



## Help update the old Bottle Bill

**Help the SSRC ensure that the Legislature updates the State's old "Bottle Bill."  
Adding a refundable deposit to non-carbonated beverage containers will reduce litter,  
increase recycling and provide additional funding for your local recycling program.**

### What is the Bottle Bill?

The Bottle Bill is the common name for MGLch.94, s.321-327, the **Beverage Container Deposit Law**, which puts **refundable deposits on beer and soda containers**, providing an incentive for the public to return them for recycling.

### Why update the Bottle Bill?

The goal of the Bottle Bill was to reduce litter. In 1983, when the law was created, beer and soda containers were the main culprits. The bill has been very effective in reducing litter of these items. Water, juice, sport drinks, etc., now account for 1/3 of the beverage market, but with no deposit, they account for most container litter and public trash.

### How effective is the Bottle Bill?

In Massachusetts, 70% of deposit containers were returned in 2008. An additional 10% are recycled at the curb. Compare this to 22% average recycling rate for beverage containers in states without a Bottle Bill.

### Who else supports updating the Bottle Bill?

- SSRC
- MassRecycle
- MassPIRG
- Massachusetts Sierra Club
- MassDEP
- Environmental League of Massachusetts
- Mass. League of Women Voters
- Mass. Municipal Association
- 130 municipalities (see list at [massrecycle.org/bottlebill/resolution.html](http://massrecycle.org/bottlebill/resolution.html))

### How can we update the Bottle Bill?

The Legislature can pass a bill to expand the definition of containers covered under the law to include non-carbonated beverage containers. The updated Bottle Bill would exclude milk products, and infant formula. This bill needs a favorable report from the Telecommunications Committee well before the legislative session ends in July.

### What happens to unclaimed deposits?

When a bottle is not returned for deposit, the unclaimed deposit currently goes to the state's general fund. The bill we support, H3515, designates a portion of the unclaimed bottle deposit revenue from bottles included in the updated bill for local recycling related initiatives.

## Take Action NOW – It is Easy!

**Call your State Representative and State Senator  
see box with suggested message >>**

Find his/her **contact information** here:

[www.mass.gov/legis/legis.htm](http://www.mass.gov/legis/legis.htm)

To read the text of the proposed bills and for more information visit [www.massbottlebill.org](http://www.massbottlebill.org)

☺ Ask if they support the Updated Bottle Bill, H3515

☺ Ask them to contact the **Telecommunications Committee\* and request the release of H3515 for a vote ASAP**

☺ Offer to send them a copy of this fact sheet.

☺ Ask your friends to call too.

\* Senate Chair Michael Morrissey  
(if in his district, call 617-722-1494)

\* House Chair Barry Finegold  
(if in his district, call 617-722-2263)

# Top 10 Reasons to Update the Bottle Bill



- 1. Catch up with consumer habits** ~ Since the original Bottle Bill was passed in 1983, many new beverages have been introduced. About a billion containers of these new beverages are consumed each year in Massachusetts, and are not redeemable under the original Bottle Bill
- 2. Reduce litter** ~ A recent study by MassDEP determined that non-deposit beverage containers are 9 times more likely to end up as litter than those with deposits. [www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/flitter.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/flitter.pdf)
- 3. Recover and recycle valuable materials** ~ Plastic, aluminum and glass beverage containers can't be recycled back into new consumer goods and containers if they've been thrown away. About 75% of deposit containers are recycled, while less than 35% of non-deposit containers are. What a waste!
- 4. Save energy** ~ Recycling plastic, metal and glass containers requires far less energy than extracting, purifying and manufacturing them from raw materials. For example, about 20 recycled aluminum cans can be made from the energy needed to produce one can from virgin ore. Throwing one aluminum can away wastes as much energy as pouring out half that can's volume in gasoline.
- 5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions** ~ Increased recycling reduces the amount of energy needed by industry to make products from raw materials, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 6. Create jobs and stimulate the economy** ~ Gains in employment have been demonstrated in nearly every state with a deposit system. Massachusetts gained almost 2,000 jobs with implementation of the original bottle bill, and an increased volume of recycled beverage containers would require an expansion within the recycling industry to handle the extra material.
- 7. Reduce waste** ~ Adding noncarbonated beverage containers to the deposit/refund system would divert an additional half billion beverage containers/year from the trash to recycling markets. This would reduce the amount of solid waste sent to landfills and incinerators, and the need to manufacture that many new containers from raw materials, including fossil fuel.
- 8. Reduce costs to municipalities** ~ A recent MassDEP study estimates that it costs municipalities about \$5 million a year to manage nondeposit beverage containers as litter, trash, and even as recycling. [www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/exbbmuni.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/exbbmuni.pdf)
- 9. Support local nonprofits and redemption centers** ~ Redemption centers support local recycling efforts by providing a convenient recycling option to the public. Redemption centers are also a key component of fundraising efforts ("bottle drives") of many local charitable organizations, Scout Troops and school programs.
- 10. Give the responsibility to the producers** ~ Bottle bills shift the responsibility of managing beverage container waste from taxpayers to beverage manufacturers and consumers, helping to increase municipal funding for other important local needs.

MassRecycle is a statewide coalition made up of individuals, governments, businesses, institutions and non-profit organizations dedicated to promoting recycling. To help support our efforts or to learn more about MassRecycle visit [www.massrecycle.org](http://www.massrecycle.org) or call 617-338-0244.