

Good morning, members of the committee on environment and energy. My name is Jacob Trombley. My wife and I own 4 redemption centers across Vermont. Last year we processed 5% of Vermont's used beverage containers, roughly 16 million. I am here to ensure the PRO strengthens redemption centers and does not cut us out.

Let me give you some background on myself. I have been around redemption my entire life. My father owned a gas station convenience store with a redemption center attached. When my father first started his redemption center the distributors were the ones picking up the used containers their companies produced. As far as I can tell from the redemption centers point of view the only difference between the two, is that Tomra is more efficient, but the reason I bring this up is because this bill sounds a lot like going back to how it used to be. What was the original reason for the change in the distributors handling their own waste then to now? I have other logistical questions regarding how the PRO will have distributors work with current mom-and-pop redemption centers around the state without undercutting handling fees, ultimately closing these locations so that distributors can open their own centers.

The heart of this bill is all about creating and running a PRO to take charge of the bottle bills future, and honestly, the way it is laid out the structure and the responsibilities feels reasonable. It has a clear plan for who does what and that's a start. But here is where we have concerns, this PRO puts the companies who are supposed to follow the rules in the driver's seat letting them manage how the rules get put into action and whether the big goals, like hitting 90% redemption, actually happens. That is a problem, regulatory capture, where the regulated twist things to their own advantage is a mess you see at every level of government, from local boards to DC. This set up feels like its starting with that capture already locked in and we are just supposed to hope it sorts itself out down the road. Im not comfortable with that and frankly neither should you.

we think the PRO needs at least one redemption center owner and an independent expert on recycling systems, like and NGO such as Container Recycling Institute to balance it out. Manufacturers and distributors bear the bottle bills weight and they should! They have built a massive industry into trash without a real clean up plan. But expecting them to eagerly push Vermont's redemption to its best potential is wishful thinking. They are too burdened to care that much, we need other voices at the table to make this work.

We want to work with the state, distributors, other redemption centers and other groups of interest to expand the bottle bill and make recycling used beverage containers more efficient. As a side note John Langus from Putney road in Brattleboro made some very compelling statements yesterday and we support their take on this bill as well.