes, I want to support the work of CRI with a contribution in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Please send me a free copy of *The 10¢ Incentive to Recycle*.

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