

Updating the Massachusetts Bottle Bill

Support the inclusion of strong “modern bottle bill” language in upcoming omnibus climate legislation.

Join [Plastic Free Mass](#), a coalition of environmental organizations in MA, to get a strong Bottle Bill update across the finish line. We’ve adopted a list of essential principles for a modern bottle bill that we support [here](#).

What the new law should include:

- **Cover almost all glass, plastic, and aluminum beverage containers**, from nips to 3 liters.
- **Increase deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents**. Include a requirement to assess return rates over time to determine if future increases are needed.
- **Enable beverage container return** to any store that sells bottled and/or canned drinks.
- **Incentivize transition** from single use plastic bottles to reusable glass bottles and a regional beverage refill system.

Why do we want these things?

- **Save cities and towns money**. Disposal and curbside recycling of beverage containers is costly to municipalities and taxpayers. Producers should be required to pay a handling fee that pays for bottles and cans to be recycled and refilled.
- **Make our communities cleaner**. Modernizing the Bottle Bill would significantly reduce the amount of beverage container and non-beverage container litter in the Commonwealth, providing both ecological and public health benefits with reduced environmental exposure to toxics.
- **Reduce carbon emissions**. Modernizing the Bottle Bill helps fight climate change: This proposal is estimated to be the carbon emissions equivalent of **taking 39,800 cars off the road for a year** – and it won’t cost taxpayers a cent!
- **Increase best use of material**. Modernizing the Bottle Bill would mean that more glass and plastic bottles would actually be recycled rather than repurposed or disposed of. In 2021, almost all of the approx. 100,000 tons of glass in the curbside recycling system was not recycled, but ground up and used as landfill cover or to build roads. Curbside plastic bottles are likewise downcycled into textiles, not made back into bottles.



How much money will a modern bottle bill save?

- Cities and towns would save money on waste management, litter cleanup, and curbside recycling. About 175,000 tons of beverage containers end up in the trash in Massachusetts each year, and taxpayers pay for all landfill waste disposal in the form of “tipping fees” or “gate fees.” That tonnage, as well as beverage containers currently in curbside recycling, could be diverted from municipal waste streams into beverage return systems, saving residents millions.
- Reloop North America did a comprehensive analysis of bottle deposits in the Northeast. [You can read the full report here.](#)
- Reloop estimates that if a modern Bottle Bill were implemented, the **total municipal savings in Massachusetts would be between \$26.7 million and \$36.5 million a year.**
- In the City of Boston alone, Reloop estimates that the City will see a net savings of \$4.1 million to \$4.4 million a year.

Members of Plastic Free Mass: Alliance for Climate and Environmental Stewards; Be the Solution to Pollution; Berkshire Environmental Action Team; Berkshire Zero Waste Initiative; Beyond Plastics, Greater Boston; Charles River Watershed Association; Clean Water Action; Climate Reality Project, MA Southcoast; Connecticut River Conservancy; Conservation Law Foundation; Container Recycling Institute; Environmental League of MA; Friends of the Malden River; Just Zero; Keep Stoneham Beautiful; Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light; Metropolitan Area Planning Council; MetroWest Climate Solutions; Mothers Out Front; Mystic River Watershed Association; Oceana; Progressive Democrats of MA; Progressive Massachusetts; Seaside Sustainability; Sheffield Saves; Slingshot; Students for Environmental Action; The Story of Stuff Project; UMass Dartmouth MassPIRG; Zero Waste Arlington

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