



April 21, 2015

The Honorable Thomas Saviello
Chair
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Joan Welsh
Chair
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Testimony in Opposition to Maine Legislative Draft 1204

Dear Chairs Saviello and Welsh:

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I am offering the following testimony in opposition to LD 1204, which would remove covered wine and liquor containers from the state's beverage container recycling refund program, aka "bottle bill".

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers, and suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry. Collectively, the industry directly employs 18,000 Americans in glass container manufacturing and related recycling industries.

When glass plants can increase the levels of recycled glass as part of the overall batch mix, they can reduce furnace temperatures, resulting in reduced energy use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. This is also true of other packaging and manufacturing industries.

A prime reason for the success of these programs is that collected containers are kept separate from other recyclables, drastically reducing contamination and providing them the best opportunity to return to a manufactured product.

Maine's beverage container recycling refund program is among the most successful in the nation, averaging a recovery rate of 90%. **Removal of any existing beverage container type from the program would not only work to decrease the overall recovery rate, but may competitively disadvantage other beverage container packaging remaining in the program.**

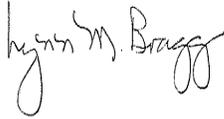
GPI estimates that 65%-80% of recycled glass used in the glass container manufacturing process is sourced from Maine and the 9 additional states with beverage container recycling refund programs. **Demand for Maine's quality recycled glass by the glass container and other manufacturers across the country is very strong, with available and ready markets.**

LD 1204 also contains a non-refundable fee on currently included wine and liquor bottles, along with other beverage containers 32 ounces and greater that would be removed from the program.

GPI is concerned that the while the justification for the fee (to improve statewide recycling), may be laudable, **the Fund and its structure contain no metrics for measuring subsequent glass recycling and recovery.** As the glass container industry and our customers would provide a substantial portion of revenue to the Fund, the ability to measure effectiveness is critical for our industry.

GPI would like to thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of our comments to your legislation. Please consider GPI and its member companies a resource and advocate for recycling related issues.

Sincerely,



Lynn M. Bragg
President

Cc: Members, Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources