



Monroe County Legislature

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Not to be removed from the Office of the Legislature Of Monroe County
Committee Assignment
<b>Memorializing Referral -L</b>

To the Honorable  
Monroe County Legislature  
407 County Office Building  
39 West Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14614

Re: **Memorializing the New York State Senate to Pass and Governor George E. Pataki to Sign Bills A.2517 and S.1290, the "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill"**

In 1982, New York State once again set an example to the nation with the passage of the Returnable Container Act, better known as the "Bottle Bill." This legislation required a five cents deposit be made on all beer and carbonated soft drink beverage containers. This included containers made of glass, metals, PET, polyethylene terephthalate (#1), and HDPE, high density polyethylene (#2), plastics. As years have progressed, so has the beverage industry, with new products of teas, juices, sport drinks, bottled water, and other non-carbonated products, which are all excluded from the Bottle Bill's jurisdiction.

Since its inception in 1982, the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) has reported that the New York State has saved \$300 million in landfill fees; a critical victory for the environment, considering that because of the Bottle Bill, about 5 million tons of plastics, glass, and metal have been kept out of landfills.

According to the Container Recycling Institute (CRI), 2.6 billion non-carbonated beverages are sold annually in New York State, more than 20% of the entire market.

The time has come to expand the Bottle Bill to include non-carbonated beverage containers. The "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" has seen the floor of the New York State Legislature several times prior to its passage through the Assembly on May 10, 2006. According to the American Plastics Council, PET and HDPE plastics take between 400 to 450 years to decompose. CRI reports that if passed, the "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" will manage to avert 64,000 tons of plastic from being thrown into growing landfills, and generate about \$180 million annually in state funding for

environmental programs. A 2004 survey conducted by the Public Policy Associates, Inc. revealed that 70% of New Yorkers support expanding the bottle law to include non-carbonated beverage containers.

Recycling has become a fixture in our daily lives. We teach our children from when they're young to "reduce, reuse, recycle." On November 16<sup>th</sup>, the United States will celebrate 'America Recycles Day,' an on-going federal campaign to increase awareness and education about recycling. New York State will also conduct a local 'New York Recycles' campaign on the same day. Considering all other actions taken to promote and increase the practice of recycling, the adoption of the "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" appears to be an obvious next course of action.

Therefore, we urge you to join us in asking the New York State Senate to readily pass, and Governor George E. Pataki to sign Bills A.2517 and S.1290 into law. Doing so will be the next logical steps towards the further promotion of conservation, environmental stewardship, and more importantly, encouraging New Yorkers, as well as the rest of the nation to, in a very simple way, promote a cleaner, brighter future for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislator - District 14

*Harry B. Bronson*  
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Assistant Democratic Leader

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*Edward M. O'Brien*  
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*C. Stephen Eckel*  
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Legislator - District 25