



Supporting Redemption Centers and Modernizing Maine's Bottle Bill

We are currently urging passage of two important bills:

An Act to Support Maine's Beverage Container Redemption Law by Stabilizing Redemption Center Handling Fees and Reducing Processing Time

Sponsored by: Sen. Anne Carney

An Act to Modernize Maine's Beverage Container Redemption Law

Sponsored by: Rep. Allison Hepler

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Maine's Bottle Bill (Beverage Container Redemption Program) is the state's most successful recycling and litter-prevention program, but inflation and labor shortages are threatening the viability of Maine's redemption centers.

Maine lawmakers should pass two bills that will help redemption centers stay in business and ensure that Mainers have places to redeem their bottles and cans.

1. Immediate Support for Redemption Centers (Sen. Carney)

- Emergency bill; increases the handling fee (set in statute) paid to redemption centers by beverage companies, matching the consumer-price index. The handling fee would increase from 4.5 cents to 5.75 cents per container redeemed.
- Allows for workers to be paid fairly and redemption center costs to be covered.
- Limited waiver provision will reduce processing time for sorting containers by brand.

2. Modernizing the Bottle Bill Program (Rep. Hepler)

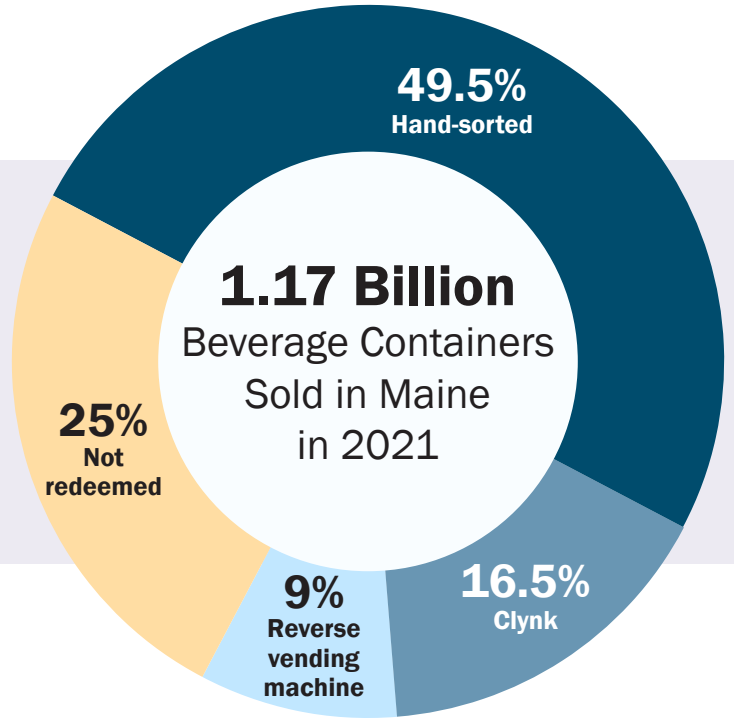
- Simplifies the sorting and billing process and makes processing and pick-up of beverage containers more efficient and cost-effective.
- Ensures a convenient redemption option for Maine people statewide.
- Earmarks "unredeemed deposits" funding to support program improvements and reduce waste instead of going to big beverage manufacturers or the State's General Fund.

It's time for a change. During the 45 years since the Bottle Bill began there have been many new types of beverages brought to market, advancements in technology, and a growing consumer demand to return to refillable containers.

No other recycling program can achieve the economic, environmental, and social benefits of Maine's Bottle Bill. We urge Maine lawmakers to act this session by passing both of these necessary bills.

Please Redeem Your Containers!

- An estimated \$16.7 million in “unclaimed deposits” are being funded annually by consumers when containers aren’t redeemed.
- About 80% of this money stays with big beverage companies that are in a commingling group, and about 20% is remitted to the State General Fund by smaller companies that don’t commingle.



How Maine’s Bottle Bill Works

- 1 BEVERAGE COMPANIES/DISTRIBUTORS**
Collect the initial deposit from retailers for each beverage container sold to them (\$0.15 for liquor/wine, \$0.05 for everything else).
- 2 BEVERAGE RETAILERS**
Collect a deposit from consumers at time of purchase, reimbursing them for deposit paid when they purchased the beverages from beverage companies/distributors.
- 3 CONSUMERS**
Redeem empty containers at a redemption center to recover the deposit they paid at a retailer or donate to a charity. Empty containers that are **not redeemed** by consumers become “unclaimed deposits.”
- 4 REDEMPTION CENTERS**
Pay consumers for deposits and get reimbursed by companies/distributors when containers are picked up. They also receive a statutorily set 4.5-cent handling fee per bottle (last updated in 2019, not set to inflation) paid by beverage companies/distributors.
- 5 BACK TO BEVERAGE COMPANIES/DISTRIBUTORS**
 In addition to paying back the deposit and handling fees to the redemption centers the beverage companies pay for pick-up of the containers; but they also keep the revenue from the sale of recycled plastic, glass, and metal or use it for manufacturing new beverage containers.

Redemption Centers Help Maine Meet Its Recycling Goals

- Recycle more than 40,000 tons of material each year.¹
- ALL glass recycled in Maine is done through Maine’s Bottle Bill program.
- More than 60% of all plastic recycled in Maine is done through the Bottle Bill program. By 2026, 25% of all plastic beverage containers sold must be made with recycled plastic; beverage manufacturers rely on this source of recycled plastic to meet their goals.

¹ Includes 27,474 tons of glass, 3,830 tons of metal; 8,927 tons of plastic, 203 tons of plastic film, 267 tons cardboard, and 11 tons of paperboard.