

**Testimony to the Rhode Island House Committee on Environment and
Natural Resources in Support of House Bill 6207**

By The Aluminum Association

May 13, 2025

Chair Bennett and members of the Committee:

My name is Curt Wells and I am in the Government Relations group at the Aluminum Association, which represents U.S. aluminum manufacturers and their suppliers. Association member companies supply 100% of the aluminum sheet produced in the US that is used to make aluminum beverage cans. Our members also supply aluminum for the manufacture of consumer products such as aluminum foil, pressed aluminum foil products like catering trays and pie plates, aluminum aerosol cans, and aluminum cans for food products. The Aluminum Association is also a founding member of the *Coalition for High Performance Recycling* (CHPR) that is working to maximize recycling rates through the implementation of synergistic Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and modern bottle bill legislation.

I would like to thank you for the time today to provide testimony in support of House Bill 6207 and share the following with you:

The opportunity before you today is to consider how best to improve consumer recycling in Rhode Island. Nationally, consumer aluminum can recycling rates are at 43% and the overall consumer recycling rate in Rhode Island is 26%. From a review of the global landscape of implemented and proven solutions for raising consumer recycling rates, the Aluminum Association endorses two policy solutions implemented simultaneously – 1) bolstering existing curbside recycling systems through EPR programs, and 2) layering on top of that financial incentives for consumers to return their used beverage containers for a refund through a modern bottle bill program. Well-designed EPR programs such as the one contained in House Bill 6207 can increase curbside recycling rates into the 65% range for a variety of recyclables, and modern bottle bills such as the one contained in Senate Bill 996 can achieve beverage can redemption rates of over 90%. And recent modeling has shown that implementing these two programs in tandem is the most cost-effective means to achieve high performance recycling rates. Bottle bills are especially effective at collecting and capturing recyclables generated ‘on-the-go’ and at away-from-home locations where curbside programs are not accessible. This is a particular advantage in terms of litter prevention and marine debris avoidance, clearly key benefits in the Ocean State.

The United States has ten states with a bottle bill, all of them for two decades or more and most in place for more than 40 years. Today, there

is upwards of 90 percent support for bottle bills among those living in states with a bottle bill and that support crosses political, geographical, and demographic lines. Notably, this level of support would not be possible or sustainable if consumers viewed deposits on beverage containers to be a financial burden, and evidence has shown that the imposition of a bottle bill in a jurisdiction does not impact sales rates of the beverages covered by it. In Rhode Island specifically, support for bottle bills is strong and the familiarity with these programs through the proximity of the Connecticut and Massachusetts bottle bill programs provides a solid foundation from which to implement a modernized bottle bill in Rhode Island.

The Aluminum Association also supports the Rhode Island Special Joint Legislative Commission's recommendations released last month for implementation of both EPR and a bottle bill as a means of protecting Rhode Island from plastic bottle waste. Although the report focused on plastic bottles, these same solutions also benefit aluminum product recycling.

Our members that make aluminum for beverage cans, foil, and other consumer aluminum products are ready, willing, and able today to incorporate substantially more used cans and other used aluminum into their production of new products as that is their preferred raw material.

But to do that, they must get more used material back from consumers through proven policies such as EPR and bottle bills.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony today to communicate the US aluminum industry's strong support for House Bill 6207, and based on that support, we encourage your **Yes** vote on the bill.