Green Okanogan (Carol Lanigan)

As a recycling center in North Central WA we have some concerns about the Deposit Return System. This addition to RRA makes complete sense for glass bottles in our region as glass is virtually unrecyclable here. We are, however, concerned about the rebate on plastic and aluminum being offered when folks are already accustomed to recycling these items and curbside will make it even easier to do so. Having two different systems in place for recycling seems confusing. It would also reduce the revenue for haulers and recyclers who depend on income from aluminum to cover their costs. We also have concerns about the additional cost that our low income, underserved community will bear in the initial cost of beverage items. Keeping glass out of the waste stream makes a lot of sense but why should people have to pay a deposit on materials they can easily recycle curbside and at drop off centers. Also, as a potential deposit redemption center, just having to collect one item would be way easier than collecting plastic, cans and glass.

The draft does indicate the concern over staffing and implementation, and we would like to continue to emphasize that this bill would place an additional burden on underserved communities particularly with these two items. We're especially concerned with implementation with regards to refunding money to customers and how this is achieved for collection centers that aren't set up to handle cash transactions nor have the means to track and record the transactions. No doubt reporting requirements will be imposed. We don't yet see the language identifying the staffing burden needed with this requirement.

One of our board members mentioned that having helped a store in Oregon with some of the problems (space, sanitation) of an early version of a bottle bill in a store in a small town in a rural area, it seemed to be a big burden that they were forced to participate in.

While a deposit return system would have been completely welcomed before RRA, we have our hesitations now that we are in the midst of RRA design and implementation.

With respect,

The Board of Directors of Green Okanogan

Tonasket, WA