Submitter: James Phillips

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3940

The bottle bill is one of the best pieces of legislation that has ever been implemented in Oregon. It gives such a good incentive to return containters to the store that seening empty cans and bottles is almost never seen. The return rate of the bottles is incredible. People literally dig through the trash so they can get money for the cans and bottles. It is a resounding success.

The new law is a disaster. It would confuse people, wondering why they are paying extra money for deposit yet not receiving that money back. Face it, people don't pay attention or don't bother to listen to the news, even when it affects them personally. While an extra 5 cents a can doesn't seem like much, it adds up quickly. An extra $1.20 on a case of pop or beer is noticable. Suddenly the consumer is paying $3.60 extra on the case, $2.40 for deposit, and $1.20 for no-refundable charge. The consumer will be confused and will blame the bottle bill for the extra money, despite the fact that they get $2.40 of that money back. Many people don't even bother returning their cans and bottles, but accept the fact that the money they pay will help someone else.

If you are going to add taxes, stop trying to hide them. This proposal will make it difficult for retailers, because they will have to change their point of sale systems to recover the tax. Most realtors will add a line item on their receipt, will will further confuse the consumer, and will have a huge backlash against what they will perceive is due to the bottle bill. The bottle bill is NOT responsible for this added tax, but it will be perceived as a bottle bill tax, and hurt the reputation of the Oregon bottle bill. This is actually just a hidden sales tax that is only applied to beverage containers.

The legislature needs to get a backbone and just raise revenue through normal means. Stop trying to hide the tax in the Oregon bottle bill. It isn't fair to anyone.