

STATE OF NEW YORK

5684

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 27, 2025

Introduced by Sens. MAY, BRISPORT, CLEARE, FAHY, GONZALEZ, HINCHEY, HOYLMAN-SIGAL, JACKSON, KAVANAGH, KRUEGER, RAMOS, RIVERA, SALAZAR, SEPULVEDA, WEBB -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to returnable bottles; to direct the multi-agency bottle bill fraud investigation team to submit a report on findings of pervasive bottle redemption fraud in New York state; and to repeal section 27-1018 of such law relating to the beverage container assistance program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 27-1003 of the environmental
2 conservation law, as amended by section 2 of part SS of chapter 59 of
3 the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

4 1. "Beverage" means carbonated soft drinks, noncarbonated soft drinks,
5 noncarbonated fruit or vegetable juices containing less than one hundred
6 percent fruit or vegetable juice, coffee and tea beverages, carbonated
7 fruit beverages, water, beer, other malt beverages, cider as defined in
8 section three of the alcoholic beverage control law, and [~~a~~] wine [~~prod-~~
9 ~~uct~~] products as defined in [~~subdivision thirty-six-a of~~] section three
10 of the alcoholic beverage control law. "Malt beverages" means any bever-
11 age obtained by the alcoholic fermentation or infusion or decoction of
12 barley, malt, hops, or other wholesome grain or cereal and water includ-
13 ing, but not limited to ale, stout or malt liquor. "Water" means any
14 beverage identified through the use of letters, words or symbols on its
15 product label as a type of water, including any flavored water or nutri-
16 tionally enhanced water[~~, provided, however, that "water" does not~~
17 ~~include any beverage identified as a type of water to which a sugar has~~
18 ~~been added~~].

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD05023-04-5

1 § 2. Subdivision 1 of section 27-1003 of the environmental conserva-
2 tion law, as amended by section one of this act, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 1. "Beverage" means [~~carbonated soft drinks, noncarbonated soft~~
5 ~~drinks, noncarbonated fruit or vegetable juices containing less than one~~
6 ~~hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice, coffee and tea beverages,~~
7 ~~carbonated fruit beverages, water, beer, other malt beverages, cider as~~
8 ~~defined in section three of the alcoholic beverage control law, and a~~
9 ~~wine product as defined in section three of the alcoholic beverage~~
10 ~~control law. "Malt beverages" means any beverage obtained by the alco-~~
11 ~~holic fermentation or infusion or decoction of barley, malt, hops, or~~
12 ~~other wholesome grain or cereal and water including, but not limited to~~
13 ~~ale, stout or malt liquor. "Water" means any beverage identified through~~
14 ~~the use of letters, words or symbols on its product label as a type of~~
15 ~~water, including any flavored water or nutritionally enhanced water] any
16 drinkable liquid intended for human oral consumption. The term beverage
17 does not include: a drug regulated under the Federal Food, Drug, and
18 Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.; infant formula; a meal replacement
19 liquid; dairy products derived from animal milk; plant-based dairy
20 alternatives; and noncarbonated fruit or vegetable juices containing one
21 hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice.~~

22 § 3. Subdivisions 8 and 12 of section 27-1003 of the environmental
23 conservation law, subdivision 8 as added by chapter 200 of the laws of
24 1982 and subdivision 12 as added by section 3 of part SS of chapter 59
25 of the laws of 2009, are amended and five new subdivisions 14, 15, 16,
26 17 and 18 are added to read as follows:

27 8. "Redeemer" means every person who demands the refund value provided
28 for herein in exchange for the empty beverage container, regardless of
29 personal purchase of the beverage container, but shall not include a
30 dealer as defined in subdivision four of this section.

31 12. "Reverse vending machine" means an automated device that uses a
32 laser scanner, microprocessor, or other technology to accurately recog-
33 nize the universal product code (UPC) on containers to determine if the
34 container is redeemable and accumulates information regarding containers
35 redeemed, including the number of such containers redeemed, thereby
36 enabling the reverse vending machine to accept containers from redeemers
37 and to issue legal tender or a scrip [e*], receipt, or other form of
38 credit for their refund value. Such definition shall also apply to
39 alternative technology approved by the commissioner pursuant to subpara-
40 graph (iii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section 27-1007 of
41 this title. Nothing in this definition shall be construed to relieve a
42 dealer specified in subparagraph (iii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision
43 one of section 27-1007 of this title of the requirement to provide an
44 immediate form of deposit repayment if the reverse vending machine or
45 alternative technology does not provide such.

