



*October 3, 2025*

Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie  
Committee on Business and Economic Development  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

**Re: Testimony for Bill B26-0058**

Dear Councilmember McDuffie and Committee Members:

The Glass Packaging Institute (GPI) is pleased to offer the following perspective and comments for Bill B26-0058, The Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Amendment Act of 2025, which would create a deposit return (DRS)/recycling refund (RR) program for beverage containers sold in the District of Columbia. GPI and its member companies work with state legislatures across the country in support of DRS programs for glass and other containers. GPI is also a member of the Coalition for High Performance Recycling a diverse group of consumer brands, environmental nonprofits, material manufacturers, packaging suppliers, and trade associations united in our mission to improve recycling systems across the country through DRS programs for glass and other containers.

Glass is an inert, 100% recyclable packaging material, recovered at very high rates in states with beverage deposit return systems. Quality and contamination are key differentiators to the value and potential end-markets for recycled glass. The separation that occurs when glass bottles are collected via deposit return systems drastically reduces contamination, increases value, increases recovery rate and provides the best opportunity to return the glass to a manufactured product.

The biggest obstacle to glass recycling is not a lack of end markets, but rather high contamination rates. When glass is collected curbside in a single-stream system, it is broken down into small pieces and often contaminated by other small recyclables. As glass is sorted through Material Recovery Facilities (MRF), the recycled glass stream often has levels of contamination above 50%. Because of the contamination, this stream of

material is often described as having “negative value” on the commodity market. Many states also allow glass to be sent to landfill as alternative daily cover. Source separated glass, however, is marketable. For example, unlike claims that Arlington has stopped recycling glass, Arlington has switched to community glass drop off locations and now benefits from the positive commodity value of clean glass.

There are seven end-market factories for glass containers in three nearby states: Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. In addition, CAP Glass has added a glass pre-cleaning location in Baltimore that can accept more glass than it is currently getting. The District’s overall diversion rate is 25-30%, with the glass container diversion rate even lower. With a deposit return system in place, D.C. could ensure that nearly 90% of covered glass bottles would be recovered and recycled into new bottles again.

GPI specifically supports the following provisions in the bill:

- Nonprofit Stewardship Organization run by the beverage producers with DOEE
  - This is consistent with best practice principles on modern management of the container deposit program.
  - We support and encourage the provision establishing bottle redemption centers, convenient “bag drop” and newer technologies to promote modern redemption access and community drop off locations.

GPI would like to see the following changes made to the bill:

- Creation of an Advisory Council
  - This would allow additional stakeholders to assist in keeping the program balanced and add transparency and accountability.
- DRS programs are aided by active involvement of local governments - we support the concept that the city could create their own redemptions centers and participate in the benefits of the program (for example, sharing in the revenue of sold recyclable commodities)

Please find some helpful photos on the next page. Thank you again for considering our input, and we look forward to working and collaborating with you and the full Committee in the future on deposit return systems and any other avenues to recycle and recover glass bottles and jars.

Sincerely,



Scott DeFife, President  
Glass Packaging Institute  
Addendum:

*Infographic on Efficiency and Yield-Loss from different glass collection streams*



*Left: Picture of Commingled Single Stream Recycling “Glass” - as delivered from a Material Recovery Facility. Requires intensive sorting and cleaning prior to meeting furnace-ready specifications.*

*Right: Picture of green bottle bill glass delivered from redemption centers to transfer facility*

