



Modernizing Maine's Bottle Bill

Support LD 1909: An Act to Modernize Maine's Beverage Container Redemption Law

Sponsored by:

Rep. Allison Hepler of Woolwich

Co-sponsored by:

Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec, Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin, Sen. Black of Franklin, Sen. Libby of Cumberland, Sen. Hickman of Kennebec, Sen. Carney of Cumberland, Sen. Bennett of Oxford, Rep. White of Waterville, Rep. Landry of Farmington

For more information, please contact
Sarah Nichols, (207) 430-0170 or
snichols@nrcm.org



Natural Resources
Council of Maine

3 Wade Street
Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 622-3101
nrcm.org

For 45 years, Maine's Bottle Bill (Beverage Container Redemption Program) has been the state's most successful recycling and litter-prevention program. This bill (LD 1909) will modernize the Bottle Bill to make it more efficient and ensure its success well into the future.

Streamlines the Program for Hard-working Redemption Centers

- Eliminates tedious brand-level sorting and instead requires all containers to be sorted by material type—plastic, glass, steel, and aluminum.
- Creates a new “commingling cooperative” to guarantee timely pick-up of, and payment for, redeemed beverage containers by beverage manufacturers.

Reclaims “Unclaimed Deposits” to Fund Improvements

- Earmarks the deposits paid by consumers that never redeemed their containers to be invested in improvements to the Bottle Bill instead of being kept by beverage manufacturers.
- Supports the use of technology in the redemption system to collect data, increase consumer convenience, and reduce trucks on the road.



















Reduces Waste and Increases Recycling

- Requires a refillable container market analysis, pilot projects, and investments needed to shift away from disposable containers toward more reusable containers.
- Data provided through annual reporting by new “commingling cooperative” will help to keep the program operating at an 85% or higher recycling rate.



No other program can deliver the environmental, economic, and social benefits of the Bottle Bill. We urge you to keep it going strong with your support for this bill, LD 1909!

How Do Rep. Hepler and Rep. Crockett's Bottle Bill Modernization Proposals Compare?

Proposed Change to Bottle Bill	Rep. Hepler LD 1909	Rep. Crockett LD 1910
Simplified sorting of containers by material type, not brand	 Yes. Redemption centers will only have to sort by material type no matter what technology they use.	 Yes. Redemption centers will only have to sort by material type, except CLYNK would still be required to report by brand.
Creation of a nonprofit commingling cooperative to manage the program	 Yes. With a board of directors that represent all stakeholders in the Bottle Bill program.	 Yes. But with a board of directors that only represents the beverage manufacturers.
Equitable use of the “unclaimed” deposits that are funded by consumers that didn’t redeem their containers	 Yes. An estimated \$16.7 M per year in consumer funds will be used to maintain and improve the Bottle Bill program or support other beneficial public programs.	 No. The \$16.7 M per year in consumer funds would belong to the beverage manufacturers, tax-free, with no accounting or reporting to the State after 3 years of sharing a small percentage.
Fair handling fee paid to redemption centers to match inflation so they can stay in business and pay living wages	 Yes. The bill would maintain the 6-cent handling fee in LD 134 and adds in CPI adjustment every 2 years to keep pace with inflation.	 No. The bill proposes to decrease the handling fee from 6 cents to 5 cents, and then further back to 4.5 cents.
Provisions to reduce waste and increase recycling	 Yes. The cooperative will work to maintain an 85% recycling rate and invest in activities that result in more reuse and refill.	 No. The cooperative will work to maintain the current estimated 75% redemption, and then 80% by 2035; with no investment in reuse.
Incentives for use of reverse vending machines by redemption centers, which verify and crush the containers, collect data, and reduce transportation costs and greenhouse gas emissions	 Yes. There will be an extra one cent per container given to every redemption center that uses a reverse vending machine.	 No. The redemption centers that have currently invested in reverse vending machines would have little incentive to keep them since they would no longer be forced to sort and count by brand.
Acknowledgment of CLYNK as a unique part of the redemption program that is responsible for redeeming 25% of all containers in Maine	 Yes. Definitions of “bag-drop” and “account based bulk processing” are added to the program to acknowledge the drop-and-go redemption model, and CLYNK’s processing technology.	 No. The proposal adds a definition for “bag drop” but fails to recognize that CLYNK’s processing facility is different from a reverse vending machine.
Timely pick-up and payment to redemption centers from the beverage manufacturers	 Yes. Increases frequency to weekly pick-up, and such that no redemption center is holding more than 20,000 containers absent a different arrangement. Penalties for non-compliance including storage fees.	 No. It maintains inadequate schedule of every 15 days, with additional pick-up if a center has more than 40,000 containers.
Fairly allocates handling fee costs for small beverage companies	 Yes. Ensures that no beverage manufacturer pays handling fees on containers that were never redeemed.	 No. Maintains status quo, where distributors may continue to charge a small beverage manufacturer for handling fees on containers that were never redeemed.

For more information, please contact Sarah Nichols, NRCM Sustainable Maine Director at snichols@nrcm.org or (207) 430-0170



Natural Resources Council of Maine

3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine • 04330
(207) 622-3101 • www.nrcm.org