



May 24, 2016

Members, Iowa House of Representatives  
Members, Iowa Senate

### **Support for Iowa's Beverage Container Recycling Refund Program**

On behalf of the midwestern union members for the glass container industry, I would like to express our strong support for the state's beverage container deposit refund program.

We are a part of the Central States Protective League, whose employees include glass container manufacturing plants in the region, as well as suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry.

It is estimated by the trade association representing this group, the Glass Packaging Institute, that 65%-80% of the recycled glass re-melted to produce new bottles and jars is sourced from Iowa and the 9 additional states with beverage container recycling refund programs. Demand for Iowa's recycled glass from the container and fiberglass industries is strong, and exceeds supply.

Iowa's beverage container recycling refund program is among the most successful in the nation, averaging a recovery rate over 80%. Removal of glass or any other container type from the current program would not only work to decrease the overall recovery rate, but may competitively disadvantage other beverage container packaging currently included in the recovery program.

A prime reason for the success of this program is that collected containers are generally kept separate from other recyclables, drastically reducing contamination and providing them the best opportunity to return to a manufacturing process.

States that rely on single-stream recycling generate more commingled glass, called "tri-mix (aka three-mix). Tri-mix is typically glass and contaminants mixed together, and is a by-product that is much more difficult to market than recycled glass from beverage container recycling refund programs.

In many cases, nearly half of the tri-mix delivered and marketed to the glass recycling plants ends up in landfills, unable to be repurchased by manufacturing end markets due to contamination. This result is not in line with the consumer's expectation they have taken the time to recycle their beverage containers and other recyclables.

Rescinding Iowa's beverage container recycling refund program will likely increase the amount of tri-mix in the market, increasing contamination levels of glass and other recyclables, and ultimately result in more glass heading to the landfill.

Separation achieved as a result of Iowa's beverage container recycling refund program also results in reduced contamination for other commodities in the single stream system (primarily aluminum, plastic and paper), assisting them in reaching manufacturing-based end markets. Lessened contamination also results in lower residual rates, and less recyclable materials heading to the landfill.

The men and women of the glass container industry are proud to make a quality package. Quality packaging requires quality feedstock for manufacturers. We want to see Iowa continue to be a part of that recyclable stream.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Best regards,

Scott

Scott Brownfield  
President, Central States Protective League, GMP