

Senate Bill

Act Number: 2023-06

23 October 2023

Introduced by: Senator Aidan D'Orta

Proposed by: Secretary of Governmental Affairs James Pacal

Whereas: The Student Government Association (SGA) of Ramapo College of New Jersey is the liaison body to the Faculty, Staff, Administration, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Governors of Ramapo College of New Jersey;

Whereas: Ramapo College of New Jersey promotes sustainability on campus with initiatives such as Ramapo Green and the opening of Ramapo College's Sharp Sustainability Education Center, the establishment of sustainability as a fundamental principle, and the signing of Second Nature's Climate Commitment;

Whereas: Aluminum, glass, and #1 PET plastic is recycled at higher rates when the materials stream is clean and consistent, which is what Deposit Return Systems (DRS) provides; most beverages are put in these types of containers;

Whereas: Every year in New Jersey more than 6 billion beverage containers are either littered, landfilled, or incinerated which creates litter, pollutes our air, water, or land, and wastes energy;

Whereas: 10 states that have a DRS; California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Vermont;

Whereas: The recycling rate for beverage containers is much higher. For example, the recycling rate for #1 PET Plastic is 62% in DRS states vs just 13% in states without a DRS([Container Recycling Institute: Bottle Bills](#));

Whereas: Beverage bottles make up 40% to 60% of all roadside litter in non-deposit states. States with a DRS reduce beverage container litter up to 84% and overall litter up to 65% ([Retail Industry Leaders Association: Fact Sheet, 2023](#));

Whereas: A modern bottle bill would put deposits on beer, soda, water, wine and liquor containers and would require some refillable containers;

Whereas: A Bottle Bill will complement and support the existing Clean Communities and recycling programs that municipalities rely upon for litter abatement. In addition, New Jersey passed a Recycled Content law which requires that certain consumer products or their packaging contain a percentage of recycled content material. A Bottle Bill also would complement the Recycled Content law by ensuring a steady stream of clean materials needed for these new manufacturing and packaging requirements;

Whereas: A DRS with a minimum 10-cent refundable deposit on most beverage containers would dramatically increase New Jersey's recycling rate for these containers. It would save energy, prevent litter, and keep recyclable materials from landfills and incinerators. In some states, the unclaimed deposit money goes back to the states and helps fund environmental programs and other fiscal needs;

Whereas: In April 2023, now-retired NBC-NY environmental reporter Brian Thompson, did an interview with NJ Governor Murphy in which he asked whether the Governor would support a Bottle Return Bill such as we see in ten other states, including NY and CT. Governor Murphy indicated that he has no idea why we don't have one, and that he supports it in concept;

Whereas: Over the phone, NJ Assembly Speaker Coughlin agreed that it was something that should be studied. A few weeks later, the Governor's office reached-out to offer help in making the concept a reality;

Whereas: Over 60 organizations already support the concept of a bottle bill in New Jersey by filling out a Statement of Support via a Google Forum: <https://forms.gle/MohdPjmBUZvRSava9>;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Ramapo College of New Jersey Student Government Association will sign a bill of support for the bottle deposit bill proposal presented by the now-retired environmental reporter Brian Thompson.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Ramapo College of New Jersey SGA President will fill out the requested Google Forum as a Statement of Support for the Bottle Deposit Bill initiative.

Shannon DeCicco

Shannon DeCicco
President '23 - '24

Madison Weeks

Madison Weeks
Senate President '23- '24