

March 14, 2019

To: Oregon Legislation SB 522 Committee

RE: Washington beverage containers returned to Oregon

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Doug Knight. I served as the Store Director of the Safeway Store located at 795 Columbia River Hwy, St Helens, OR 97051 for more than 30 years. The nearest Washington city is Longview Washington. Distance is 28 miles.

As a Safeway Store Director, I experienced Washington residents returning containers to our Reverse Vending Machines on a daily basis and multiple times throughout each day. When Oregon changed the redemption value from 5 cents per container to 10 cents, I noticed a dramatic increase in Washington residents attempting to return containers to our RVM's.

It is also important to note that both Longview and Vancouver have curbside recycling. Many Washington residents place their cans and bottles at the curbside. This program gives easy access for a Washington or Oregon residents to collect Washington containers and then bring them to Oregon.

As follows are examples of typical responses and experiences I encountered when confronting a Washington residents attempting to return cans and bottles:

- It is usual to get multiple Washington cars and pickup trucks filled with large bags of cans and/or bottles each day.
- On several occasions, I have observed Washington vehicles filled with cases of water at our site. I further observed the occupants of the vehicle dumping the contents of the plastic water containers on to the parking lot so that they could feed the empty containers through the RVM's.
- I just moved to Oregon, so it's ok. *(They could provide no proof that they that they lived in Oregon.)*
- I come to Oregon all the time and purchase my soda and/or beer while I am in Oregon. *(Why would anyone drive from Washington to Oregon just so they could pay an additional deposit cost?)*
- I am an Oregon resident, I just borrowed the pickup from a friend. *(Why would someone drive to Washington to borrow a vehicle then drive back to Oregon just to return containers through the RVM's)*
- I am from Washington, but it's ok, because I am doing this for a fundraiser at my child's school.
- I am doing this for a friend that lives here in Oregon. *(It is not likely that anyone would drive 28 miles from Longview to return an Oregon resident's cans and bottles.)*

I have encountered hundreds of interactions concerning this issue while performing the duties of Store Director here in St Helens. During many of these situations, I have been yelled at with profanity, threatened and been forced to contact the police.

I recall that KGW News ran a story on this problem not too long ago, commenting on Vancouver residents returning Washington containers to Delta park and other locations in Oregon. While the news story pointed out that Washington containers coming to Oregon was a problem, they also stated that it is not illegal in Oregon to do so. You just shouldn't do it.

Impacts to Oregonians as I see them;

1. Every Washington container redeemed drives the cost of Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative up. Since most of the major retailers in our market are part of ORBC, we as consumers pay additional costs for consumable products linked to ORBC.
2. Each vehicle filled with Washington containers that goes through Oregon RMV's requires additional labor to maintain and empty the machines. That typically moves labor from inside the store providing customer service for their customers, to the outside attending to the RVM's.

Finally, if the State of Oregon had a law such as SB 522 on the books, I believe it would have a huge impact on the flow of Washington containers coming into Oregon.

Respectfully

Doug Knight