



*October 19, 2015*

The Honorable Rita Hart  
The Honorable Megan Jones  
Co-Chairs, Iowa Recycling Policy Study Committee  
Iowa Recycling Policy Study Committee  
c/o Iowa Legislative Services Agency  
Legal Services Division  
State Capitol  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Chairs Hart and Jones:

**On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I am offering the following testimony and information on the importance of continuing a strong glass recycling program for Iowans.**

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers, and suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry. Collectively, the industry directly employs 18,000 Americans in glass container manufacturing and related recycling industries.

When glass plants can increase the levels of recycled glass as part of the overall batch mix, they can reduce furnace temperatures, resulting in reduced energy use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. This is also true of other packaging and manufacturing industries. For glass, one ton of carbon dioxide is reduced for every six tons of recycled container glass used in the manufacturing process. Energy use at the glass plants also drops about 2-3% for every 10% recycled glass used in the manufacturing process.

GPI estimates that 65%-80% of the recycled glass re-melted to produce new bottles and jars is sourced from Iowa and the 9 additional states with bottle bill recycling programs. **Demand for Iowa's recycled glass by container and other manufacturers throughout the country is very strong and has many available end markets.**

**Iowa's bottle bill recycling program is among the most successful in the nation, averaging a recovery rate of 86%.** Removal of glass or any other container type from the current program would not only work to decrease the overall recovery rate, but may competitively disadvantage other beverage container packaging, currently included in the recovery program.

A prime reason for the success of the bottle bill programs is that collected containers are generally kept separate from other recyclables, drastically reducing contamination and providing them the best opportunity to return to a manufactured product.

### ***Pricing for Recycled Glass Remains Steady***

According to RecyclingMarkets.net (which follows the price of commodities for all major recyclables on a monthly basis), the price for all three types of food and beverage container glass, flint (clear), amber and green has remained steady over the past 10 years, and in fact, slightly increased. Glass container manufacturing plants require relatively clean and color sorted glass before it can be remelted in their furnaces.

As of October 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, RecyclingMarkets.net has the Midwest regional average price paid for flint (clear) glass at \$31 per ton. In 2005, the average price for flint was \$22 per ton. During the same timeframe, the price paid for amber glass is \$21 per ton, compared to \$10 per ton in 2005. Green glass has seen a similar increase, increasing to \$8.50 per ton, versus \$2.00 per ton in 2005.

What varies more in price is "tri-mix" (aka three-mix). Tri-mix is typically glass and contaminants mixed together, and is the by-product of the single stream recycling process.

Tri-mix is often confused with the value of traditional amber, flint and green markets for glass. These are actually two distinct products.

While tri-mix is accepted at some glass recycling facilities, it must be cleaned and sorted to the degree that its value is typically much less than glass sorted from cleaner recycling streams. In many cases, nearly half of the tri-mix delivered and marketed to the glass recycling plants ends up in landfills, and is unable to be repurchased by the manufacturing end markets. This result is not in line with the consumer's expectation when they placed their glass container at the curbside for recycling.

**Rescinding Iowa's bottle bill recycling program will likely increase the amount of tri-mix in the market, increasing the contamination levels of glass and other recyclables, and ultimately result in more glass heading to the landfill.**

### ***Single Stream Recycling and Bottle Bills Work Together***

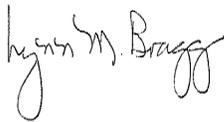
All 10 states with bottle bill recycling programs in place also have single stream, curbside programs in place. For every beer bottle, and other glass container collected through the bottle bill recycling program, reduced stress on the single

stream program is experienced, as less beverage containers would need to travel through the single-bin recycling process.

This separation also results in reduced contamination for the other commodities in the single stream system (primarily aluminum, plastic and paper), assisting them in reaching valued manufacturing-based end markets. Lessened contamination also results in lower residual rates, and less recyclable materials heading to the landfill.

GPI would like to thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of our comments on glass recycling for lowans. Please consider GPI and its member companies a resource and advocate for recycling related issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn M. Bragg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "B".

Lynn M. Bragg  
President