

Comment Report

HF 872

A bill for an act relating to the redemption of beverage containers, providing civil penalties, and including effective date provisions.(Formerly HF 814, HSB 252; See HF 892.)

Subcommittee Members: Bossman-CH, Brink, Konfrst

Date: 04/27/2021

Time: 08:00 AM

Location: RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult

Name: Jessica Mazour

Comment: Please vote no on HF872. Iowa's Bottle Deposit Program is overwhelmingly popular and a majority of Iowans want to see it stay the way it is or expand it. HF 872 does the opposite.We opposed allowing grocery stores the option to optout.We would like to see the handling fee increased to 2cents.We should expand the types of containers in the program to include water, juice, and sports drinks.We should increase the deposit amount to 10cents to increase the rate of return.HF 872 makes it less convenient to recycle and the result will be more cans and bottles in our water, landfills and the side of the road. Vote no on HF 872.

Name: S Sweeney

Comment: Vote NO on HF 872 Please do not limit where bottles and cans can be returned in Iowa. The bottle bill should not be partisan, it should be updated and expanded to include more types of bottles and drinks. I personally think the deposit should be 10 cents and more money returned to retailers and redemption centers to get people to return them and in turn keep our state clean. Recycling is important, stop filling up the landfills.

Name: Frank Potter

Comment: I see one state gives 15 cents for bottle and can returns so I hope Iowa will be at least 15 cents.Frank from Dubuque

Name: Patrick Bosold

Comment: Everybody including retailers, grocery stores and other points of purchase needs to stay engaged in accepting used beverage containers and keeping them out of Iowa's waters, roadsides and landfills. HF 872 isn't helping. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." If anything, we should be keeping all current places of redemption engaged in this program AND start including in it more types of beverage containers, such as those for sports drinks, water and tea. It would also be a good idea to increase the handling fee from one cent to two cents, to give redemption centers more incentive to stay open, or reopen, and give the public another option for responsibly disposing of their empty beverage containers.HF 872 is not good public policy, it takes us in exactly the wrong direction. Please vote NO on HF 872.

Name: Sue Wilson

Comment: Vote NO on HF 872. If passed this bill takes the convenience out of recycling by allowing grocery stores to optout of taking back cans and bottles. If Iowans cannot return their cans and bottles at their place of purchase, those cans and bottles will likely end up in the landfill, ditches or our water. Iowans overwhelmingly like the bottle bill and want to see it expanded not gutted. We should include sports drinks, water bottles, and tea. We should increase the handling fee from 1cent to 2cents so redemption centers can earn a living wage. We want to increase the number of

bottles and cans that are recycled this bill does the opposite. Please VOTE NO on HF 872

Name: Linda Meloy

Comment: Please vote NO on H.F. 872. A significant number of Iowans, more than a majority even, want the bottle bill to be expanded and not limited. My tenyearold grandson wonders why sports, water, and tea bottles are not included to save the environment from the mouths of babes I believe is the saying. Further, I know of no scientific studies or data sets that have established a health risk from can recycling at grocery stores where the deposits have been paid for the duration of this outstanding service to, first, the environment, and second, to the establishment of the recycling business in our state. Thank you for your attention to my comments. L. L. Meloy

Name: Jody Gibson

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Name: Hannah Hayes

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Name: Thomas Reardon

Comment: The Iowa bottledeposit law is a longstanding piece of extraordinarily successful and popular legislation that needs to be strengthened by upping the deposit and including items such as juice containers that dont currently require a deposit. Polls show its popularity, and its success (although the numbers are readily available) can be gauged just by personal experience. As I hike or fish in our state parks, I usually carry a trash bag to pick up litter, and the overwhelming majority of containers I find do not have the Iowa deposit stamp. The success of this law rests on two legs, the incentive to return (the deposit) and the convenience to do so (after all the deposit is quite small). Yet HF 872 would greatly weaken the law by cutting off the convenience leg. Not only will this adversely affect the environment and our enjoyment of it but will in effect create a sneaky tax by charging Iowans for services they will not get. Please vote against this sneaky tax bill.

Name: Nancy Porter

Comment: Please rewrite this bill to include a ten cent deposit so Redemption Centers can become profitable. Please put in place Redemption Centers that are convenient and open to the public (close and convenient to their homes) using kiosks if applicable. Please allow penalties and oversight to enforce Redemption which is supported by 70% of Iowans in a poll that could still be off by 10 percent and still represent a large majority. Make this bill include plastic which is ruining our waters and harming many animals. Make Redemption profitable for all, easy for Iowans, and a job market for those in need. Thank you!

