



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 144

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to pass Senate bill S.1696 and Assembly bill A.3922 to amend the Returnable Beverage Container Law commonly known as the “Bottle Deposit Law” or “Bottle Bill”, to expand the scope of the law to include non-carbonated beverage containers and to return unclaimed deposits to municipalities.

By Council Members Koppell, Fidler, Gentile, Stewart, Weprin, Jackson and Liu

Whereas, In July 1983, the New York State Legislature enacted the Returnable Beverage Container Law, in July 1983, also know as the “Bottle Bill” requiring a minimum 5-cent deposit on many bottles and cans; and

Whereas, The “Bottle Bill” has been successful in removing litter from the streets and has reduced the amount of solid waste disposed of, while fostering the recycling and reuse of the containers on which it required a deposit; and

Whereas, As a result of this bill, 78,000 tons of containers per year are eliminated from the City of New York’s waste stream saving the City a minimum of \$4,212,000 in export costs; and

Whereas, In the twenty-one years since the passage of the “Bottle Bill” the types of beverages being consumed in recyclable containers has increased and changed dramatically. Many of the beverages consumed in individual containers today were not envisioned in 1983. Beverages such as iced tea, bottled water, sports drinks and fruit juices were virtually not sold in individual plastic or glass containers, while now they are as common as carbonated beverages; and

Whereas, There is no rational justification for not including these containers in the definition of beverages under the law requiring a deposit, and Senate bill S.1696 and Assembly bill A.3922 seek to remedy this by expanding the definition of "recyclable container" to include all containers for non-carbonated beverages, with the exception of liquor, wine and milk; and

Whereas, The Returnable Beverage Container Law is now recognized as the single most effective law in our state’s history at diminishing litter and encouraging recycling, and individuals should now be subject to this law irrespective of whether they consumed a carbonated soft drink, bottled water, a fruit juice or sports drink; and

Whereas, The uncollected deposits from the 5-cent deposit are currently retained by the bottle distributors. These unclaimed deposits amount to \$107 million per year for New York City alone under the current bottle bill and would increase to \$150 million per year under the expanded bottle bill; and

Whereas, Senate bill S.1696 and Assembly bill A. 3922, would require all unclaimed deposits to be remitted to the New York Department of Taxation and Finance to be deposited in a Solid Waste Account of the Environmental Protection Fund and would be designated for use in municipal recycling and waste reduction projects; and

Whereas, These amounts, representing citizen funds, should be returned to the municipalities that must pay to collect and dispose of the uncollected bottles and cans, and used to bolster recycling programs and ensure that they are effective; and

Whereas, Senate bill S.1696 and Assembly bill A.3922, by placing a deposit on non-carbonated beverage containers, would create a positive economic incentive for consumers to properly dispose of many additional beverage containers and put the burden of recycling used beverage containers on their manufacturers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the Returnable Beverage Container Law commonly know as the “Bottle Deposit Law” or “Bottle Bill” through passage of Senate bill S.1696 and Assembly bill A.3922 to expand the scope of the law to include non-carbonated beverage containers to return all uncollected deposits municipalities.

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