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April 30, 2025

Chair Nancy Nathanson
House Committee on Revenue
Rep.NancyNathanson@oregonlegislature.gov

Dear Chair Nathanson and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3940.

Oregon's bottle bill was the first law of its kind implemented in the U.S. and serves as a model program for other container deposit laws due to its broad coverage of beverage types and mix of convenient return options. The state leads the nation with an 87% beverage container redemption rate, far surpassing the beverage container recycling rate of 26% in non-bottle bill states. Additionally, Oregon's beverage container return volume has doubled in the last 14 years.

We are concerned that the bill may be amended to capture unclaimed deposits from the bottle bill to use as a funding source for wildfire defense. **The funds from unclaimed deposits are currently being used to pay for program operations and container deposit-related activities.** Currently, the program is funded by unclaimed deposits (as well as scrap revenues and contributions from beverage distributors), and these funds go directly into the operating budget of Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC). OBRC uses the funds to build and operate redemption centers as well as provide transportation and processing for redeemed beverage containers that are recycled through the program. OBRC also partners with various organizations to operate litter cleanup events and provide employment opportunities that help keep people out of homelessness.

To state the obvious, if unclaimed deposits were taken away from OBRC, it would leave a gaping hole in their operating budget. It is possible that OBRC would curtail some redemption operations to cut costs.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Susan' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Susan V. Collins
President
CONTAINER RECYCLING INSTITUTE