



Testimony of Matt Marks on Behalf of Clynk in Support of LD 2091

"An Act Regarding Businesses' and Consumers' Use of Returnable, Reusable and Refillable Containers for Food, Beverages and Nonfood Items"

Joint-Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

January 22, 2024

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Matt Marks, I am a Principal at Cornerstone Government Affairs and here today to testify in support of LD 2091 on behalf of Clynk.

Clynk is a Maine-based technology company in the container redemption business committed to making the right thing the easiest thing for our customers. We have 150 full-time team members in Maine and forty of those positions are filled by New Mainers. Clynk has an active program with the Department of Corrections helping incarcerated women prepare for community re-entry with 60+ alumni. As Clynk's technical capacity continues to grow, the work in data, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and software offers exciting opportunities for careers in the recycling industry.

Clynk provides a streamlined collection service leveraging innovative technology. Through partnerships, customers have access to drop returnable containers at 55 locations covering 85% of Maine's population. They've created a system that is easy and convenient, and the efficiency in processing allows them to meet the demand.

Customers use a process known in the industry as "bag drop" to return redeemable containers. Each bag, made of recycled plastic, is labeled with a bar code that is associated with their online account. Once the bag is filled, they are dropped at a convenient location, scanned in, and subsequently shipped to a processing center. Twenty-four percent of the market is managed by Clynk who has processed more than 1.62 billion containers since the company started operations.

The proposed law enables Maine businesses to provide reusable containers to customers, sanitize them, and prepare for reuse. As other States are seeing a proliferation in businesses that offer reusable packaging, we were alarmed to learn that existing Maine law does not enable every business in Maine to provide reusable containers to consumers and then collect them back for sanitation and reuse.

The Oregon Beverage and Recycling Cooperative program is built off of the CLYNK model. The bottles don't require any extra time or hassle for consumers – they are returned through the same redemption pathways as other beverage containers. The distinct bottles are sorted and separated during OBRC's processing, then washed and carefully inspected before they are delivered back to Oregon's craft beverage producers to be used again.



CLYNKs innovative technology and existing drop-off locations in Maine are poised to support the deposit and return systems that could facilitate more reusable packaging in the State. We look forward to being a part of the conversation and working with our community and business partners to further the development of reusable packaging infrastructure in Maine.

As other States and jurisdictions around the world experience the benefits of reuse, we think it's easy to support LD 2091. Reuse is a win for the environment, it supports economic growth, and it creates more satisfying experiences for consumers. We want to recognize and thank Senator Grohoski for submitting this bill and thank the Committee for considering our testimony, I am happy to answer any questions.