46 14. "Refillable beverage container" means any beverage container which
47 is so constructed and designed that it is structurally capable of being
48 refilled and resold at least fifty times by a beverage manufacturer, and
49 which the beverage manufacturer requires to be returned for the purpose
50 of refilling and resale.

51 15. "Return and reusable system" means a refillable beverage container
52 reuse system that features an operational and financial arrangement in
53 which refillable beverage containers are collected for washing and reus-
54 ing. The distances between each point of the system shall be no greater
55 than two hundred miles.

1 16. "Redemption rate" means the percentage of beverage containers sold
2 that are redeemed for deposit value.

3 17. "Recycling" means to separate, dismantle or process the materials,
4 components or commodities contained in discards for the purpose of
5 preparing the materials, components, or commodities for use or reuse in
6 new products or components. "Recycling" shall not include:

7 (a) energy recovery or energy generation by any means, including but
8 not limited to, combustion, incineration, pyrolysis, gasification,
9 solvolysis, or waste-to-fuel;

10 (b) any chemical conversion process; or

11 (c) landfill disposal.

12 18. "Recycling rate" means the percentage of redeemed beverage
13 containers that are ultimately recycled. The recycling rate shall be
14 calculated as the total weight of beverage containers that are recycled
15 in a given year divided by the total weight of beverage containers
16 generated by a distributor in that year.

17 § 4. Section 27-1007 of the environmental conservation law, as added
18 by section 4 of part SS of chapter 59 of the laws of 2009, paragraph (b)
19 of subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 459 of the laws of 2011, and
20 subdivision 12 as added by section 3 of part F of chapter 58 of the laws
21 of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

22 § 27-1007. Mandatory acceptance.

23 Except as provided in section 27-1009 of this title:

24 1. (a) A dealer shall accept at [~~his or her~~] such dealer's place of
25 business from a redeemer any empty beverage containers of the design,
26 shape, size, color, composition and brand sold or offered for sale by
27 the dealer, and shall pay to the redeemer the refund value of each such
28 beverage container as established in section 27-1005 of this title.
29 Redemptions of refund value must be in legal tender, or a scrip or
30 receipt from a reverse vending machine, provided that the scrip or
31 receipt can be exchanged for legal tender for a period of not less than
32 sixty days without requiring the purchase of other goods. In the event
33 such scrip or receipt expires, such scrip or receipt must indicate any
34 expiration date and the dealer must post a conspicuous sign indicating
35 how many days a redeemer has to exchange the scrip or receipt for legal
36 tender. If such notification is not provided, a dealer must redeem the
37 full refund value indicated on any legible scrip or receipt. The use or
38 presence of a reverse vending machine shall not relieve a dealer of any
39 obligations imposed pursuant to this section. If a dealer utilizes a
40 reverse vending machine to redeem containers, the dealer shall provide
41 redemption of beverage containers when the reverse vending machine is
42 full, broken, under repair or does not accept a type of beverage
43 container sold or offered for sale by such dealer and may not limit the
44 hours or days of redemption except as provided by subdivision three of
45 this section. All dealers and redemption centers shall provide consum-
46 ers the ability to recycle any containers deemed unredeemable.

47 (b) Beginning March first, two thousand ten, a dealer whose place of
48 business is part of a chain engaged in the same general field of busi-
49 ness which operates ten or more units in this state under common owner-
50 ship and whose business has at least: (i) forty thousand but less than
51 sixty thousand square feet devoted to the display of merchandise for
52 sale to the public shall install and maintain at least two reverse vend-
53 ing machines at the dealer's place of business; (ii) sixty thousand but
54 less than eighty-five thousand square feet devoted to the display of
55 merchandise for sale to the public shall install and maintain at least
56 three reverse vending machines at the dealer's place of business; or

