

**American Littoral Society
Container Recycling Institute
Environmental Advocates of New York
New York Public Interest Research Group
Sierra Club
WE CAN**

NEWS RELEASE

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BIGGER, BETTER, BOTTLE BILL SWEEPS THROUGH ASSEMBLY WITH BROAD, BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

Environmental Groups Applaud Assembly and Call On State Senate To Pass the Bill This Year

Environmental groups praised the New York State Assembly for passing the Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill (A2517B-DiNapoli) last night, and called on the State Senate to take up the measure before they adjourn this week.

After nearly two hours of floor debate, the Assembly passed the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill by a vote of 98 to 40 last night, with broad-based bipartisan support. This is the first time since the bill was originally introduced in 2002 that it has been voted on in the Assembly. The bill, which has eight Senate cosponsors (S1290B-LaValle) and strong support among the Senate minority, now goes to the Senate.

“This is a tremendous milestone for the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill,” said Laura Haight, senior environmental associate for NYPIRG. “We applaud the Assembly for taking a strong stand for cleaner communities and more recycling in New York State, and are enormously grateful to Assemblyman DiNapoli for his hard work and leadership. This bill has the backing of farmers, environmentalists, local governments, and many businesses. It’s now up to the Senate to take action on this important measure.”

“Passage of the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill, one of the environmental community’s five ‘Super Bills,’ is a tremendous achievement,” said Rob Moore, executive director of Environmental Advocates. “Assemblyman DiNapoli’s leadership on this legislation is much appreciated and should be applauded.”

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Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Legislative Associate, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, said: "The Sierra Club thanks Assemblyman DiNapoli for his work to get the plastic drink bottles and broken bottle glass off our shorelines, playgrounds and streets. We thank the Assemblymembers who voted to protect our children and our environment by reducing litter and increasing recycling. Finally, we call on the Senate leadership to put the interests of our children and the environment first and stop stalling action on the Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill."

Jennifer Gitlitz, research director for the Container Recycling Institute, said, "We applaud the New York State Assembly for its overwhelming endorsement of an updated bottle bill. This vote will invigorate activists and policymakers in Massachusetts, Oregon, Michigan, and Connecticut who are working to add non-carbonated beverages to their deposit systems, and it will encourage people campaigning for new deposit laws across the country. This popular and effective recycling and litter prevention program deserves to be voted on by the full Senate."

"It's encouraging to know that our representatives in the Assembly responded to the grassroots campaign of the people of New York," said Barbara Toborg, Conservation Coordinator for the Northeast Chapter of the American Littoral Society. "Common sense carried the day!"

"This is a great victory for those who continue to believe that recycling preserves energy and precious nonrenewable resources," said Bob Sann, executive director of WE CAN, a nonprofit redemption center serving the needs of the homeless in New York City. "Let's hope that the Senate recognizes that support for a cleaner environment crosses party lines."

The "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" (A2517B, DiNapoli/S1290B LaValle) would extend the current 5-cent container deposit law to include non-carbonated beverages like bottled water and iced tea. It would also require beverage companies to return the unclaimed deposits to the state to fund recycling and other environmental protection programs.

The Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill enjoys tremendous popular support, with endorsements from more than 350 local governments, small businesses, and a broad range of groups from across New York State. Polls show that most New Yorkers support this proposal. However, the bill has faced stiff opposition from well-financed industry groups such as beer wholesalers, soda and beverage companies, and supermarket and convenience stores.

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