

FINAL REPORT
MANAGEMENT OF BEVERAGE CONTAINERS
INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE

January 1995

AUTHORIZATIONS AND APPOINTMENT

The Management of Beverage Containers Interim Study Committee was established by the Legislative Council for the 1994 Legislative Interim. The charge of the Committee was to "review the issues of waste management, collection and disposition of household waste, recycling, markets for recycled materials, the enforcement of bans, and the efficacy of the present beverage container deposit law." In addition, the Committee was to "study the costs associated with these issues, and the effect of these issues on consumers, business, Iowa's economy, and the environment."

Members serving on the Committee were:

Senator Bill Fink, Co-chairperson
Representative Mary Lundby, Co-chairperson
Senator Michael Gronstal
Senator Wilmer Rensink
Senator Sheldon Rittmer
Senator Al Sorensen
Representative Barry Brauns
Representative Michael Cataldo
Representative Chuck Gipp
Representative Linda Nelson

COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

The Committee was authorized two meeting days which were held on November 14th and November 28th. The remainder of this report summarizes the proceedings of the two meetings and the recommendations which the Committee adopted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Most of the focus of the Committee was on an assessment of the current mandatory deposit legislation and the issue of expanding the present system to include additional beverages which would require a five cent deposit. The current beverage container law (popularly known as the bottle bill) requires a five cent deposit on all carbonated beverages and wine and spirits.

The Committee also discussed elimination of the existing ban on polystyrene. Section 455D.16 of the Code of Iowa, currently provides that beginning January 1, 1996, a person shall not manufacture, offer for sale, sell, or use any polystyrene packaging products or food service items in this state.

In addition, the Committee heard testimony on waste reduction and recycling relating to changes that were made during the 1994 Legislative Session. Beginning July 1, 1995, these changes would penalize planning areas that do not meet the 25 percent waste reduction and recycling goals required by section 455D.3 of the Code of Iowa.

NOVEMBER 14, 1994 MEETING

Testimony was presented by Ms. Teresa Hay, Division Administrator, Waste Management Assistance Division, Department of Natural Resources, who briefly described the state's role in the bottle deposit system and discussed solid waste management requirements and Ms. Tere Caldwell-Johnson, Director, Metro Waste Authority, Des Moines, who presented waste stream characterizations based upon Metro Waste's waste sort and discussed the results of a study comparing bottle deposit programs with curbside recycling programs. The Iowa State Association of Counties was represented through a panel of persons, Mr. Dave Hogan, Executive Director, Blue Stem Solid Waste Agency, Cedar Rapids, Mr. Jim Ulveling, Director, Carroll County Solid Waste Agency, Carroll, and Mr. Don Wurtzel, Director, Spectrum Industries, Decorah. The panel discussed sanitary disposal in each of their respective solid waste agencies and the methodology for measuring achievement of the state's waste volume reduction and recycling goals.

The focus of the remainder of the meeting was solely upon the bottle deposit system in Iowa. The grocery industry was represented by Ms. Rose Mitchell, Hy-Vee, Mr. Jim Waters, Sioux Center, Hy-Vee store manager, Mr. Butch Trumble, Hy-Vee store manager, Mr. Scott Havens, Plaza Holiday Food, Norwalk, Mr. Lance Scanlon, Fareco Foods, Ankeny and Mr. Greg Barnes, Barnes Foods, De Witt. The testimony provided by members of the grocery industry described individual store procedures for accepting redeemed containers, sanitation and space problems, and expressed universal opposition to expansion of the bottle bill to include required deposits on noncarbonated beverages and juices.

The beverage industry was represented by Mr. Jeff Elgin, Mid-Continent Bottlers, Cedar Rapids and Mr. Kirk Tyler, Iowa Soft Drink Association who both expressed opposition to expansion of the bottle bill, Mr. Bob Williams, Iowa Beverage Systems, Des Moines and Mr. Scott Doll, Western Iowa Wine, Council Bluffs and Western Iowa Beverage, Creston who opposed an increase in the handling fee and suggested a gradual phase out of the bottle bill over a two to five year period and Mr. Lyle Stutzman, Johnson Brothers Wine, Des Moines who provided the Committee with figures detailing the additional costs imposed by the bottle bill.

Redemption centers were represented by Mr. Rick Smith, DJ's Redemption Center, New Hampton and Mr. Leslie Forman, Mr. John Shilkaitis, and Ms. A.J. Elsgin, Youth and Shelter

Services, Ames who explained the problems and costs associated with running a redemption center and advocated for an increase in the one cent handling fee. In addition, Mr. John Watson and Mr. John Koch, Goodwill Industries of Southeast Iowa, discussed problems encountered in the redemption process.