1 (iii) eighty-five thousand square feet devoted to the display of
2 merchandise for sale to the public shall install and maintain at least
3 four reverse vending machines at the dealer's place of business. The
4 requirements of [~~paragraph (b) of~~] this subdivision to install and main-
5 tain reverse vending machines shall not apply to a dealer that: (i)
6 sells only beverage containers of twenty ounces or less where such
7 beverage containers are packaged in quantities fewer than six; (ii)
8 sells beverage containers and devotes no more than five percent of its
9 floor space to the display and sale of consumer commodities, as defined
10 in section two hundred fourteen-h of the agriculture and markets law; or
11 (iii) obtains a waiver from the commissioner authorizing dealers to
12 provide consumers with an alternative technology that: (A) determines if
13 the container is redeemable, (B) provides protections against fraud
14 through a system that validates each container redeemed by reading the
15 universal product code and, except with respect to refillable contain-
16 ers, renders the container unredeemable, (C) accumulates information
17 regarding containers redeemed, and (D) issues legal tender, or a scrip,
18 receipt, or other form of credit for the refund value, that can be
19 exchanged for legal tender for a period of not less than sixty days
20 without requiring the purchase of other goods and includes any expira-
21 tion date on the scrip, receipt, or other form of credit. Notwithstand-
22 ing the foregoing, if the alternative technology does not allow consum-
23 ers to immediately obtain the refund value of the redeemed container, a
24 dealer shall be permitted to deploy such alternative technology only if
25 it also offers an alternative that allows consumers to conveniently and
26 immediately obtain such refund value through a reverse vending machine
27 or other alternative method.

28 (c) A dealer to which paragraph (b) of this subdivision does not apply
29 and whose place of business is at least forty thousand square feet which
30 does not utilize reverse vending machines to process empty beverage
31 containers for redemption shall: (i) establish and maintain a dedicated
32 area within such business to accept beverage containers for redemption;
33 (ii) adequately staff such area to facilitate efficient acceptance and
34 processing of such containers during business hours; and (iii) post one
35 or more conspicuous signs conforming to the size and color requirements
36 described in subdivision two of this section at each public entrance to
37 the business which describes where in the business the redemption area
38 is located. The commissioner may establish in rules and regulations
39 additional standards for the efficient processing of beverage containers
40 by such dealers.

41 (d) For the purposes of this subdivision on any day that a dealer is
42 open for less than twenty-four hours, the dealer may restrict or refuse
43 the payment of refund values during the first and last hour the dealer
44 is open for business.

45 2. A dealer shall post a conspicuous sign, at the point of sale, that
46 states:

47 "NEW YORK BOTTLE BILL OF RIGHTS

48 STATE LAW REQUIRES US TO REDEEM EMPTY RETURNABLE BEVERAGE CONTAINERS OF
49 THE SAME TYPE AND BRAND THAT WE SELL OR OFFER FOR SALE

50 YOU HAVE CERTAIN RIGHTS UNDER THE NEW YORK STATE RETURNABLE CONTAINER
51 ACT:

52 THE RIGHT to return your empties for refund to any dealer who sells
53 the same brand, type and size, whether you bought the beverage from the

1 dealer or not. It is illegal to return containers for refund that you
2 did not pay a deposit on in New York state.

3 THE RIGHT to get your deposit refund in cash, without proof of
4 purchase.

5 THE RIGHT to return your empties any day, any hour, except for the
6 first and last hour of the dealer's business day (empty containers may
7 be redeemed at any time in 24-hour stores).

8 THE RIGHT to return your containers if they are empty and intact.
9 Washing containers is not required by law, but is strongly recommended
10 to maintain sanitary conditions.

11 The New York state returnable container act can be enforced by the New
12 York state department of environmental conservation, the New York state
13 department of agriculture and markets, the New York state department of
14 taxation and finance, the New York state attorney general and/or by your
15 local government."

16 Such sign must be no less than eight inches by ten inches in size and
17 have lettering a minimum of one quarter inch high, and of a color which
18 contrasts with the background. The department shall maintain a toll free
19 telephone number for a "bottle bill complaint line" that shall be avail-
20 able from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each business day to receive reports of
21 violations of this title. The telephone number shall be listed on any
22 sign required by this section.

