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Testimony of

Christopher Carlozzi, State Director, National Federation of Independent Business
In Opposition to House Bill Nos. 6206 and 6207
Relating to Health and Safety – Beverage Container Recycling Act
Before the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
May 13, 2025

Chairman Bennett and Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Christopher Carlozzi. I am the Rhode Island State Director of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). A non-profit, non-partisan organization, NFIB is the nation's and Rhode Island's largest small business advocacy group. In Rhode Island, NFIB represents hundreds of small and independent business owners involved in all types of industry, including manufacturing, retail, wholesale, service, and agriculture. The average NFIB member has five employees and annual gross revenues of about \$450,000. In short, NFIB represents the small Main Street business owners from across the state. On behalf of those small and independent business employers in Rhode Island, I urge you to oppose House Bill Nos. 6206 and 6207 creating a bottle deposit law.

House Bill Nos. 6206 and 6207 will increase operating costs for businesses while failing to have an appreciably positive impact on the environment. Rhode Island will join a very small minority of states with a bottle deposit law and will have an impact on both consumers and smaller businesses that are still attempting to recover from the pandemic, all at a time when inflation is already driving up the cost of consumer goods.

Legislative proposals to enact a bottle law have been filed in the past and would require Rhode Island consumers to pay hundreds of millions of dollars more for groceries – in effect a tax increase. Initiating the bottle law would also be problematic for small groceries, convenient stores and any other business that sell drinks. For small businesses and grocers, the inconvenience and expense of unique pricing, storage, space, leasing and maintaining machines, and shipping associated with an expanded bottle bill would be problematic.

NFIB strongly opposes any attempts to enact a costly bottle redemption bill in Rhode Island. Instead, the state should focus on a single stream recycling program that have been shown to work and would not impose a new financial burden on small businesses and consumers. We urge you to reject House Bill Nos. 6206 and 6207, thank you.