



January 22nd, 2026

J. Gary Pretlow, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
New York State Assembly
wamchair@nyassembly.gov

Liz Krueger, Chair
Finance Committee
New York State Senate
financechair@nySenate.gov

RE: 2027 New York State Budget -- New York Bottle Deposit Law

Dear Chairs Pretlow and Krueger,

The Surfrider Foundation's Eastern Long Island, Niagara Frontier, and New York City Chapters support the expansion of New York's Bottle Deposit Law, also known as the Bottle Bill. As an organization dedicated to protecting clean and healthy beaches for all to enjoy, we want to see this expansion because we are concerned with the amount of litter that we regularly pick up from New York's beaches, and the environmental justice issues stemming from the burning or burying bottles in incinerators or landfills.

Our chapters host dozens of cleanups every year, and our volunteers record data on the trash collected so we can document what types of litter are most common. Plastic

bottle caps and rings are the seventh most common item that we pick up—in 2024, Surfrider Foundation volunteers removed nearly 36,000 plastic bottle caps and rings from our beaches. Of the top ten items that we've identified and collected, four of them are related to the beverage industry. In 2023, we cleaned up 1,827 glass bottles, 3,022 aluminum beverage cans, and 8,654 plastic beverage bottles from New York beaches. That is over 35,700 pieces of beverage debris from just our beach cleanups, & this number has continued to grow year-over-year.

This is not just an unsightly problem for our local beaches, which draw thousands of visitors each year, but affects our local wildlife and even human health once plastic infiltrates our food chain and ecosystem. Increasing recycling rates also decreases production and waste management of materials, operations that overwhelmingly operate in underserved communities.

By increasing the bottle deposit and expanding to new types of beverages, an improved Bottle Bill would incentivize and increase redemption. This has numerous benefits: it would divert solid waste, support a more circular economy, reduce greenhouse gasses, and generate revenue for the state and for the people who bring returnable containers to redemption centers.

We need an upgrade to the Bottle Bill to bring more value to recyclable containers so they have a better chance of being recycled, rather than littering our communities and beaches, or being burned or buried as solid waste.

Respectfully,

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