23 3. On or after June first, two thousand nine, a dealer may limit the
24 number of empty beverage containers to be accepted for redemption at the
25 dealer's place of business to no less than seventy-two containers per
26 visit, per redeemer, per day, provided that:

27 (a) The dealer has a written agreement with a redemption center, be it
28 either at a fixed physical location within the same county and within
29 [~~one-half~~ one] mile of the dealer's place of business, or a mobile
30 redemption center, operated by a redemption center, that is located
31 within one-quarter mile of the dealer's place of business. The redemp-
32 tion center must have a written agreement with the dealer to accept
33 containers on behalf of the dealer; and the redemption center's hours of
34 operation must cover at least [~~9:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m.~~] eight hours
35 daily or in the case of a mobile redemption center, the hours of opera-
36 tion must cover at least four consecutive hours between 8:00 a.m. and
37 8:00 p.m. daily. The dealer must post a conspicuous, permanent sign,
38 meeting the size and color specifications set forth in subdivision two
39 of this section, open to public view, identifying the location and hours
40 of operation of the affiliated redemption center or mobile redemption
41 center; and

42 (b) The dealer provides, at a minimum, a consecutive two hour period
43 between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. daily whereby the dealer will accept up
44 to two hundred forty containers, per redeemer, per day, and posts a
45 conspicuous, permanent sign, meeting the size and color specifications
46 set forth in subdivision two of this section, open to public view, iden-
47 tifying those hours. The dealer may not change the hours of redemption
48 without first posting a thirty day notice; and

49 (c) The dealer's primary business is the sale of food or beverages for
50 consumption off-premises, and the dealer's place of business is less
51 than ten thousand square feet in size.

52 4. A deposit initiator shall accept from a dealer or operator of a
53 redemption center any empty beverage container of the design, shape,
54 size, color, composition and brand sold or offered for sale by the
55 deposit initiator, and shall pay the dealer or operator of a redemption
56 center the refund value of each such beverage container as established

1 by section 27-1005 of this title. A deposit initiator shall accept and
2 redeem all such empty beverage containers from a dealer or redemption
3 center without limitation on quantity.

4 5. A deposit initiator's or distributor's failure to pick up empty
5 beverage containers, including containers processed in a reverse vending
6 machine, from a redemption center, dealer or the operator of a reverse
7 vending machine, in a timely manner and at reasonable times as provided
8 by the department pursuant to the regulations promulgated pursuant to
9 paragraph (c) of subdivision eight of this section shall be a violation
10 of this title.

11 6. In addition to the refund value of a beverage container as estab-
12 lished by section 27-1005 of this title, a deposit initiator shall pay
13 to any dealer or operator of a redemption center a handling fee of
14 [~~three and one-half~~] five cents for each beverage container accepted by
15 the deposit initiator from such dealer or operator of a redemption
16 center. Beginning April first, two thousand twenty-seven, the handling
17 fee shall be six cents. Beginning April first, two thousand thirty-two,
18 the handling fee shall be six and one-half cents. Payment of the handl-
19 ing fee shall be as compensation for collecting, sorting and packaging
20 of empty beverage containers for transport back to the deposit initiator
21 or its designee. Payment of the handling fee may not be conditioned on
22 the purchase of any goods or services, nor may such payment be made out
23 of the refund value account established pursuant to section 27-1012 of
24 this title. A distributor who does not initiate deposits on a type of
25 beverage container is considered a dealer only for the purpose of
26 receiving a handling fee from a deposit initiator.

27 7. A deposit initiator on a brand shall accept from a distributor who
28 does not initiate deposits on that brand any empty beverage containers
29 of that brand accepted by the distributor from a dealer or operator of a
30 redemption center and shall reimburse the distributor the refund value
31 of each such beverage container, as established by section 27-1005 of
32 this title. In addition, the deposit initiator shall reimburse such
33 distributor for each such beverage container the handling fee estab-
34 lished under subdivision six of this section. Without limiting the
35 rights of the department or any person, firm or corporation under this
36 subdivision or any other provision of this section, a distributor shall
37 have a civil right of action to enforce this subdivision, including,
38 upon three days notice, the right to apply for temporary and preliminary
39 injunctive relief against continuing violations, and until arrangements
40 for collection and return of empty containers or reimbursement of such
41 distributor for such deposits and handling fees are made.

