

Modernizing Vermont's Bottle Bill



When Vermont passed a bottle bill back in 1972, it was one of the first in the country. In 2015, Vermont’s Universal Recycling Law Act banned recyclable containers from landfills and helped raise the state’s collection rate. Today, the Green Mountain State has an opportunity to address severe environmental challenges even more effectively by implementing ten high-performance principles for modernizing its deposit return system (DRS).

BENEFITS DELIVERED BY MODERNIZED DRS

- ENVIRONMENTAL
- ECONOMIC
- SOCIAL
- + SAVES MILLIONS FOR VT TAXPAYERS & CITIES/TOWNS**

NEW RESEARCH ON VERMONT SHOWS THE IMPACT:

8,000
METRIC TONS
OF CO₂

annually in reduced greenhouse gas emissions—the equivalent of taking over 1,805 cars off the roads in Vermont each year¹

\$1.5+
MILLION
IN SAVINGS

for Vermont cities and towns by redirecting recyclables away from costly curbside collection systems

85%
LITTER
REDUCTION

of beverage containers², creating far more livable communities

176
MILLION

additional beverage containers recycled each year, yielding over 7,400 more tons of high-value material annually.

\$41
MILLION

added to Vermont’s economy annually in Gross Value Added (GVA)³

HOW SHOULD A MODERN DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM WORK?

Accessible & Accountable

Increases access for consumers

with 272 projected locations to return containers, so redemption becomes part of a Vermonter’s daily routine

Includes more beverages containers

leading to almost 900,000 “nips” removed from roadsides and landfill streams

76% to 90% jump

in redemption rate for containers included in Vermont’s deposit return system

Industry Financed

Funded by producers

so Vermont consumers or their cities and towns do not pay for the management of these materials

Creates efficiencies

by establishing clear standards, oversight, and enforcement that optimize performance and reduce fraud

Producers will pay

\$16.7 million annually - not Vermont municipalities and consumers, as they do now

Well Managed & Regulated

Government plays an oversight and enforcement role

to ensure performance standards are met by producers and retailers and enforce a 90% collection target in Vermont

1 Calculated at: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>
2 “National Litter Study”, Keep America Beautiful. 2021 <https://kab.org/litter-study/>.
3 Gross value added (GVA) is an economic productivity metric that measures the contribution of the DRS to the state.