Name: Margo Vanderhill

Comment: Keep the bottle bill, but increase the handling fee from 1 cent to 2 cents. Bottles should be recycled near consumers rather than consumers having to make long trips to bring them to recycling stations. Increase the types of beverage containers that can be recycled, including plastic containers so that we can keep our roadsides, parts, and waterways cleaner while recovering valuable resources such as metal, plastics, and glass.

Name: Leland Freie

Comment: Vote NO on HF 872, Grocers sell the cans, they need to take them back as well. More beverage containers need to be included as well. Look at Oregon's bill and Michigan's bill. It's unconscionable that we haven't raised the redemption fee since the 70's. No matter WHO you are or what your job is, we owe it to future generations to raise the deposit fee and to increase the redemption fee for ALL involved. It's the principle of the thing. It's ridiculous to drive 20 miles, how environmentally unfriendly. I'm 70 years old, it's about TIME Iowa steps up to the plate. Leland Freie

Name: Dennis Stewart

Comment: Please vote no on HF 872. We should be discussing how to strengthen our bottle policy, not weaken or eliminate it. We just celebrated the 51 Earth Day in our communities and it is more important than ever to understand why we need a strong bottle bill, that does not allow companies to opt out of taking back returns. No business that sells products, that charge a deposit, should be allowed to not take them back. This idea is absurd. These businesses need to take back those containers that they have sold to the public, that is just a fact. No business should be allowed to say no, otherwise they should not be able to sell that product, it is just that easy. We the people, should be the ones setting the standard for the returns, not the businesses. Please say no to HF 872, our future generations need a clean earth and this bill will not help that.

Name: Mark Sarcone

Comment: Vote NO on HF 872. If passed this bill takes the convenience out of recycling by allowing grocery stores to opt out of taking back cans and bottles. If Iowans cannot return their cans and bottles at their place of purchase, those cans and bottles will likely end up in the landfill, ditches or our water. Iowans overwhelmingly like the bottle bill and want to see it expanded not gutted. We should include sports drinks, water bottles, and tea. We should increase the handling fee from 1 cent to 2 cents so redemption centers can earn a living wage. We want to increase the number of bottles and cans that are recycled this bill does the opposite. Please vote no on HF 872.

Name: Nancy Pinkerton

Comment: Please vote NO on HF 872. This bill makes it less convenient to recycle by allowing grocery stores to opt out of taking back the bottles and cans. Iowans want to see the bottle bill expanded. We should include more types of bottles such as water bottles, sport drinks, and teas. We need to increase the handling charge from 1 cent to 2 cents so redemption centers can earn a living. It is important to increase the number of bottles that are recycled so less are sent to the landfills and ditches.

Name: Kara Trebil-Smith

Comment: Please Vote NO on HF 872. The Bottle Bill is popular among Iowans we should be thinking about how to expand it so we can keep even more waste out of our ditches and landfills while also ensuring the people working at redemption centers are able to earn a fair wage. Please Vote NO on HF 872.

Name: Jessi Carver

Comment: Vote no on HF 872. Iowans want expanded redemption options for bottles and cans. Vote no on HF 872 and introduce legislation that holds corporations accountable for the waste they produce.

Name: Syndy Conger

Comment: Thank you for your attention to the bottle bill and your willingness to hold a meeting to address fees and penalties. Here are suggestions in order of importance (1 most important):1. Double (at least) the handling fee to 2 cents. 3 cents would be even better. This will make program more attractive to more attractive for retailers and independent recycling businesses.2. Increase the deposit fee. This will make the program more attractive to consumers, lower income collectors of roadside cans, and will keep more containers in the supply chain.3. Assign the collection of data on unclaimed deposits and any penalties to the Department of Revenue. Collection of these monies should be as automatic and transparent as possible.4. Dedicate the income from unclaimed deposits and any penalties to the recycling goal: offer grants to vendors to modernize their equipment and and to entrepreneurs to open recycling centers in areas with little or none

Name: Pam Mackey-Taylor

Comment: I urge you to oppose this bill. The Sierra Club supports increasing the handling fee from 1 cent to 2 cents; keeping the 10minute convenience standard where the redemption center is 10 minutes or less from the dealer selling the beverage; and expanding the kinds of containers to include juice, teas, water. Further dealers who do not accept empty containers should be penalized that is a huge problem today in that some stores who sell the beverages are refusing to take the returns. Expecting customers to travel beyond 10 minutes to a redemption center is unreasonable and will result in cans not being returned, leading to littered ditches.

