

February 1, 2022

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Lieber, Vice-Chair Findley and Members of the Committee,

The Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) is a 501(c)6 committed to supporting policies that promote high-quality recycling and composting, thoughtful consumption, and producer responsibility. We believe the producers that manufacture and sell products to Oregonians should have a role in how products are managed at the end of their usable life. Equity is also centered in our guiding principles because we believe the reuse, repair and recycling economy should benefit everyone, including communities of color and rural areas. Our principles around equity and the environment are why *AOR supports SB 1520*.

I am writing to express AOR's support for SB 1520, which would make enhancements to Oregon's Bottle Bill. AOR had the pleasure of participating on the work group that was convened in 2021 to examine opportunities to improve Oregon's Bottle Bill. The group explored options for improving system performance including access to services, the list of covered items, the role of canners in the system and transparency and reporting. SB 1520 is the product of those discussions.

If SB 1520 is approved, it will expand the materials recovered by Oregon's Bottle Bill by including wine in cans. AOR has supported Oregon's bottle bill since our founding in 1977 and we believe if wine in cans had been available in 1972, when Oregon's Bottle Bill came online, wine would have already been included. We believe all beverages in aluminum and steel cans with pull-tab openers and plastics bottle with twist-off caps should be included despite what type of liquid is in the container. Any exceptions to this create confusion for consumers.

This bill would also enhance redemption access for consumers in areas of the state that do not have redemption centers and bulk/bagged return options. The lack of access to these types of services cause redemption rates to suffer and negatively impacting Oregon's recycling outcomes. SB 1520 will greatly improve the consumer experience for many communities.

The work group also recommended that the statewide distributor cooperative communicate more regularly with elected officials about expansion of consumer access to the BottleDrop network, plans and priorities for expansion in the upcoming year, and efforts to expand redemption access for individuals who redeem containers on a near-daily basis, often referred to as "canners" or "gleaners." SB 1520 includes this enhanced annual reporting from the statewide distributor cooperative, which will help the Legislature continue to track improvements to consumer access for years to come.

While SB 1520 does not address all the issues raised by work group members, AOR believes it will improve recycling recovery, consumer convenience and system transparency which is why we are urging your support of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Kristin Leichner
Chair, Association of Oregon Recyclers

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