

Chicago Crosby

My name is Chicago and I am a canner and have been so for the past 12 years. It is not an occupation I had endeavored to do, but at the time, reasons left me choiceless, as I partially explained in an interview aired by CNN 2 or 3 years ago, this month. The common fallacy is that it's very easy work, since it only involves picking up bottles/cans, when we see them littered about! It is not, though, an occupation I'd advise anyone to enter into, except in dire circumstances, as mine had been at the time I did so. It is also filled with danger, which causes it to be a perilous undertaking, due to lack of public concern or support.

We're being robbed as we leave the redemption center, as those who've filed police reports can attest. We're being beaten to within an inch of our lives, as reported by the New York Post and Daily News, with photos included. There has even been an incident where an acidic compound was sprinkled in an outdoor trash can, with the attempt to cause harm to canners seeking to recover redeemables from it. Fortunately, I was saved from harm by policemen hidden around the area, with hopes of discovering the culprit(s) responsible. However, canner safety and well-being is not the immediate concern at this time.

I would like to speak about an astounding discovery I viewed at the onset of the Covid-19 "stay home" demand.

At that time, the redemption areas and centers also closed! There I was, out on the streets, continuing to collect anyway. The number of bags hanging from fences waiting to be collected by canners was amazing! There, they remained until the owners were forced to reclaim them, as canners had no way to redeem them! Rather than place them curbside for the Department of Sanitation to take them, they were placed in backyards or basements. Once one begins collecting redeemables, it becomes a habit, I know! Not only am I

told such, but I cannot pass a corner bin or trash can without looking inside for any that are redeemable.

Raising and/or revising the current Bottle Bill would be a very wise and well overdue undertaking. It's a cause that will have a very definite and much needed effect! The grumbling and anger will prove positive, though to what extent cannot be measured, but however great or small, it will prove environmentally positive! Canners fear that, should the deposit be raised, they may end up earning less, due to consumers beginning to collect towards their own benefits in redeeming and not tossing them into the garbage cans as many of them do presently. In that action, there will definitely be a downside! What they do not realize, is that it (collecting) will become a habit, as not only I can attest, but also the people and families that have done so on my behalf for years! The impact from raising the deposit from 5c to 10-15c could/would only prove positive!

As a canner, of which there are many, I've been collecting redeemable cans/bottles for well over 12 years. The first 2-3 years were for environmental purposes and given by bagfuls, to canners, for reasons of survival-until I myself acquired that very same need!

Many of us- if not all, have, for lack of a better description, patrons, who collect within their households and specifically for the canner(s) of their neighborhood. There have even been instances where our benefactors come to realize the worth of their donated bounty and cease donating—becoming appreciative of its financial value and begin retaining the redeemables for themselves and/or their own households! It's happened to me more times than I care to admit, with other canners experiencing the very same! This reaction is at its present cost of 5 centers per! Once collection begins and regardless of its reason, be it financial or environmental awareness, the practice of tossing them away ends! It then becomes habitual. The psychological impact, though subtle, is astounding! I have had drivers pull along beside me, seeing my cart

full of cans/bottles, get out and open their trunks after removing what they've inside the car, first!

The only thing that will not change, however, is beverage consumption! They will not discontinue buying or consuming the amounts of water, beer, and soda. Grocery buying with ever-rising prices, has not changed, though some products have faltered a bit, but not stopped. This revision of 5-10c or more, will not affect consumer spending.

Maintaining the bill as it is presently only to assuage anger and resentment, holds little to no validity! Consumers will not cease purchases of their favored beverages, due to an increase of 5 to 10 cents! This is no time to be in support of businesses, whilst ignoring the overall health of the planet that supports us all! It is the greater good that is in need of advancement.

It's time America join other countries and begin instituting changes that will garner positive results for the planet as a whole. At present, we are doing very little toward this endeavor, but beginning with these changes, will affect advancements in other areas that will require certain reinforcements. As a concerned nation, we shall work our way upward. Thank you!