



March 6, 2014

The Honorable Benjamin Downing
Chairman, Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
State House
Room 413F
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable John Keenan
Chairman, Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
State House
Room 473B
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 3848, Bottle Bill Petition Initiative

Dear Chairman Downing and Chairman Keenan:

GPI, the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers, and suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry, **strongly supports House Bill 3848**, which would update the state's beverage container recycling refund program to include all non-carbonated beverages, and provide an increase to the minimum handling fee paid.

GPI's members recognize the importance of supporting sustainability initiatives including conserving energy, saving raw materials, reducing air emissions (including NOx, SOx, PM and greenhouse gases such as CO2) and being fully committed to "Reduce / Reuse" in all aspects of plant operations e.g. water, cardboard, lubricants, electricity, etc.

When glass plants can increase the levels of recycled glass as part of the overall batch mix, they can reduce furnace temperatures, resulting in reduced energy use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. For glass, one ton of carbon dioxide is reduced for every six tons of recycled container glass used in the manufacturing process. Energy use at the glass plants also drop about 2-3.5% for every 10% recycled glass used in the manufacturing process.

Specific to Massachusetts, GPI member company Verallia operates a glass container plant in Milford, which employs over 200 represented and salaried workers. In addition to the Milford glass plant, glass recycling company Strategic Materials, Inc. has operations in Franklin, which recycles and supplies glass to our industry and employees dozen of additional residents.

Massachusetts is fortunate to have one of the nation's ten beverage container recycling refund programs in place. These programs have proven highly effective in providing clean, well-sorted recyclable materials that are able to be repurchased by the glass container and other manufacturing industries.

Collectively, these 10 states average a recycling rate for beverage containers of 80% and importantly, are estimated to supply (via purchase by the glass companies), 65%-80% of the recycled glass used in the production of new containers. The Verallia plant in Milford utilizes on average, over 90% recycled glass in the manufacture of new containers.

GPI and its member companies are focusing on a variety of collection programs to get glass containers back to our plants. A key element that all of the most successful programs around the country share, is the separation of the recyclables collected, which our industry has found greatly increases the opportunities for their eventual reuse in the manufacturing process.

Unlike beverage container refund programs, curbside and drop-off programs do not have a demonstrated ability to reduce litter from public areas. However, curbside and drop-off programs can collect a broader spectrum of materials, and therefore work in conjunction with beverage container recycling refund programs to achieve a greater overall improvement in recycling. Additionally, the wear and tear on capital-intensive sorting and processing machines at recycling recovery facilities can be greatly reduced if a portion of glass is removed from the process.

A Study recently commissioned by the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), and conducted by Resource Recycling Systems (RRS), released earlier this year examined some elements of both beverage container recycling refund systems and single stream recycling programs. As all ten states with beverage container recycling refund programs also have single stream operations for curbside recyclables in place, GPI wanted to better understand how these programs work together.

The "Optimized Bottle Bill" (OBB) Study, found that in conjunction, single stream collection systems and beverage container recycling refund programs have the potential to increase overall statewide recovery of recyclables by at least 11%, while at the same time, increasing recovery rates of included beverage containers by 162%.

As sustained funding for recycling and solid waste programs in all states and counties remain a top priority, the OBB Study also examined the potential fiscal impact to each. The Study found that if unredeemed deposits are reinvested into the recycling infrastructure, then OBBs might increase recovery while also creating a sustainable funding source for recycling.

GPI would like to thank the Committee for their consideration of our comments and expansion of one of the country's most successful recycling programs. Please consider GPI and its member companies a resource and advocate for recycling related issues.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Bragg

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn M. Bragg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "L".

Lynn M. Bragg
President

Cc: Members, Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy