



March 10, 2017

The Honorable Thomas Saviello
Chairman
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
c/o Legislative Information
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Ralph Tucker
Chairman
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
c/o Legislative Information
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Legislative Document 683

Dear Chairs Saviello and Tucker:

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), **I write in opposition to Legislative Document 683**, which would remove wine, liquor and larger beverage containers from Maine's bottle bill recycling program. **Maine's bottle bill recycling program high quality glass and other recyclables to manufacturing-based end markets.**

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 industry supplies America's leading beverage brands, and directly employees 18,000 Americans in glass container manufacturing and related recycling industries.

Maine's bottle bill recycling program is among the most successful in the nation, averaging a recovery rate of 90%. **Removal of any existing beverage container type from the program would not only work to decrease the overall recovery rate, but may competitively disadvantage other beverage container packaging remaining in the program.**

GPI estimates as much as 80% of recycled glass used in the glass container manufacturing process is sourced from Maine and the 9 additional states with bottle bill programs. Demand for Maine's quality recycled glass by the glass

container and other manufacturers across the country is very strong, with available and ready markets.

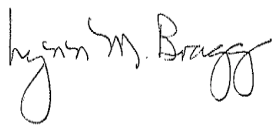
LD 683 also provides for a non-refundable 5-cent tax on wine and liquor bottles, along with other beverage containers 46 ounces and greater that would be removed from the program.

The justification for the fee (to improve statewide recycling), may be laudable, however, LD 683 provides no metrics for measuring subsequent glass recycling and recovery. As the glass container industry and our customers would provide a substantial portion of revenue to the Fund, the ability to measure effectiveness is critical for our industry.

A similar approach taken in Delaware demonstrated that single stream collection of beverage containers (through money gained via a per container tax), led to a significant increase in contamination of recyclables. Statewide, 11,000 tons of collected recyclables, including a high percentage of glass, are lost to landfills annually due to contamination.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our comments to LD 683. 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, looped initial "L".

Lynn M. Bragg
President

Cc: Members, Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources