

## Watts Remy

---

**From:** Taylor Cass Talbott <taylorcasstalbott@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 14, 2019 10:35 AM  
**To:** SENR Exhibits  
**Subject:** Testimony for SB 522

Dear Chair Dembrow and Vice-Chair Olsen,

My name is Taylor Cass Talbott. I am from Portland. I am a specialist on the informal waste economy, and I work both internationally and locally with several organizations that support waste pickers, which locally we more commonly think of as can and bottle collectors, or canners.

Waste is a critical resource for society's most vulnerable workers, and it serves as a safety net source of income for millions of people around the world. In the US, our waste systems has become so consolidated and privatized, that bottle bills are one of the only remaining ways that people who are struggling can make still money from waste

I have interviewed and talked with hundreds of can collectors in Portland. I come across a lot of folks who collect cans because it helps keeps them in housing, or affords them showers and laundry services. Canners collect materials from all over the place, usually without any idea or thought about where the cans were purchased.

Our country is facing severe shortages in affordable housing, a growing homelessness crisis, a widening gap between the rich and poor, and to top it all off, a global recycling and oceans plastics crisis. Bottle bills, in no insignificant way, helps to alleviate all of these problems. And their success depends on canners. If people are coming across the border to deposit cans, really it speaks to the demand and need for bottle bills in our neighboring states.

Oregon has a great bottle bill, and I sympathize with OBRC's interest in tightening up our bottle bill system. But I don't feel that further criminalizing the most vulnerable players in this equation is the right way to go about it. It would take 2,500 cans to afford the fine this bill proposes, and I can imagine the unintended consequences of this bill would be significant.

If you do decide to take this bill forward, and even if you don't, I encourage OBRC and concerned lawmakers and citizens to slow down and engage more with the community that would be most affected by this bill, because they are starting to have a voice in this region, and we may be able to collectively come up with a solution that would work for all.

Thank you

Taylor Cass Talbott  
503-464-6653