



03/17/2020

To: Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response

Re: BottleDrop Essential Services

Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC) would like to thank this committee and Governor Brown for the leadership shown in Oregon to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our business represents over 500 employees, over 200 members, and over 1.5 million customers, and we take our responsibility to public health and safety very seriously.

OBRC owns and operates 25 BottleDrop Redemption Centers around the state of Oregon, where customers may redeem beverage containers covered under the “Bottle Bill” to receive their 10-cent refund. Currently, **OBRC and BottleDrop services are the only way a consumer may receive their refund.** The Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) has temporarily suspended beverage container redemption at retail stores, in recognition of the extraordinary labor and staffing challenges stores are facing during this pandemic.

OBRC is committed to keep our BottleDrop centers open using best practices as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Oregon Health Authority. We are regularly cleaning and disinfecting our centers, advising staff and customers of proper hygiene, and implementing measures to increase “social distancing” and expand options to redeem containers without physical interaction.

In addition, we are providing the public with blue bags for container donations that will automatically be credited to the Oregon Food Bank. Should any person decide to donate their refunds, they can simply take a blue bag from a center and return it full.

Many Oregonians depend on their 10-cent refund, and now, more than ever, it is important to ensure they have access to it. Because all retail locations are temporarily exempt from redeeming containers, **OBRC hopes the State of Oregon will consider BottleDrop an “Essential Service” and exempt BottleDrop from any future closures instituted to limit the spread of COVID-19.**

To be clear, as member-run not-for-profit cooperative, OBRC does not derive profit from these centers. Rather, we believe they must be kept open so that the public still has places where they can get their deposit back in these uncertain economic times. **OBRC and BottleDrop are committed to being partners in best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19,** and as such, we believe continued operation of our centers is in the best interest of the public.

If you have further questions, you may contact Jules Bailey at jbailey@obrc.com.