Name: Shannon Patrick

Comment: Let's fix this bill properly so that it works in the long term and don't have to keep talking about it every year. To make it durable: (1) move administration and disbursements of unclaimed deposits to a more appropriate state agency, (2) bring the handling fee and deposit up to date a 2 cents fee is better, but either 3 cents and a 10 cent deposit or builtin scheduled increases are what is really needed. Also, (3) phase in additional containers redeemed to include water, tea, sports drinks, and juice that use the same materials as currently redeemable containers. The bottle bill does a lot of good for Iowa, from keeping our ditches clean to supporting manufacturer to providing a gig to help out lowincome Iowans. Let's give it the 40year tuneup it needs and let it continue to do good.

Name: Carolyn Stephenson

Comment: Vote NO on HF 872. Without the convenience of recycling cans and bottles at a local grocery store those cans and bottles will likely end up in the landfill, ditches or our water. Iowans overwhelmingly like the bottle bill and it has helped keep our roadways cleaner for the past 20 years. Iowans want to see it expanded not gutted. We should include sports drinks, water bottles, and tea. We should increase the handling fee from 1cent to 2cents so redemption centers can earn a living wage. We want to increase the number of bottles and cans that are recycled this bill does the opposite. Please vote no on HF 872.

Name: Gaylen Wobeter

Comment: Please improve the Bottle Bill by including water, tea, sports drinks, and juice that use the same containers as those currently redeemed. Raising the handling fee to 3 cents and the deposit to 10 cents totally makes sense considering how the value of money has changed in 40 years. Change the administration and disbursement of unclaimed deposits to a more appropriate state agency. Making these changes will help every segment of the Iowa economy and will make a big impact on our

environment.

Name: Linda Schreiber

Comment: Please see attached.

RE: Public Hearing HF 872 – April 27, 2021

House Ways and Means Committee members

My name is Linda Schreiber, representing the League of Women Voters of Iowa. We appreciate lawmakers' efforts to update the bottle bill throughout this Legislative session. The bottle bill (Iowa's Container Deposit Law) has served the state well for over 40 years. Everyone agrees it's time for an update. The League would like to see improvements to the bottle bill that benefit Iowa consumers.

HF 872 improvements:

- Requires a registered universal product code and
- Expands civil enforcement procedures and penalties for violations (up to \$2,500).
- Any person may establish a redemption center to serve a dealer if it is approved by the Department of Natural Resources.

HF 872 concerns:

- The term dealer is not defined in the proposal – what or who is identified as a dealer?
- Any person can establish an unapproved redemption center without registering with the DNR. Will these pop-up centers be regulated? How will the DNR know where these centers exist? How will customers find these centers if they can open and close at will?
- Counties with 30,000 or more population may allow dealers that are within 10 miles of a redemption center to enter into a contract for service.
- Counties with fewer than 30,000 population may allow dealers that are within 15 miles of a redemption center to enter into a contract for service.

Driving to redeem will discourage redemption which means more plastic containers will be landfilled.

Plastic takes decades to decompose and leeches toxins into the soil that ultimately seeps into the state's waterways. Redemption is critical to conserving energy and natural resources and maintaining a supply chain for manufacturers. Iowa's current law requires all sellers to redeem.

If Iowa lawmakers truly want a Container Redemption Law that is successful they should look to the states where redemption is the highest. Michigan has a 91 percent redemption rate. One of the most successful components of that state's law is the ability to track beverage sales.

I urge you to shift the responsibilities for the bottle bill to an Iowa department that could create a transparent accounting system to track beverage sales, manage deposit fees and refund retailers and redemption centers for the deposits they payout to consumers and authorize a chargeback system for distributors to reimburse handling fees for beverages sold. And equally important: enforce and regulate fines to those entities that aren't following the law.

The state would be able to recoup the cost of administering the accounting program with a beverage administrative fee and also offer grants from the unclaimed deposits to a) retail for technology updates (like reverse vending) and b) environmental groups for eco-friendly projects and environmental improvements.

This one step could be a game-changer for the state's bottle bill and create a fair, equitable program for everyone – distributors, retail and customers.

A better bottle bill would increase deposit fees to 10 cents and the handling fee to 3 cents and tie all increases to the cost of living to initiate an automatic fee adjustment at appropriate points to provide a timely revenue-generating mechanism.

A great bottle bill would also expand allowable containers redeemed to include water, tea, sports drinks, and juice that use the same materials as currently redeemable containers.

A really wonderful bottle bill would require future beverage sellers to outfit all new construction with redemption facilities along the exterior perimeter of their facility.

Redemption supports the economy, encourages the development of new industries to create new ways to repurpose container materials, which helps preserve natural resources and grow jobs. The more ways that containers can be reused or repurposed the better.

Vote no on HF 872 and support these simple steps maintain costs within the industries affected and won't raise or pass costs to taxpayers or consumers and that keeps a net-neutral bottle bill for Iowans.

Thank you –

Linda Schreiber
LWVIA Advocacy

Name: Linda Schreiber

Comment: See attached.