



NEWS RELEASE

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GROUPS CALL ON GOVERNOR HOCHUL AND STATE LEADERS TO IMMEDIATELY DO ALL THEY CAN TO HELP STRUGGLING REDEMPTION CENTERS

REDEMPTION CENTER CLOSURES NOW NEARLY 150 BUSINESSES

URGE STRENGTHENING AND EXPANSION OF “BOTTLE BILL” AS RECOMMENDED BY DEC’S SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Albany, NY) A coalition of civic, environmental, social justice, and community-based charities joined with small business “redemption centers” to call on Governor Hochul and the state legislative leaders “to urge your attention and immediate action to prevent business closings and job losses by supporting legislation to boost the ‘handling fee’ that provides revenues for redemption centers, which are critical to the success of the state’s Bottle Deposit Law.”

The groups charged that the closures are, to some extent, the result of failed state policies. Redemption centers’ business model is based on the “handling fee” enshrined in state law. That handling fee – put in place in 2009 and not changed since – allows redemption centers to function as an important component of the state’s Bottle Deposit Law. Redemption centers typically handle large numbers of redeemable beverage containers and are a convenience to the consumers and independent recyclers that make the Bottle Deposit Law New York State’s most effective recycling system.

Consumers all across New York face having their access to bottle return options cut off if redemption centers continue to close. Parts of the state where redemption centers don’t exist are seeing stores refuse to accept containers due to their space limitations. If redemption centers close, that closure begins to cut off access to:

- Low-income families relying on their deposit money for survival
- Businesses requiring pick-up services stores do not provide
- Elderly/disabled citizens who need the services redemption centers provide to cater to their specific physical needs
- Charity/Community organizations who fundraise hundreds of thousands of dollars through redemption centers via bottle drive accounts

Yet, due to increased expenses combined with stagnant pay (from the stagnant handling fee), almost 150 redemption centers in the state have been forced to go out of business and those that remain are struggling. 20% of the industry was lost in just one year. Policymakers simply cannot expect small businesses to survive on 15-year-old pay rates while their costs more than double (minimum wages alone have doubled during this time).

During the 2024 legislative session, the groups advocated for a comprehensive strengthening of the Bottle Bill, but the legislature failed to take action. Now the groups are urging lawmakers to throw a “lifeline” to redemption centers. There is increasing concern that the state is allowing this system to fail to collect more money from the unredeemed fund. Taking money out of the hands of New Yorkers trying to do their part in keeping New York clean by cutting off their access to collect their deposit money.

The groups called on Governor Hochul to “use any and all of her executive powers to provide support to these struggling businesses.” The groups cited an example of an area in which they believe the governor could act: “the Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for a grant program that is *supposed* to provide support to redemption centers. The grant program was established in 2009 and has *not* – as far as we know – provided grants to *any* centers. It is our understanding that the absence of action is the result of flawed legislation, perhaps executive authority can push that program along.”

The groups also called on the leaders of the State Senate and Assembly to “reconvene to approve ‘lifeline’ legislation that could immediately help struggling redemption centers (S.8520/A.9044).”



June 25, 2024

Governor Kathy Hochul
Executive Chamber
Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12234

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader
LOB Room 907
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblymember Carl Heastie
Speaker
LOB Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Re: Urge your immediate action to save redemption center businesses in New York (S.8520/A.9044)

Dear Governor Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

We write to urge your attention and immediate action to prevent business closings and job losses by supporting legislation to boost the “handling fee” that provides revenues for redemption centers which are critical to the success of the state’s Bottle Deposit Law.

As you know, the state’s 40-year-old Bottle Deposit Law has been extremely effective in reducing litter and helping to stimulate recycling efforts. Like any other four-decade-old program it does need improvements. Our groups have advocated needed reforms but those efforts failed in the waning days of the session.

However, that failure also caused *severe* harm for the redemption centers in New York. As you can see in the attachment, nearly 150 recycling centers have closed their doors and many

others appear to have (perhaps as much as 20% of the industry). Given the inaction of the past session, it is expected that more will as well.

