

(Without Reference to File)**CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS**

AB 1311 (Wood)

As Amended September 3, 2021

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Expands beverage container redemption opportunities under the California Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Program (Bottle Bill).

Senate Amendments

- 1) Specify that businesses and centers that are experiencing operational challenges due to natural disasters or states of emergency are eligible for an alternative operating schedule.
- 2) Extends the timeline for appointment-based operation from July 1, 2022, to January 1, 2023.
- 3) Make related technical and clarifying changes.

COMMENTS

This bill makes small, measured adjustments to Bottle Bill requirements for recycling centers that will help increase consumers redemption convenience and stabilize recycling centers.

This bill increases the ability of consumers to redeem their deposit, the California Redemption Value (CRV), by modernizing the program to allow the use of "bag drop" operations as certified recycling centers. Bag drop recycling programs allow consumers to use specific bags with a label that is unique to each consumer to collect their empty beverage containers and drop off the bag when it is full at a bag drop recycling center. The bags are collected by the operator, counted or weighed, and the redemption value is returned to the consumer electronically.

Current law requires that certified recycling centers are open for a minimum of 30 hours per week, including at least five hours outside of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Many smaller, especially family-owned centers, do not need to be open for a full 30 hours per week to provide convenient recycling opportunities to consumers. Additionally, centers are unable to close for any reason, including for illness or vacation, without risking decertification. This bill authorizes CalRecycle to authorize alternative schedules based on criteria it develops, taking into consideration flexibility for small and family-owned centers. When developing the criteria, CalRecycle will be required to ensure that the operating hours do not significantly decrease the ability of consumers to conveniently redeem beverage containers.

Many certified recycling centers closed when the state shut down due to the pandemic. In Humboldt County, the closures resulted in only one center remaining open to serve the entire county. This resulted in excessively long lines and crowds that made it impossible to ensure social distancing and protect the health of employees and the public. As a result, the only remaining center closed its doors. This bill authorizes CalRecycle to allow certified recycling centers to operate using an appointment system for one year, through January 1, 2023, to prevent overcrowding while allowing consumers to redeem the containers they have accumulated while redemption centers have been closed.

According to the Author

Humboldt County in my district has been a leader in the recycling movement for more than 50 years. In 1971, the Northcoast Environmental Center in Arcata became one of the first non-profit recycling centers in America. Tragically, today there are zero redemption centers that remain open in Humboldt County. Residents of Arcata, many of whom led the recycling revolution, are forced to drive either one and a half hours north to Crescent City or two and a half hours south to Willits if they want to redeem their CRV containers.

This bill offers several minor changes that will create flexibility in the bottle bill program for redemption centers to operate on alternative schedules and by appointment. These simple changes will provide the flexibility redemption centers in my district need to reopen and give my constituents a reasonable opportunity to redeem their CRV containers.

Arguments in Support

According to the League of California Cities, AB 1311 would make several important changes... Specifically, the measure would require bag drop recycling centers to pay the CRV for containers within three business days and allows it to be paid electronically. AB 1311 would also enable CalRecycle to adjust recycling center operating hours and allow appointment-based recycling opportunities to accommodate local needs. These changes will create greater flexibility in the Bottle Bill program for redemption centers, which will help create new opportunities for consumers to redeem their CRV and preserve the program's core functions. Cal Cities continues to support efforts to increase the availability of redemption centers and ease of recycling for our city residents.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Potential ongoing cost pressure of about \$120,000 annually [Beverage Container Recycling Fund (BCFR)] for CalRecycle to promulgate regulations if necessary.
- 2) To the extent that consumers redeem more beverage containers, unknown but potentially significant ongoing costs, possibly in the millions of dollars annually, (BCRF) for increased payments of the CRV.

VOTES:**ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 11-0-0**

YES: Luz Rivas, Flora, Chau, Friedman, Cristina Garcia, Mathis, McCarty, Muratsuchi, Seyarto, Stone, Wood

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 16-0-0

YES: Lorena Gonzalez, Bigelow, Calderon, Carrillo, Chau, Megan Dahle, Davies, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Levine, Quirk, Robert Rivas, Akilah Weber, Holden, Luz Rivas

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0-2

YES: Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Bigelow, Bloom, Boerner Horvath, Bryan, Burke, Calderon, Carrillo, Cervantes, Chau, Chen, Chiu, Choi, Cooley, Cooper, Cunningham, Megan Dahle, Daly, Davies, Flora, Fong, Frazier, Friedman, Gabriel, Gallagher, Eduardo Garcia, Gipson, Lorena Gonzalez, Gray, Grayson, Holden, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Kiley, Lackey, Lee, Levine, Low, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nguyen, O'Donnell, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Reyes, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas, Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Salas, Santiago, Seyarto, Smith, Stone, Ting, Valladares, Villapudua, Voepel, Waldron, Ward, Akilah Weber, Wicks, Wood, Rendon

ABS, ABST OR NV: Cristina Garcia, Maienschein

UPDATED

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