



South Shore Audubon Society

Post Office Box Thirty-One
Freeport, New York 11520
<http://ssaudubon.org>



January 26, 2026

Re: proposed budget pursuant to Article 2, Section 31-a of the Legislative Law

Re: Senate S5684 / Assembly A6543

AND

The bill's relevance to the NYS Ocean Acidification Taskforce Final Report (NYSOATF)

By email: wamchair@nyassembly.gov AND financechair@nysenate.gov

Dear Senate Finance Committee and Assembly Ways and Means Committee:

The final report of the NYS Ocean Acidification Taskforce sheds a great deal of light about why we need passage of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill (S5684).^{1,2} The NYOATF reveals unequivocally why collection at redemption centers is far superior to curbside municipal collections, which perpetuates a misleading myth about the material that is collected curbside.

This mythology comes into poignant focus on Page 23 of the NYOATF (1-10.), which discusses the potential use of ground glass to help recontour bay bottoms. This recommendation seeks a beneficial use for junk waste - waste that we should avoid engendering in the first place. Curbside glass collected for recycling has a small market and is in excess supply because it's contaminated. Using it for benthic repair would be like using dirty glass for roadbed aggregate. Certainly, it would be better to find some use for this inferior glass if we are foremost making efforts to minimize the amount of contaminated glass we collect in the future.

The contaminated glass is unmarketable because it was collected at the curbside by municipal recycling programs. Glass containers collected through curbside are color-mixed, broken, and contaminated-that's why they have a negative market value. Municipalities seek to get rid of unmarketable curbside glass without being charged for it, but this scenario speaks far more to the inefficiency of curbside recycling than it does to the potential use of contaminated recycled glass.

Glass recycled through deposit systems is far more efficient than glass collected curbside. Glass bottles collected through New York's deposit system are marketable because they're source-separated and clean. Consequently, we must encourage greater contributions to our deposit system and much less to municipal curbside systems. The Bigger Better Bottle Bill

(S5684) would incentivize more recycling of beverage containers by increasing deposits to ten cents and by expanding types of eligible bottles.

Moreover, if we down-cycle recycled glass on our roads and marine ecosystems, we will not displace virgin materials used to make glass bottles and jars. The Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act (PRRIA) (S1464)³ seeks to change this problem by requiring minimum recycled content in glass and other containers. In this way, both bills work in tandem.

Besides the optics of using contaminated glass for benthic repair that would distract us from the task of collecting more marketable recycled glass, there is no evidence that utilizing virgin gravel exceeds the energy it took to collect and process the glass bottles in the first place. The energy and material savings of this approach vs. using virgin gravel (clean dredge material) are questionable. Rather than focusing effort on potentially utilizing unmarketable recycled glass in the marine environment, we should legislate ways to maximize the highest quality recycled glass and thereby minimize the energy and resources required to use virgin materials.

We urge serious consideration of including Senate S5684 / Assembly A6543 in your budget negotiations. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

On behalf of our Board of Directors,

Guy Jacob
Conservation Co-Chair
South Shore Audubon Society
<https://www.ssaudubon.org/>



The mission of the South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to Long Island bird populations, wildlife, and habitat; and to preserve and restore Long Island's environment through responsible advocacy, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

Resources:

1. https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/oatfdraftreport.pdf
2. [NY State Senate Bill 2025-S5684](#)
3. <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/S1464>