



# Supporting Redemption Centers and Modernizing Maine's Bottle Bill

We are currently urging passage of two important bills:

## LD 134, An Act to Increase the Handling Fee for Beverage Containers Reimbursed to Dealers and Redemption Centers

**Sponsored by:** Sen. Troy Jackson

## 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. Jackson)

- 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 5.5 cents on May 1, and then to 6 cents per container in September.
- Keeps redemption centers open while we work to modernize Maine's Bottle Bill to make it more efficient.

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

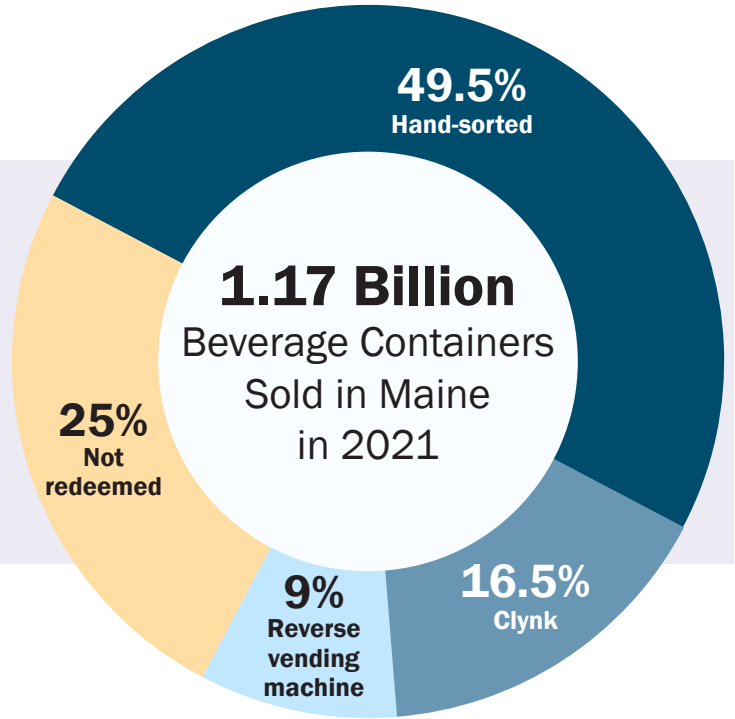
- Simplifies the sorting and billing process and makes processing and pick-up of beverage containers more efficient and cost-effective.
- Ensures a convenient redemption option for Maine people statewide.
- Earmarks "unredeemed deposits" funding to support program improvements and reduce waste instead 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.<sup>1</sup>
- 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.