42 8. It shall be the responsibility of the deposit initiator or distrib-
43 utor to provide to a dealer or redemption center a sufficient number of
44 bags, cartons, or other suitable containers, at no cost, for the packag-
45 ing, handling and pickup of empty beverage containers that are not
46 redeemed through a reverse vending machine. The bags, cartons, or
47 containers must be provided by the deposit initiator or distributor on a
48 schedule that allows the dealer or redemption center sufficient time to
49 sort the empty beverage containers prior to pick up by the deposit
50 initiator or distributor. In addition:

51 (a) When picking up empty beverage containers, a deposit initiator or
52 distributor shall not require a dealer or redemption center to load
53 their own bags, cartons or containers onto or into the deposit initi-
54 ator's or distributor's vehicle or vehicles or provide the staff or
55 equipment needed to do so. However, where pallets or skids, bags,
56 cartons or containers are readily movable only by means of a forklift or

1 similar equipment, a deposit initiator or distributor may require a
2 dealer or redemption center to move or load such items at no cost using
3 a forklift or similar equipment belonging to the dealer or redemption
4 center provided that such equipment and appropriate staff are readily
5 available.

6 (b) A deposit initiator or distributor shall not require empty
7 containers to be counted at a location other than the redemption center
8 or dealer's place of business. The dealer or redemption center shall
9 have the right to be present at the count. In the event of a discrepancy
10 between the count of the dealer or redemption center and the count of
11 the deposit initiator or distributor for containers not processed
12 through a reverse vending machine all such empty containers shall be
13 retained and a re-count may be requested. The re-count may be held at a
14 location other than the redemption center or dealer's place of business
15 only if the dealer or redemption center agrees and is present.

16 (c) A deposit initiator or distributor shall pick up empty beverage
17 containers from the dealer or redemption center in a timely manner and
18 at reasonable times [~~and intervals~~] as determined in rules or regu-
19 lations promulgated by the department no later than April first, two
20 thousand twenty-seven.

21 9. No person shall return or assist another to return to a dealer or
22 redemption center an empty beverage container for its refund value if
23 such container had previously been accepted for redemption by a dealer,
24 redemption center, or deposit initiator who initiates deposits on bever-
25 age containers of the same brand.

26 10. A redeemer, dealer, distributor or redemption center shall not
27 knowingly redeem an empty beverage container on which a deposit was
28 never paid in New York state.

29 11. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision two of section
30 27-1009 of this title, a deposit initiator or distributor shall accept
31 and redeem beverage containers as provided in this title, if the dealer
32 or operator of a redemption center shall have accepted and paid the
33 refund value of such beverage containers.

34 12. No person shall intentionally program, tamper with, render inaccu-
35 rate, or circumvent the proper operation of a reverse vending machine to
36 wrongfully elicit deposit monies when no valid, redeemable beverage
37 container has been placed in and properly processed by the reverse vend-
38 ing machine.

39 13. The department and the department of taxation and finance are
40 authorized to audit any reverse vending machine.

41 14. Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, a
42 dealer shall not be required to accept from a redeemer any empty bever-
43 age container at a farmers' market as such term is defined by the
44 department of agriculture and markets.

45 § 5. Subdivision 1 of section 27-1011 of the environmental conserva-
46 tion law is amended by adding a new paragraph c to read as follows:

47 c. Each beverage container sold or offered for sale in this state that
48 has a refund value pursuant to paragraph a of this subdivision, shall
49 include a universal product code and barcode printed on the label that
50 is readable by reverse vending machine or alternative technology. Each
51 deposit initiator shall provide such universal product code and barcode
52 and ownership and packaging information of any such beverage container,
53 to the department not less than forty-five days prior to such product
54 being offered for sale in the state. The department shall, not more than
55 thirty days after receipt of such information, make this information
56 readily available to any redemption center, reverse vending machine

1 system operator, deposit initiator-authorized contracted agents, or any
2 other appropriate stakeholder approved by the department.