It is a failure of state policy that has contributed to these business closures. Redemption centers' business model is based on the "handling fee" enshrined in state law. That handling fee – put in place in 2009 and not changed since – allows redemption centers to function as an important component of the state' Bottle Deposit Law. Redemption centers often handle large numbers of redeemable beverage containers and are a convenience to consumers.

They provide quick and easy access to low-income families and independent recyclers, pick-up services to businesses, and irreplaceable fundraising opportunities to a variety of nonprofit and community organizations. The closures of these businesses have significant ripple effects in all of New York's communities.

These businesses have upheld New York's Bottle Deposit Law. But they have been facing financial strain for years. They have and continue to suffer increased expenses, while receiving stagnant pay (from the stagnant handling fee). Policymakers simply cannot expect small businesses to survive on 15-year-old pay rates while their costs more than double (minimum wages alone have doubled during that time).

Yet, that is precisely what inaction has meant – business failures and job losses.

Therefore, we urge that the governor use any and all of her executive powers to provide support to these struggling businesses. For example, the Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for a grant program that is *supposed* to provide support to redemption centers. The grant program was established in 2009 and has *not* – as far as we know – provided grants to *any* centers. It is our understanding that the absence of action is the result of flawed legislation, perhaps executive authority can push that program along.

Ultimately legislation is needed. We have strongly supported a comprehensive measure to strengthen the law (see S.237-C/A.6353-A), but *faster* action is needed.

We strongly urge that the legislature reconvene to approve "lifeline" legislation that could immediately help struggling redemption centers (S.8520/A.9044).

We are well aware of the difficulty of what we ask. However, given the legislative inaction this session, the looming loss of this crucial industry, and many negative financial and environmental effects on New York communities throughout the state, we believe that such action is necessary.

We look forward to working with you on this matter. If you have any questions or request additional information, please feel free to contact Jade Eddy (518-409-2728) or Martin Naro (631-807-3573) of Empire State Redemption Association.

Name Of Redemption Center	Location	Status
AAA	WEST HAVERSTRAW	Closed
ADVANCED RECYCLING SOLUTION	BROOKLYN	Closed
ADAMS B&CR	ADAMS	Closed
ALLEN'S BOTTLE & CAN RETURN	CANASTOTA	Closed
ALLSTATE RECYCLING LLC	BRONX	Closed
BRONX RECYCLING CENTER INC	BRONX	Closed
BOTTLE AND CAN RETRIEVAL CENTER 1	WATERTOWN	Closed
BOTTLE AND CAN RETRIEVAL CENTER 2	WATERTOWN	Closed
BOTTLE DEPOT #18	WEST HAVERSTRAW	Closed
BOTTLE DROP	WHITESBORO	Closed
BOTTLE RETRIEVER	KINGSTON	Closed
BOTTLE RETRIEVER	NEWBURGH	Closed
BROADWAY REDEMPTION	BUFFALO	Closed
BUFFALO HEAD REDEMPTION	HERKIMER	Closed
CANS FOR CANS	STONY POINT	Closed
CAZ RETURNABLES	CAZENOVIA	Closed
D'S BOTTLE REDEMPTION	SYRACUSE	Closed
DASHER LLC	OGDENSBURG	Closed
DRUM REDEMPTION	BLACK RIVER	Closed
DUTTINGER	OSWEGO	Closed
EAST SYRACUSE BOTTLE AND CAN	DEWITT	Closed
FINGER LAKES RETURNABLES	SENECA FALLS	Closed
HARKNESS BOTTLE REDEMPTION	PERU	Closed
HARRISVILLE REDEMPTION CENTER	HARRISVILLE	Closed
M&N REDEMPTION	CLYDE	Closed
MERIDIAN CAN-O-RAMA	MERIDIAN	Closed
MID-CITY BOTTLE	NORTH TONAWANDA	Closed
MOUNTAIN GATE REDEMPTION	STAR LAKE	Closed
MY 2 SONS BOTTLE & CAN	NORTH COLLINS	Closed
NEW CITY BOTTLE REDEMPTION	NEW CITY	Closed
NICKELS BOTTLE REDEMPTION	MALONE	Closed
NORTHSIDE REDEMPTION	SYRACUSE	Closed
ON THE CAN REDEMPTION	UTICA	Closed
ONIEDA STREET REDEMPTION CENTER	UTICA	Closed
PENNIE'S NICKLES & DIMES REDEMPTION CENTER	LYONS	Closed
PHELPS REDEMPTION CENTER	EDWARDS	Closed
POP-A-TOP	CONSTANIA	Closed
RAILROAD REDEMPTION CENTER	BOONEVILLE	Closed
RECYCLE KING		Closed
RELLICS	THREE MILE BAY	Closed
ROSEN'S REDEMPTION CENTER	CORTLAND	Closed
SALT CITY REDEMPTION CENTER	LIVERPOOL	Closed
SOUTH TROY PENNYSAVER	TROY	Closed
UKIES	PLATTSBURGH	Closed
BOBBI'S BOTTLE AND CAN	WILLIAMSTOWN	Closed
VERN'S RETURNS	BREWTON	Closed

