



May 27, 2026

The Honorable David A. Bennett
Chair, House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island State House, Room 203
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 7911 – Glass Packaging Institute

Dear Chair Bennett and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I offer the following comments and testimony in support of HB 7911. GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers and suppliers to the industry. Our member companies produce domestic US food and beverage glass containers purchased in grocery stores and retail outlets. GPI's members include glass container manufacturers and glass recycling facilities across the country, including the New England region.

GPI **supports HB 7911**. We feel it is a well-designed EPR program that is also combined with an integrated bottle bill, also known as a Deposit Return System (DRS). The combined systems encourage consumers to recycle their bottles separately, creating the development of cleaner recovery streams and opportunities for reinvestment into the system. The EPR provisions also balance the need for better quality material and allow for the system to account for contamination and collection systems when setting fees.

EPR laws may address part of the problem, by shifting costs to brands and producers to help local governments pay for recycling service and hopefully influence more sustainable packaging choices. EPR alone may not change the behavior of consumers to increase recycling rates, nor will it increase quality or reduce contamination in the material recovery and recycling system without specific requirements to do so. We do not see adequate protections in this legislation to accomplish those objectives.

The commingled single-stream curbside recycling system sacrifices quality for convenience. That lowers collection costs but increases contamination and lowers the material yield for all materials. Modern facilities with adequate investment can overcome that with proper equipment for most commodity streams, but the glass stream is still different. Due to the typical design of most single-stream facilities, the glass commodity stream is typically built from a "negative" sort. This means

that while the rest of the equipment in the facility is purposely looking for metals, plastics or paper, etc., everything else – small recyclables and non-recyclables – is funneled into the glass stream. Some EPR-only proposals may disincentivize producers from using glass as their packaging choice because of rising fees based on weight, which is not the primary issue confronting Rhode Island's waste management system. Glass can be recycled as many times as we can get back but in states without DRS, like Rhode Island, it is often used as alternative daily cover, thrown to landfill, or downcycled in another way.

A modern bottle bill would triple the recovery rate of glass and would allow for all that material to be recycled back into new containers instead. The cleaner streams produced by a combined system will have access to already existing processing and end-markets nearby in New England and save taxpayers.

Combining EPR and DRS, allowing them to work together, is the best option for the future of recycling in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott DeFife". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott DeFife, President
Glass Packaging Institute