

## 40 Years Since the Passage of New York State’s Bottle Bill

**History:** the New York bottle bill was enacted on June 15, 1982 and implemented on July 1, 1983.

**Deposit and beverages covered:** 5¢ deposit on carbonated beverages: soft drinks, mineral water, beer, malt, and mixed wine drinks. On Oct. 22, 2009, non-carbonated and non-flavored water was added.

**Redemption system:** consumers bring empties to retail stores and redemption centers for the 5¢ refund.

### Redemption rate of 64% in 2020:

- In 2020, New Yorkers redeemed **5.5 billion bottles & cans**, or 64% of 8.6 billion deposit units sold.<sup>1</sup>

### Bottles and cans redeemed over the 38 years since the law’s implementation:

- Since late 1983, an estimated **162 billion** deposit beverage containers have been redeemed for the nickel deposit, or 69% of deposit beverages sold
- That’s about 80 billion aluminum cans, 45 billion plastic bottles, and 37 billion glass bottles
- That amounts to more than 8,300 cans and bottles for each person living in New York State today:
  - More than 4,100 aluminum cans per person
  - About 2,300 PET bottles per person
  - About 1,900 glass bottles per person
- If these containers were laid end-to-end, they’d reach to the moon and back 38 times

**Tonnage redeemed:** about **11.6 million tons** of beverage containers have been redeemed since 1983:



**Environmental benefits:** redeemed 11.6 million tons of containers in New York over 38 years:

- Saved enough aluminum to build about 32,000 Boeing 737 MAX airplanes
- Reduced greenhouse gases equivalent to taking about 3.4 million cars off the road for one year
- Avoided litter: saved half a billion dollars in litter cleanup costs and avoided injuries

### Economic benefits:

- The 11.6 million tons redeemed are worth about **\$4 billion** at today’s scrap prices (Feb. 2022). The processing and sale of these containers as scrap boosts New York’s economy
- Jobs in the recycling industry benefit thousands of New Yorkers
- Unclaimed deposits:
  - **\$2.4 billion** has been retained by the beverage industry since 1983
  - **\$1.2 billion** has been kept by NY State since 2009, in part to fund environmental projects

<sup>1</sup> 8.6 billion deposit containers sold: as reported by the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, based on information submitted by beverage distributors to the Department of Taxation and Finance. Drawing on multiple sources of national, regional, and statewide industry data, CRI’s estimate is 14.4 billion deposit units sold. We believe the disparity is due to under-reporting and non-reporting by beverage distributors, and could be resolved through audits.