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Representative David A. Bennett
Chair of the House Environment and Natural
Resources Committee
State House, Room 203
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

May 27, 2026

Re: Support for HB 7911 — Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging and Paper Act

Dear Chair Bennett and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Reloop, I am writing in support of HB 7911, legislation that would establish an extended producer responsibility framework for packaging and paper and a modern Recycling Refund program for beverage containers in Rhode Island.

Reloop is an international non-profit organization working with governments, industry, and civil society to advance practical circular economy solutions, including extended producer responsibility (EPR) policies and high-performing deposit return systems for beverage containers. Through our research and policy work in North America, Europe, and globally, we have seen that the strongest recycling systems are those designed around clear performance targets, producer accountability, consumer convenience, high-quality material recovery, and effective oversight.

Rhode Island's approach in HB 7911 is incredibly important because it recognizes that EPR and Recycling Refund programs are not competing approaches. They are complementary tools that work best when designed together. EPR can strengthen recycling for packaging and paper across the broader system, including by supporting municipal recycling services, improving consistency for residents, and increasing accountability for the materials placed on the market. A dedicated Recycling Refund program, meanwhile, is the proven mechanism for recovering beverage containers at high rates and in a cleaner, source-separated form that is better suited for closed-loop recycling.

This combined approach is what makes the Bill a best-in-class opportunity for the State of Rhode Island. Reloop is particularly encouraged by the inclusion of several design elements that are

consistent with strong deposit return performance in other jurisdictions globally, including a 10-cent refund value, clear performance expectations, producer responsibility for program costs, convenient and equitable access for consumers, and public information requirements to support straightforward participation. It can also help stimulate consistent consumer education, address material flows between programs, and reduce the potential for duplication, cost-shifting, or confusion among consumers and service providers.

This approach gives Rhode Island the opportunity to build on lessons from neighboring states with longstanding deposit return programs, while designing a system that reflects current packaging, recycling, and consumer access needs. Older deposit systems have delivered important benefits, but many were not designed alongside modern EPR frameworks or with the same level of centralized producer responsibility, fraud prevention, service flexibility, and program coordination now available to policymakers.

When paired with EPR for packaging and paper, Rhode Island's Recycling Refund program provides a comprehensive producer-funded framework to strengthen recycling performance across the state. Together, these reforms can increase recovery, improve material quality, support more convenient and accessible recycling for residents, and reduce costs that would otherwise fall on municipalities and taxpayers.

ReLoop urges the Committee to support HB 7911 and advance Rhode Island towards a modern, high-performance recycling system that reflects best practice and positions the state as a leader in circular economy policy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Morawski
Chief Executive Officer
ReLoop Platform