

Arthur Carroll
S. 208
2-27-14

Subject: 27 Feb 2014 Senate Natural Resources Report

I am the owner of two Vermont redemption centers. I'm here to speak on behalf of the one hundred redemption centers in Vermont and also for the 80% of Vermonters who approve of the Bottle Bill and want it expanded. I'm referring to the thirteen thousand responses to the 2012 Senator Doyle Town Meeting Day Survey. Compare all those numbers of people who approve of redemption compared to the handful trying to end it.

Senate Bill S.65 and House Bill H.375, both introduced early in 2013 to expand redemption, have not been allowed to be heard. These bills add to the over 30 proposed House and Senate bills in the past 20 years which never got through either the House or Senate Natural Resources committees for a vote of the full Vermont Legislature - nothing for any of the members to be proud of.

From the list of people testifying on Senate Bill S.208, it's entirely obvious that this bill primarily concerns Vermont redemption. It is meant to end Vermont's Bottle Bill. In November 2013, the Agency of Natural Resources, after extensive study, submitted the Vermont Legislature: Act 148 Implementation report. The recommendation by the ANR in this report, on page 7, was to implement Act 148 with the current Bottle Bill intact. Because the report was presented in November last year and didn't provide the results the beverage interests wanted and expected, S.208 was proposed this year. This bill provides subtle expectations. After all, it only wants to repeal the deposit on liquor bottles and all beverage containers over one liter in size. There is no good reason to reduce the variety or sizes of redeemable containers. The object here is to dismantle Vermont's Bottle Bill, piecemeal and more palatably, for not being able to end redemption otherwise. Although the cost of doing business keeps going up, there has been no change in the redemption handling fee for the past seven years. Reduced volume of containers would result in reduced income and put me and others out of business - just as hoped for.

I urge this committee to not just vote S.208 down, but to allow Senate Bill S.65 to be heard and expand Vermont's Bottle Bill to include all of the beverage containers not now covered as they are made of the same materials as containers presently redeemed. All those millions of water and other beverage containers, sent to Vermont's landfills for the past 20+ years because of beverage lobbying influence in the first required committee of both the House and Senate should have been redemption recycled instead. There is no recycling method of any kind that is more than half as successful as Vermont's Bottle Bill. Curbside recycling and single-stream recycling, whether the name given as "no sort" or "zero sort" is not at all new. It has been around nationally for over 25 years and has a recycling rate of under 45%. Because of its higher intrinsic value, aluminum, PET1 plastic, and glass containers should receive the no contamination sorting and 85% recovery rate that Vermont redemption provides. Expanding the Bottle Bill through passage of Senate Bill S.65 will greatly help assure the success of Act 148 - there is every reason it should be given that chance.

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