



**Testimony  
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Before the Environment Committee  
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- **SB-11 – An Act Concerning the Reliability, Sustainability and Economic Vitality of the State Waste Management System**
- **SB-296 – An Act Concerning Minimum Recycled Glass Content for Wine and Liquor Bottles Sold or Distributed in the Northeast Region**
- **HB-5340 – An Act Concerning the Modernization of the Connecticut Bottle Redemption Program**
- **HB-5342 – An Act Concerning Multi-Stream Recycling**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments relative to the above-referenced waste and recycling bills.

Municipalities are working hard to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy (CMMS), which requires the diversion and/or recycling of at least 60% of the solid waste generated in the state by 2024. Unfortunately, meeting this goal is challenging, particularly given China's decision to no longer accept any more recyclable materials from the United States.

Towns are now faced with new, unanticipated costs for recycling, which had, in previous years, generated much-needed revenues. However, it continues to be cheaper to recycle bottles and other materials than to dispose of those items as part of the regular trash stream.

At the same time, many towns are facing challenges associated with the redevelopment of the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) which, without significant state support, public financing or other funding mechanisms, will increase disposal costs for member towns by a projected \$50-60 per ton. This would result in property tax hikes on already overburdened homeowners and businesses.

Recognizing the importance of meeting solid waste management goals and promoting greater recycling, COST supports the following initiatives:

1. Provide sufficient state funding or identify other funding mechanisms to ensure the continued viability of MIRA.
2. Promote greater recycling by increasing the bottle deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents, which will create a strong incentive for the collection and recycling of bottles and help



produce a cleaner stream of recyclables, increasing the value of the recycled materials. In addition, it will help reduce litter in our communities.

3. Support efforts to create new markets for recyclables.
4. Determine the feasibility of returning to a multi-stream recycling system which separates categories of recyclables to prevent contamination and enhance the value of recyclables.
5. Consider the benefits of establishing minimum recycled glass content for glass wine and liquor bottles, as called for under SB-296, to promote glass recycling in the Northeast.

COST appreciates that the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) is proactively working with our members and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to discuss a pathway forward for addressing waste management and recycling challenges.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with DEEP and other stakeholders to develop innovative, cost-effective solutions to promote greater recycling in an effort to reduce municipal costs and protect the environment and the state's natural resources.