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## **NEW STUDY SHOWS ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MODERNIZING DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEMS IN NORTHEAST US**

***First-of-its kind research reveals impact if legislatures update decades-old “bottle bills” and adopt proven high-performance principles in CT, ME, MA, NY and VT***

With the Northeast region [warming faster](#) than global average temperatures, new research released today by Reloop North America shows how five states with bottle bills— Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont—could achieve major environmental and economic benefits by modernizing their deposit return systems.

The study, [Reimagining the Bottle Bill](#), uses new modeling and data to make a compelling case for immediate legislative action to fully modernize bottle bills in these five states. Benefits for the region would include:

- Increase in recycling rate of beverage containers from 69% to 92%
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 550,000 metric tons each year—[the equivalent of taking 121,000 cars off Northeast roads annually](#)
- Increase by as much as \$1.4 billion annually the region’s [Gross Value Added](#) (GVA)
- Up to \$160 million in savings to cities and towns across the five states
- 2,751 jobs created throughout the region

**Elizabeth Balkan, Director of Reloop North America**, stated, “We did this study because time is not on our side. The environmental implications of waste-based manufacturing and over-consumption demand urgent action. In the Northeast alone, over 400 beverage containers per person per year are buried, burned, or littered. We need to take action now so that bottles remain bottles and cans remain cans.”

For the first time, players from across the beverage container supply chain—industry, advocates, government—came together to support and inform the Reloop North America study. It highlights how modernized bottle bills—instituted in Europe to great success—result in higher recycling rates, recovery of valuable materials, and savings to taxpayers. New bottle bills are currently moving through legislatures in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New York, albeit too slowly given resistance from industry leaders.

"Plastic pollution is having a devastating impact on our environment, especially marine ecosystems. Refundable deposits on beverage containers is a proven way to reduce litter, boost reuse and recycling, save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create jobs. This

strategy shifts the financial responsibility away from taxpayers and on to the producers that sell products. It is an exemplary example of producer responsibility," said **Judith Enck, President of Beyond Plastics and former EPA Regional Administrator.**

So how does it work? Modernized bottle bills incentivize consumers and make it as easy to return beverage containers as going to the grocery store. An updated deposit return system includes more types of beverages, increases deposit value to 10¢, and establishes an accessible recycling system that is transparent, uniform, and accountable. Financed by the beverage industry, and overseen and regulated by state government, a modern system would save taxpayers and Northeast municipalities millions each year.

**Kate Bailey, National Policy Coordinator for the Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers (AMBR),** reviewed the study's findings and said, "There is no denying the benefits of a well-run DRS, and it's time to finally end the false dichotomy between curbside recycling and bottle bills. It is not either-or but both-and. We are excited to see Reloop identifying the need for a transition plan for the existing curbside recycling industry as one of the key principles of success for modernizing DRS."

According to **Balkan**, "It's time for all of us, especially legislators in these five Northeast states to put our collective energy into a solution that is proven, achievable, and enables us and future generations to live in healthy, sustainable, and just communities. We must act with urgency to modernize bottle bills throughout the Northeast region."

For a copy of the research report or executive summary [see bottlebillreimagined.org](https://www.bottlebillreimagined.org) contact Geoffrey Knox at 917-414-1749, [gknox@geoffreyknox.com](mailto:gknox@geoffreyknox.com) or Kelly Castagnaro at 646-707-1004, [kcastagnaro@gmail.com](mailto:kcastagnaro@gmail.com).

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*Reloop's vision is a world free of pollution, where an ambitious and integrated circular economy allows our precious resources to remain resources, so that people, businesses and nature can flourish. To achieve this it works with governments, industry and society to accelerate the global transition to a circular economy for all resources. <https://www.reloopplatform.org/>*