WILDCAT REDEMPTION	BOONVILLE	Closed
S&J REDEMPTION	EATON	Closed 2012
POP-A-TOP	NO. PITCHER	Closed 2014
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	NORTH SYRACUSE	Closed 2017
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	BALDWINSVILLES	Closed 2017
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	SYRACUSE	Closed 2017
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	SYRACUSE	Closed 2017
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	SYRACUSE	Closed 2017
LUCKY 7 BOTTLE & CAN RETURN LLC	SYRACUSE WEST	Closed 2017
FOUR SEASONS	MILLERTON	Closed 2018
VALLEY REDEMPTION CENTER	NEWARK VALLEY	Closed 2021
ARC OF GENESEE ORLEANS REDEMPTION	BATAVIA	Closed 2022
EDEN'S RUSTY NICKEL REDEMPTION	EDEN	Closed 2022
MJ'S DRIVE-THRU	WILSON	Closed 2022
T&T REDEMPTION	CORTLAND	Closed 2022
CK BOTTLES4BUCKS	BUFFALO	Closed 2023
THE CAN MAN	SPRINGVILLE	Closed 2024
JAN'S CANS	FORT EDWARD	Closed April 2023
ROUTE 48 BOTTLE CENTER	NORWOOD	Closed April 2024
AXEL'S CAN & BOTTLE REDEMPTION	BINGHAMTON	Closed August 2023
GREEN WITCH REDEMPTION	GREENWICH	Closed August 2023
NICKEL AND DIME	MENDON	Closed August 2023
ALEX BAY REDEMPTION	ALEXANDRIA BAY	Closed Jan 2024
TURNPIKE BOTTLE REDEMPTION	ELLENBURG DEPOT	Closed Jan 2024
JT BOTTLE REDEMPTION	BUFFALO	Closed July 2022
EXCHANGE REDEMPTION	ATTICA	Closed July 2023
MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE	HUDSON	Closed July 2023
NICKELBACK	GASPORT	Closed July 2023
COON'S CANS	GENEVA	Closed March 2024
COON'S CANS	PHELPS	Closed March 2024
ERIE BLVD W RETURNS	ROME	Closed March 2024
B&K REDEMPTION	HYDE PARK	Closed May 2023
WELLSVILLE REDEMPTION	WELLSVILLE	Closed May 2023
PAPA CANS	STITTVILLE	Closed Part Time Now
PULASKI 5¢ RETURNS	PULASKI	Closed Sept 2023
ROLAND P WILCOX	EAST SYRACUSE	Disconnected
WISE GUYS CANS	SOUTH OTSELIC	Open by Appt Only Now
HILLTOP REDEMPTION	SKANEATELES	Phone Disconnected
RED CREEK BOTTLE RETURN	RED CREEK	Phone Disconnected
REDEMPTION CENTER OF VAN BUREN	SYRACUSE	Phone Disconnected
SAUGERTIES BOTTLE & CAN RETURN	SAUGERTIES	Phone Disconnected
RAILROAD RETURNABLES	WILLAMSON	Closed Dec 2023
CAPITAL REDEMPTION	ALBANY	Sold to Get Out
COLONIE STAR B&CR	ALBANY	Sold to Get Out
TWO-CANS REDEMPTION	NORTH TONAWANDA	Sold to Get Out
TERRAPIN BOTTLE & CAN RETURN	AMSTERDAM	Sold to Get Out
N&N REDEMPTION	HANNIBAL	Sold to Get Out

LEELYNN'S	PARISH	Temporarily Closed
PERFECT BOTTLE AND CAN	GLOVERSVILLE	Temporarily Closed
RANDEE'S REDEMPTION	PHEONIX	Temporarily Closed
T-N-J 5¢ REDEMPTION	ONEIDA	Temporarily Closed
196 BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
A&A REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
ALBION REDEMPTOIN CENTER	N/A	No response
ALLEGANY BEVERAGE & REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
ALLEYWAY REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
AQS REDEMPTION INC	N/A	No response
B & K BEVERAGES	N/A	No response
BAG O'NICKELS	N/A	No response
BC CAN AND BOTTLE	N/A	No response
BEER WORLD 7	N/A	No response
BOTTLE AND CAN DEPOT	N/A	No response
CASH IN CASH OUT REDEMPTION CENTER LLC	N/A	No response
COINS TO DOLLARS	N/A	No response
COLMADO BRI	N/A	No response
CORDIAL CONCEPTS LLC	N/A	No response
EC RECYCLE INC	N/A	No response
ECO CENTS BOTTLE REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
ECO FRIENDLY REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
EXTRA DIME BACK LLC	N/A	No response
EZ BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
F&J RECYCLING	N/A	No response
FRYE ROAD REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
FULTONVILLE REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
GRANDVIEW RECYCLE INC	N/A	No response
GREENWORLD 168	N/A	No response
HUEY'S REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
JASNOOR INC	N/A	No response
JASWINDER SINGH CHILANA CORP	N/A	No response
KS REDEMPTION INC	N/A	No response
LANNING CORP., WESTERN LIGHTS BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
LANNING CORP/DBA ESM BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
LIVONIA REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
LONG ISLAND BOTTLES AND CANS INC	N/A	No response
LYNCOURT BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
MEGA BEVERAGE REDEMPTION CENTER INC	N/A	No response
NEIGHBORHOOD REDEMPTION CENTER, INC	N/A	No response
NICKLE BACK BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
ONEONTA REDEMPTION CENTER LLC	N/A	No response
PLANK ROAD BOTTLE RETURN	N/A	No response
QUICK CASH BOTTLE AND CAN REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
R&R BOTTLE AND CAN REDEMPTION CENTER	N/A	No response
RABIDEAU REDEMPTION	N/A	No response
RAJPREET INC DBA BOTTLE DEPOT	N/A	No response

RECYCLE FOR EDUCATION	N/A	No response
RIGHI REDEMPTION LLC	N/A	No response
ROSEADON ENTERPRISES CHITTENANGO CAN AND BOTT	N/A	No response
ROSEADON ENTERPRISES MINOA CAN AND BOTTLE RETL	N/A	No response
RT. 149 BOTTLE AND CAN RETURN	N/A	No response
SCHENECTADY RECYCLING	N/A	No response
SHERIDAN WHOLESAL	N/A	No response
THE ENVIRONMENTAL RECYCLING OF NY	N/A	No response
THE REDEEMER	N/A	No response
THEODORE STINNER	N/A	No response
UNITED REDEMPTION INC	N/A	No response
VEE RECYCLING INC	N/A	No response