

Senator Brenner  
Representative Gramlich  
Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Re: LD 134, An Act to Increase the Handling Fee for Beverage Containers  
reimbursed to Dealers and Redemption Centers

My name is Debra Hart, and I am a resident of Manchester, Maine. I am presenting these comments in qualified support of LD 134, as amended, on behalf of Hannaford Supermarkets. Hannaford has been in the grocery business in Maine since the late 1800s and currently has 64 stores in Maine.

Specifically, we agree that something needs to be done fairly quickly to stem the tidal wave that completely overwhelmed the redemption system following the pandemic. As you know, Hannaford's stores are supported by the CLYNK system, which processes bottles brought into their facilities.

In Section 2, we take no specific position on what the correct amount of the handling fee should be for returned containers. We question whether adjusting the reimbursement of handling costs must be done biannually is necessary.

In Section 3, however, we support the ability for the Department to waive the individual container reporting requirements. There needs to be a focus on fairness in the bottle sorting process while still allowing a method that will ensure fair and accurate accounting methods. We believe this is a reasonable approach to dealing with returnable containers.

Like others, we only saw this new language yesterday. We look forward to working with the committee and others as they work to make the beverage container law better for all the interested parties.