



May 27, 2026

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

Dear Chair Bennett and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS), the national trade association representing the leading producers and marketers of distilled spirits sold in the United States, I am writing in support for HB 7911, "Relating to Health and Safety – Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging and Paper Products." HB 7911 proposes a comprehensive policy model that combines Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging and paper products with Recycling Refunds (RR) – also known as Deposit Return Systems (DRS) or "bottle bills" – for beverage containers. DISCUS supports this approach over HB 7910, EPR legislation that lacks the critical Recycling Refunds component.

Our organization's Environmental Sustainability Working Group is a global leader in efforts to protect the environment by working proactively to collaborate and share effective strategies and practices for maximizing resource utilization and eliminating waste at every step of the production process. DISCUS believes that sustainable environmental practices are critical to the continued production of the high-quality spirits that consumers enjoy.

We believe the comprehensive hybrid model proposed under HB 7911 will result in enhanced recycling outcomes, improved resource utilization, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by enhancing the availability and quality of recycled glass cullet. A hybrid Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Recycling Refunds (RR) model presents the best opportunity to drive higher recovery and recycling rates for beverage containers, while ensuring investment in improving systems for all packaging and paper products.

HB 7911 reflects lessons learned in other states, where EPR schemes have resulted in excessive fees on glass beverage containers, which are heavy but can be recycled practically without limit. Having a Recycling Refunds (RR) mechanism in place will help keep glass beverage containers out of landfills.

HB 7911 would establish an effective and convenient producer-funded recycling system in Rhode Island at the most efficient cost, while reducing litter and protecting the environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Smith".

Emily Smith
Vice President, State Public Policy

cc: Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee