May 6, 2026

Maggie Lenz on behalf of the Vermont Retail & Grocers Association

Re: H.915

VRGA members would be affected by H.915 in different ways because they occupy different roles in Vermont's beverage container system. For that reason, the Association is neutral on the bill as a whole. However, VRGA strongly supports the increase in handling fee for its redemption center members.

We would like to flag two concerns with the current draft:

1) Although the current draft includes an exemption for retailers under 5,000 square feet once a stewardship plan is in place, we are concerned that some of the smaller stores could still be identified as necessary redemption points because of geographic necessity.

   These smaller stores have limited space, limited staff capacity, and, in many cases, food preparation areas that must be kept separate from dirty containers and the pests, odors, and sanitation issues they can create. We have heard from smaller members that even under the current system, this can be a challenge.

2) VRGA echoes recent VPIRG testimony requesting clarity around how single-feed reverse vending machines will fit within the larger system when they are located in municipalities or counties that have already satisfied the bill's minimum redemption-access requirements. Once that minimum network is satisfied, it remains unclear what will happen to existing RVM setups and whether retailers using them today can continue to do so as additional redemption opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the bill.

Maggie Lenz