3 § 6. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 3 of section 27-1011 of the environ-
4 mental conservation law, as added by section 1 of part PP of chapter 58
5 of the laws of 2018, is amended and two new subdivisions 4 and 5 are
6 added to read as follows:

7 (b) comply with [~~minimum post-consumer recycled material content and~~]
8 hole diameter limitations as defined in rules and regulations promulgat-
9 ed by the department no later than April first, two thousand twenty-six,
10 and is recyclable and indicates a resin identification code.

11 4. Each distributor shall develop and implement a policy with the goal
12 of achieving the following performance requirement: Beginning April
13 first, two thousand thirty-one, it shall be the goal of each distributor
14 that at least twenty-five percent of all beverage containers sold by
15 each distributor in the state shall be refillable containers that are
16 part of a return and reusable system. Each distributor shall work with
17 dealers, reverse vending machine owners, and redemption centers to
18 ensure that refillable beverage containers sold by the distributor
19 achieve at least an eighty percent return rate.

20 5. Each distributor is required to meet the following performance
21 requirements: a. Beginning April first, two thousand twenty-six, all
22 distributors of non-refillable beverage containers shall report the
23 recycling rate, by material type, of redeemed containers to the depart-
24 ment.

25 b. Beginning April first, two thousand twenty-seven, at least seventy
26 percent of the redeemed beverage container material shall be recycled.

27 c. Beginning April first, two thousand twenty-nine, at least eighty
28 percent of the redeemed beverage container material shall be recycled.

29 d. Beginning April first, two thousand thirty-one, at least ninety
30 percent of the redeemed beverage container material, including beverage
31 container caps, lids, and other rigid sealers, shall be recycled.

32 § 7. Subdivision 5 of section 27-1012 of the environmental
33 conservation law, as amended by section 2 of part JJ of chapter 58 of
34 the laws of 2017, is amended to read as follows:

35 5. All moneys collected or received by the department of taxation and
36 finance pursuant to this title shall be deposited to the credit of the
37 comptroller with such responsible banks, banking houses or trust compa-
38 nies as may be designated by the comptroller. Such deposits shall be
39 kept separate and apart from all other moneys in the possession of the
40 comptroller. The comptroller shall require adequate security from all
41 such depositories. Of the total revenue collected, the comptroller shall
42 retain the amount determined by the commissioner of taxation and finance
43 to be necessary for refunds out of which the comptroller must pay any
44 refunds to which a deposit initiator may be entitled. Of the revenue
45 remaining following payments of any refunds, the comptroller shall
46 retain an amount equal to five percent of the total for the beverage
47 container assistance program established pursuant to section 27-1018 of
48 this title. After reserving the amount to pay refunds, the comptroller
49 must, by the tenth day of each month, pay into the state treasury to the
50 credit of the general fund the revenue deposited under this subdivision
51 during the preceding calendar month and remaining to the comptroller's
52 credit on the last day of that preceding month; provided, however, that,
53 beginning April first, two thousand thirteen, nineteen million dollars,
54 and all fiscal years thereafter, twenty-three million dollars plus all
55 funds received from the payments due each fiscal year pursuant to subdi-
56 vision four of this section in excess of the greater of the amount

1 received from April first, two thousand twelve through March thirty-
2 first, two thousand thirteen or one hundred twenty-two million two
3 hundred thousand dollars, shall be deposited to the credit of the envi-
4 ronmental protection fund established pursuant to section ninety-two-s
5 of the state finance law.

6 § 8. Paragraph c of subdivision 3 of section 27-1012 of the environ-
7 mental conservation law, as added by section 8 of part SS of chapter 59
8 of the laws of 2009, is amended and a new subdivision 13 is added to
9 read as follows:

10 c. all withdrawals from the refund value account during such quarter,
11 including all reimbursements paid pursuant to subdivision two of this
12 section, all service charges on the account, provided that such service
13 charges do not exceed the maximum amount authorized by the commissioner,
14 and all payments made pursuant to subdivision four of this section; and

15 13. Annually the department, in consultation with the department of
16 taxation and finance, shall use available information to produce an
17 annual report at a minimum containing information on redemption rates,
18 container material types by percent usage, refillable container usage,
19 fraud and enforcement actions, an analysis of the handling fee and
20 consumer price index, and information on how this program helps to
21 achieve the targets of chapter one hundred six of the laws of two thou-
22 sand nineteen. Such report shall be shared with the legislature and
23 posted publicly on the department's website.

