



New York State Joint Legislative Budget Hearing - Environmental Conservation February 7, 2024

New York Deposit Law (S237B/A6353) & Climate Change Superfund Act (S.2129-A/A.3351-A)

Dear Senator Krueger & Assemblymember Weinstein,

The New York City & Eastern Long Island Chapters of the Surfrider Foundation support the expansion of the New York Deposit Law, also known as the Better Bottle Bill (S237B/A6353). Surfrider Foundation is an environmental organization dedicated to protecting our oceans, beaches and coastal communities and we support expanding the bottle bill so that we reduce the amount of litter we find in our communities and reduce the negative effects to underserved communities from the manufacturing and disposal of beverage containers.

Our New York chapters host a lot of beach cleanups every year, with around 35 cleanups in 2023 and we record data on the trash collected at each cleanup. Plastic beverage bottles are always some of the most commonly found items. Last year, we collected 1,526 plastic bottles and 3,694 plastic bottle caps and rings. Other items we found that are related to the beverage industry are 428 glass bottles and 640 aluminum beverage bottles.

Expanding the deposit law to include wine, spirits, hard cider, and most non-carbonated beverages will reduce litter that is ending up on our beaches and communities. Increasing the deposit fee from 5-cents to 10-cents will increase the redemption rate, as this has been proven successful in other states that have expanded their bottle bill. For example, in Michigan, the deposit fee is 10-cent and their redemption rate was 89% in 2019. We also support raising the handling fee so that redemption centers are still able to provide redemption access to

communities. It is time for NYS to expand the deposit law to address the state's waste issue and the effects it has on wildlife and human health. We urge the Assembly and Senate to include the Better Bottle Bill (S237B/A6353) in their one-house budget.

The Surfrider Foundation also supports the Climate Change Superfund Act (S.2129-A/A.3351-A). This State level bill would hold the world's biggest oil and gas companies accountable and responsible for a portion of the climate-related damages that they've created. As new Yorkers, we saw first hand in 2023 the worsening effects of climate change (heat waves, wildfire smoke, flash flooding, damaging coastal storms, etc), and it's time for New York to address all of these issues and invest in upgrading our roads, beaches, infrastructures and service to protect us from these rapid and dangerous changes.

However, it shouldn't fall on taxpayers to pay for all of those projects, while big oil companies keep making record profits. It costs about \$272 per NY household per year to address climate change damages while the world's biggest oil companies made a record \$750 billion in profits since 2021. A national [poll](#) by Data for Progress found an overwhelming majority of American voters support a Climate Superfund that makes companies pay a share of climate costs caused by their pollution.

The Climate Change Superfund Act would charge a proportional fee to any oil, coal, or gas company that has emitted over one billion tons of carbon pollution from 2000 to 2018 in the US. These fees will raise \$3 billion a year towards the estimated \$10 billion needed annually to address the climate crisis. The funds will then be spent on job-creating infrastructure projects designed to adapt, avoid and repair the negative impacts of climate change. It is also important to mention that the fees imposed on the companies will not result in any gas price increase at the pump. One, it will be prevented due to the impact of competitive market forces, and two, the price of oil is set by a global market. We urge the Assembly and Senate to include the Climate Change Superfund Act (S.2129A/A.3351A) in their one-house budget.

Lisa Salomon, New York City Chapter Manager
Surfrider Foundation New York City
lsalomon@nyc.surfrider.org

Jenna Schwerzmann, Eastern Long Island Chapter Manager
Surfrider Foundation Eastern Long Island
jschwerzmann@easternli.surfrider.org