



Testimony in Support of LD 1721
An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Commingling of Beverage Containers
Sarah Nichols, on behalf of the Maine Redemption Center Association
April 22, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and distinguished members of the committee on environment and natural resources, my name is Sarah Nichols and I am here on behalf of the nine members of the Maine Redemption Center Association (MRCA) to speak in favor of LD 1721.

We appreciate the bill sponsor's and Committee's ongoing work to modernize and strengthen Maine's Bottle Bill in ways that support the small businesses at the heart of the system—our redemption centers.

This bill further clarifies the updates regarding container commingling. It updates the definition of "like materials," allowing containers that are similar in composition to be grouped together. That helps streamline sorting and will reduce confusion as the recent law changes are implemented.

The bill clarifies the responsibilities around sorting. It allows commingling groups to refuse containers that are not sorted according to an approved plan—but importantly, it also removes their ability to reject containers processed through reverse vending machines. Maine's high-volume redemption centers rely on the efficiencies gained by using these machines.

Finally, the bill protects redemption centers from being required to perform unnecessary or excessive sorting beyond what's already required by law. This ensures consistency and shields centers from arbitrary demands that increase labor and drive up costs.

In short, these provisions are about clarity, operational efficiency, and protecting our interests, which is why we are in favor. Thank you for your time and for your continued leadership.