



**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

HEARING ON THE BOTTLE BILL

Monday, October 23, 2023

Comments from New York's Wine Producers

1. I'm Carol Doolittle. In 1979 my husband and I co-founded Frontenac Point Vineyard Estate Winery – Farm Winery #44. There are now almost 500 wineries in NYS.
2. I am testifying on behalf of the New York Wine Policy Institute, which represents the state's wine industry on policy issues.
3. We appreciate this opportunity to comment on solutions to increase the effectiveness of New York's bottle bill.
4. Because all versions of the proposed EPR legislation exclude producers subject to the bottle deposit law we ask that wine bottles not be added to the bottle deposit program. We believe an analysis of EPR may determine that EPR is more efficient and cost-effective for both wineries and State recycling objectives.
5. We are generally concerned about the combined impact of the deposit and added back-end costs on the retail price of our wines, and the resulting effect that the higher prices will have on our competitiveness against regions and wineries with lower production costs.
6. NY wineries are currently exploring washing/re-filling wine bottles. If wine bottles are crushed, they can't be re-filled. The so-called soft landing/storage of re-fillable containers requires a huge amount of storage space. And I understand that redeemed bottles are crushed, in part, to eliminate double redemption.
7. If wine is included in the Bottle Bill, we applaud the change in the latest proposal that exempts craft beverage bottlers from redemption obligations. In the absence of other convenient redemption retail locations for consumers, we agree that redemption centers should be given the resources and technology they need to handle the extra 'product.'
8. Since most redemption centers don't have reverse vending machines (RVMs) a brand owner cannot be identified by a bar code reader. Consequently, a brand owner can be over-billed for the number of recyclables taken by the recycler/hauler. All redemption centers should have to install RVMs.

9. If wine bottles breaking in single stream collection bins contaminating paper/cardboard is a concern, then ALL glass jars, bottles must be included in the deposit/redemption process. Salsa, pickle, olives – all of them.

10. We also suggest that you review the wine bottle deposit program in Ontario, Canada, which was implemented in 2007. Winery owners in Ontario support their deposit law because it is mutually beneficial – to the goal of recycling and their business. Some key features:
 - 20 cent deposit on wine bottles – a REAL incentive to redeem them.
 - Wineries collect the deposit, send it to Ottawa
 - Redemptions are only at The Beer store; not a winery or LCBO.
 - Unredeemed deposits are retained by the bottler to cover their costs to comply with the law.