

Connecticut Bottle Bill Advisory Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2023 1:00pm via ZOOM

Present:	See Attachment A
Next meeting:	Monday, August 21 at 1:00pm via ZOOM
Prepared by:	Elizabeth Moore, DEEP

I. Call to Order and Announcements

The meeting started at 1:00PM.

James Albis, Director of the Office of Policy and Planning, Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) provided welcoming remarks.

II. Committee Reports

James Albis described the purpose of the advisory group in meeting regularly to receive updates and provide input on DEEP's implementation of its responsibilities under Public Act 21-58. A survey was sent to all participants following the previous advisory group meeting and the results of the survey were shared. The survey focused primarily on upcoming topics and the potential inclusion of certain specific beverages within the redemption system.

Laura Pointek, Environmental Analyst, CT DEEP presented answers to common questions concerning the deposit increase from five to ten cents on January 1, 2024.

Wayne Pesce, President of the Connecticut Food Association, presented education and outreach campaigns related to last year's inclusion of additional beverage containers in the Bottle Bill and future education and outreach efforts related to the deposit increase from five to ten cents.

Joseph DeNicola, Senior Policy Advisor, CT DEEP presented on the Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program.

III. Roundtable and Public Comment

Attendees were asked to share initial reactions to the survey results.

Shahil Kantesaria, Central Connecticut Redemption Center, suggested the Bottle Bill should be interpreted inclusively, and in a way that makes sense to consumers. Kantesaria noted customers are often confused why one beverage has a container redemption value while another does not.

Lawrence Cafero, Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut, provided historical background on the Bottle Bill system in that Connecticut has always treated beer differently from wine and spirits. Cafero noted any step to include new beverages requires major capital investment.

Veronica Colas, Attorney with Hogan Lovells, emphasized the importance of clarity, yet distinguished clarity from over-inclusivity. Colas described how additional containers must fall within the meaning of the categories described in the law.

Mary Grywatch, Attorney with Hogan Lovells, echoed statements regarding clarity. Grywatch suggested that where there is a question as to whether a beverage is included in the Bottle Bill, Connecticut should look first and foremost at the federally required statement of identity on the beverage.

Christine O'Neil, Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, suggested that Connecticut should make beverage container decisions within the spirit of law as a tool for recycling. O'Neil suggested that decisions should be made based on the recyclability of the bottle, not the drink inside of it. Agreement was expressed by several attendees in the chat.

Following presentations, James Albis asked attendees to share any comments or questions.

Shahil Kantesaria, Central Connecticut Redemption Center, asked if redemption system operators will make container databases available to entities like redemption centers. In response, Chuck Riegler, TOMRA, suggested the intent is for all stakeholders to have access to TOMRA's database.

Representative Joseph Gresko noted the passage of legislation intended to support industry in completing a notification and education campaign for consumers on the increase to ten cent deposit. Representative Gresko asked if DEEP has reached out to industry for assistance.

Denise Best asked for a list of redemption center locations in the north end of Hartford and described challenges for areas that do not have existing redemption center coverage. Laura Pointek suggested anyone asking about existing locations and access to redemption systems should contact her.

Penny Newbury, The Arc Eastern Connecticut, asked if the timeline for the second round of the Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program will be extended. Joseph DeNicola suggested the timeline might be extended if there is demand for it.

James Albis provided an explanation of the difference between independent redemption centers and other retail locations that are required to take bottles back for the products they sell.

IV. Adjournment

James Albis closed the meeting and noted that any thoughts related to the topics discussed and any future meeting topics may be sent to the DEEP.MMCAPlanning@ct.gov email address. A poll was also released regarding upcoming meeting topics.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 18 at 1:00pm.

Attachment A.

James Albis

Denise Best

Laura Pointek

The Connecticut Network (CT-N)

Jude Malone

Beth Milligan

Peter Gallo

Elizabeth Moore

18606046104

Lori Brown

Tony Manfre

Ryan Bingham

Andrew Ginsburg

Christine O'Neill

Kevin Kranzler

Penny Newbury

Alexis Bourassa

Joe Canino

Doug Bedard

Krishna Winston

Eric Gjede

Mary Grywatch

wayne pesce

Shahil Kantesaria

David Kozak

Emma Cotnoir
Mitch Bolinsky
Adrian Vannahme
Brian Popovich
Megan Siegel
Partick Grasso
Sandra Grance
Jean Cronin
Adam Salina
Tyler Anderson
Jackie Caceci
Jay Aronson
Kelly Colvin
David Aldridge
Thomas Strahle
Susannah Smith
Lawrence Cafero
Joseph DeNicola
Jennifer Perry
Brenna Toman
Brian Sullivan
Paul Cicarella
Samantha Davis
Bree Dietly
Josh Hughes
Chuck Riegle
Matt Dmyterko

Kathy Kennedy

Alissa Wesche

David McBride

Lewis Dubuque

Donald McCalman

Andrew Droney

Pamela Roach

Lauren Craig

Sarah Huang

Jennifer Amundsen

Julie Cammarata

Sean Hughes

Janell Niles

Mara Shulman

Hillary Glass

Mike Noel

Carrie Rand-Anastasiades

14048249202

gena parker

Mike Rell

Jonathan Steinberg

John Bailey

Veronica Colas

Kirsten Witt

John Cottell

Tracy Babbidge

Rocky Gallo

Paul Aresta

Donna Hamzy Carroccia

Chris Phelps

C.J. Kowaleski

Humphrey Amedeo

Emma MacDonald

Dallas Dodge

Diane Lauricella

Ethan Werstler

Harrison Nantz

Mary Hogue

David Fleming

Tracy Persico

Mike Manfre

Joe Gresko

Nicole Griffin

Joseph Gresko