The final presenters for the day were students from Ames High School who were members of an environmental group called the "The One Hundredth Green Butterfly." The students presented the results of a study they conducted relating to perceptions of the bottle bill and expansion of the bottle bill.

NOVEMBER 28, 1994, MEETING

The grocery industry was again represented at this meeting by Mr. Robert McDaniel, Coca-Cola Foods, who discussed the negative effects that expansion of the bottle bill has had in the state of Maine and expressed opposition to expansion of the bottle bill in Iowa and Mr. Robert Cramer, Fareway Stores, Boone, who expressed opposition to the bottle bill and discussed the problems associated with it.

The plastics industry was represented by Mr. Francis Fitzgerald, American Plastics Council, Mr. Dale Humbert, Dow North America, and Mr. Greg Tasler, Tasler Pallett and EPS, Inc, who discussed the various facets of the plastics industry and recycling. In particular, testimony focused upon the positive effects of using polystyrene and the unreasonableness of the existing ban.

Ms. Abbi Swanson, League of Women Voters of Iowa, explained the League's activities when the bottle bill was originally enacted and expressed support for expansion of the bottle bill. Testimony concluded with Ms. Teresa Hay, Department of Natural Resources, who discussed several issues which had been raised in earlier testimony relating to the bottle bill, waste reduction and recycling goals and waste abatement table methodology, flow control, and the landfill alternative grant program.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee agreed to conduct a survey by mail of the members to develop final recommendations. These recommendations are compiled in the form of a resolution directed to the chairpersons of the Environmental Protection Committee in the House of Representatives and the Natural Resources, Environment, and Energy Committee in the Senate which is attached to this Report. The final recommendations of the Committee are as follows:

1. Eliminate the current ban on polystyrene.
2. Revise the 25 percent waste reduction and recycling goals so that planning areas that meet the goals are rewarded, but planning areas that do not meet the goals are not penalized.
3. Exempt wine and spirit containers from requirements to pay a bottle deposit.

4. Request the Department of Natural Resources to establish a specific grant to be used for a centrally located glass recycling plant.
5. Recommend encouragement of a unified, comprehensive waste collection and recycling program as the public policy of the state, that standing legislative committees review and encourage the development of curbside recycling, that at a minimum all Iowa households should have access to drop-off services and ideally should have curbside recycling available to them, and that the state's solid waste grant programs put greater emphasis on expansion of curbside recycling programs.

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1 INTERIM COMMITTEE RESOLUTION NO. ____
2 BY MANAGEMENT OF BEVERAGE CONTAINERS INTERIM STUDY
3 COMMITTEE
4 A Resolution relating to recommendations of the Management
5 of Beverage Containers Interim Study Committee.

6 WHEREAS, the Management of Beverage Containers
7 Interim Study Committee conducted two days of interim
8 committee meetings on November 14, 1994, and November
9 28, 1994; and

10 WHEREAS, the Committee heard testimony relating to
11 beverage container deposits and solid waste management
12 policies of the state from the Department of Natural
13 Resources, various solid waste agencies, grocers,
14 wholesalers, bottlers, redemption centers, and other
15 interested persons; and

16 WHEREAS, the Committee agreed to conduct a survey
17 of its members and the results were compiled in the
18 form of recommendations to be sent to the respective
19 Senate and House standing committees; NOW THEREFORE,

20 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MANAGEMENT OF BEVERAGE
21 CONTAINERS INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE, That the Committee
22 makes the following recommendations:

23 1. That the existing ban on the manufacture, offer
24 for sale, sale, or use of any polystyrene packaging
25 products or food service items in this state be
26 eliminated.

27 2. That Code section 455D.3 be amended so that
28 planning areas which do not meet the 25 percent waste
29 reduction and recycling goals are not required to
30 remit an additional 50 cent per ton tonnage fee to the

1 department of natural resources.

2 3. That the definition of beverage in Code section
3 455C.1, subsection 1, be amended by removing wine and
4 alcoholic liquor, so that these beverages are not
5 included as beverages requiring a mandatory deposit.

6 4. That the Department of Natural Resources be
7 requested to use landfill alternative grant moneys to
8 establish a centrally located glass recycling plant.

9 5. That a public policy of the state be adopted to
10 encourage unified, comprehensive waste collection and
11 recycling programs by reviewing and encouraging the
12 development of curbside recycling programs for
13 household waste and critically examining and
14 evaluating any other existing state programs which
15 might adversely affect those programs. That at a
16 minimum, all Iowa households have access to drop-off
17 services, and ideally, have curbside services
18 available. That the Department of Natural Resources
19 be required to place a greater emphasis on continued
20 expansion of curbside recycling programs.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this
22 resolution be sent to the Chairperson of the Senate
23 Committee on Natural Resources, Environment, and
24 Energy and the Chairperson of the House Committee on
25 Environmental Protection.

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