



*February 28, 2019*

The Honorable Rob Bradley  
Chairman

The Honorable Wilton Simpson  
Vice Chairman

Senate Committee on Appropriations  
404 S. Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**Re: Testimony in Opposition to Section 1 of Senate Bill 816**

Dear Chairman Bradley and Vice Chairman Simpson:

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I offer the following **testimony in opposition to Section 1 of Senate Bill 816, which would fundamentally, and subjectively, alter recycling contract requirements for Florida’s municipalities, cities, towns and counties.** As drafted, Section 1 would establish an extremely poor precedent for other states to follow.

**Background:**

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers, and suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry. The US glass container manufacturing industry produces the vast majority of glass bottles and jars for food and beverages purchased in grocery stores and retail outlets. Collectively, the industry directly employs 16,000 Americans in glass container manufacturing and related recycling operations throughout the country.

GPI member companies both process (clean up) and purchase recycled glass collected from municipal programs across the state of Florida. Florida is home to a glass container manufacturing plant in Jacksonville, and a glass processing (aka glass recycling) facility in Sarasota.

Glass is a 100% and endlessly recyclable package, and **one of 8 “core” recyclables recognized by the state of Florida**, feeding an existing

and established end market in-state, and throughout the southeastern US. The average recycled glass content of a bottle or jar in the US is about 31%.

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## **Specific Concerns with Section 1 of Senate Bill 186:**

**I.** Section 1 would require that “contaminated recyclable materials” be defined, and that recycling contracts not include such materials in their recycling programs. Which entity would provide the ultimate definition of a “contaminated recyclable” is unclear, **as the haulers, recovery facilities and local jurisdictions** are the only ones authorized in the legislation to provide this definition.

**Notably absent** from the discussion in defining a “contaminated recyclable material” are the **end market manufacturing companies** (the ultimate purchasers of all recyclables), **recyclable processing companies** (the purchasers of recyclables from the material recovery facilities), and finally, **the constituents** (who provide all recyclable material in residential curbside collection programs).

By weight, glass containers on average comprise 25% of a curbside recycling program’s volume. **A 2017 survey conducted by the Glass Recycling Coalition found that 96% of residents expect to be able to recycle glass containers.** Glass containers are a key part of recycling programs.

**II.** The legislation states a contaminated recyclable material would be defined after a review of “available composition waste studies”, “availability of end markets” and “other relevant factors”.

These factors are subjective, and **wholly insufficient to address statutory changes for the 412 incorporated municipalities in Florida.** For example, what composition waste studies would be reviewed, how are end markets defined, what is meant by “other relevant factors?”

End markets for recycled glass are not measured by proximity, but by the quality of the glass within the program. This metric, and others laid out in the bill, offer no program stability for the cities and municipalities that are expected to provide recycling services to their constituents.

**III.** July 1, 2019 is the start date for which the “contaminated recyclable material” definition must be included in renewed or new recycling

contracts.

This very short timeframe is insufficient to address or even comprehensively review the undefined waste composition studies and other materials. **GPI recommends a substantial phase-in period for any legislation addressing recycling contracts, so municipalities may have adequate time to discuss proposed changes with their recycling service providers and constituents.**

GPI and member companies work with the recycling supply chain to address challenges related to solid waste and other non-recyclables that are processed at materials recovery facilities, and to better improve the yield and quality of recycled glass containers available for sale to the end markets. We look forward to supporting legislation that would reduce recycling-related contamination in the state, **without subjective and undefined metrics that unfairly threaten glass recycling.**

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony to Section 1 of Senate Bill 816.

Sincerely,

Joe

Joseph J. Cattaneo  
Executive Director