



March 1, 2023

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita
Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa
Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Finance
State Capitol Building
Conference Room 308, State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Comments for HB 1326 HD-1, Oppose as Drafted

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of Committee:

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I offer the following comments and testimony **for HB 1326 HD-1**, which would create an extended producer responsibility program (EPR) for glass and other packaging. GPI opposes the legislation as drafted.

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers and suppliers to the industry. Our member companies produce the vast majority of US food and beverage glass containers purchased in grocery stores and retail outlets. Glass is an environmentally friendly, endlessly recyclable and sustainable package.

Glass Container Recycling Background

The glass container manufacturing industry has a significant stake in the effectiveness of recycling programs. Recycled glass is a key component of the glass container manufacturing process. For every 10% of recycled glass included in the manufacturing process, energy costs can be reduced 2-3%. A corresponding reduction of plant greenhouse gas emissions also occurs when increasing levels of recycled glass are used to produce new containers.

Comments for HB 1326 HD-1

While GPI appreciates the primary goal of the legislation, to greatly reduce the number of recyclables and solid waste heading to landfills and incinerators, we have particular concern with waste reduction, future producer costs and the broader implications of packaging reduction efforts, when measured by weight or tonnage.

Glass is a long-standing package of choice for food and beverage brands, is sustainable, reusable, refillable, non-toxic and infinitely recyclable. By basing reductions and establishing primary packaging metrics on weight, the bill may unintentionally provide a financial incentive to producers to choose lighter weight, often lesser recycled packaging options.

Weight based metrics are also contrary to the goal of reducing the amount of plastic and other single use packaging sold in Hawaii. While we appreciate that the legislation directs the Dept. of Health to not base fees solely on weight, when it is the only currently defined data collection metric within the bill, it becomes the default option.

HB 1326 HD-1 also lacks clear direction to ensure better performance for outbound recyclable material (i.e., recyclables post-sorting), which would ultimately keep covered material out of Hawaii's landfills and incinerators, a primary goal of the bill. Quality and reduced contamination provide manufacturing based-end markets with the needed incentive to purchase recycled glass, and other recyclables collected.

We support the concept of the "needs assessment" provision within the bill, however, elements within the assessment should be clarified in the legislation, so the appropriate and needed information is collected. These elements include understanding the current recycling processing capacity and infrastructure, as well as consumer education needs, future funding to improve local recycling programs and a clear public stakeholder process.

GPI also notes the absence of a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) within the bill. PROs exist in states with approved and in-development EPR programs (California, Maine, and Oregon). While PROs, are driven by producers and brands responsible for the costs of the program, each of the PROs under development have regulatory and non-industry stakeholder involvement and oversight. PROs provide information and resources that will eventually be sought by any EPR program throughout the development phases and should be included in programs under consideration by the Hawaii legislature.

GPI appreciates the most recent amendment which includes the creation of an EPR advisory council. This council, with a mix of stakeholder and regulatory participants, can provide additional support and guidance to the PRO, as they develop a comprehensive EPR program.

GPI and its member companies look forward to additional opportunities to engage with Hawaii legislators and all stakeholders on the best ways to increasing recycling, recovery, reuse of glass.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,



Scott DeFife
President