24 § 9. Paragraph a of subdivision 4 of section 27-1012 of the environ-
25 mental conservation law, as added by section 8 of part SS of chapter 59
26 of the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

27 a. Quarterly payments. An amount equal to eighty percent of the
28 balance outstanding in the refund value account at the close of each
29 quarter shall be paid to the commissioner of taxation and finance at the
30 time the report provided for in subdivision three of this section is
31 required to be filed. The commissioner of taxation and finance may
32 require that the payments be made electronically. The remaining twenty
33 percent of the balance outstanding at the close of each quarter shall be
34 the monies of the deposit initiator and may be withdrawn from such
35 account by the deposit initiator. However, a deposit initiator who
36 initiates deposits on refillable beverage containers which are part of a
37 return and reusable system may be entitled to pay an amount equal to
38 seventy-five percent of the balance outstanding in the refund value
39 account specifically attributable to refillable beverage containers at
40 the close of each quarter to the commissioner of taxation and finance at
41 the time the report provided for in subdivision three of this section is
42 required to be filed. The department shall promulgate rules on the
43 eligibility of deposit initiators for such refillable beverage container
44 bonus. If the provisions of this section with respect to such account
45 have not been fully complied with, each deposit initiator shall pay to
46 such commissioner at such time, in lieu of the amount described in the
47 preceding sentence, an amount equal to the balance which would have been
48 outstanding on such date had such provisions been fully complied with.
49 The commissioner of taxation and finance may require that the payments
50 be made electronically.

51 § 10. Paragraph a of subdivision 7 of section 27-1012 of the environ-
52 mental conservation law, as amended by section 8 of part SS of chapter
53 59 of the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

54 a. Any person who is a deposit initiator under this title before April
55 first, two thousand nine, must apply by June first, two thousand nine to
56 the commissioner of taxation and finance for registration as a deposit

1 initiator. Any person who becomes a deposit initiator on or after April
2 first, two thousand nine shall apply for registration prior to collect-
3 ing any deposits as such a deposit initiator. Such application shall be
4 in a form prescribed by the commissioner of taxation and finance and
5 shall require such information deemed to be necessary for proper admin-
6 istration of this title. The commissioner of taxation and finance may
7 require that applications for registration must be submitted electron-
8 ically. The commissioner of taxation and finance shall electronically
9 issue a deposit initiator registration certificate in a form prescribed
10 by the commissioner of taxation and finance within fifteen days of
11 receipt of such application or may take an additional ten days if the
12 commissioner of taxation and finance deems it necessary to consult with
13 the commissioner before issuing such registration certificate. A regis-
14 tration certificate issued pursuant to this subdivision may be issued
15 for a specified term of not less than three years and shall be subject
16 to renewal in accordance with procedures specified by the commissioner
17 of taxation and finance. The commissioner of taxation and finance shall
18 furnish to the commissioner a complete list of registered deposit initi-
19 ators and shall continually update such list as warranted. The commis-
20 sioner shall share any information with the commissioner of taxation and
21 finance that is necessary for the administration of this subdivision.
22 The commissioner shall publish the list of registered deposit initiators
23 and their covered products, and a list of registered redemption centers
24 on the department's website.

25 § 11. Section 27-1014 of the environmental conservation law, as
26 amended by section 10 of part SS of chapter 59 of the laws of 2009, is
27 amended to read as follows:

28 § 27-1014. Authority to promulgate rules and regulations.

29 In addition to the authority of the commissioner, under sections
30 27-1007, 27-1009 [~~and~~], 27-1011, 27-1012, 27-1013, and 27-1018 of this
31 title, the commissioner shall have the power to promulgate rules and
32 regulations necessary and appropriate for the administration of this
33 title.

34 § 12. Section 27-1018 of the environmental conservation law, as added
35 by section 13 of part SS of chapter 59 of the laws of 2009, is amended
36 to read as follows:

37 § 27-1018. Beverage container assistance program.

38 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, within the
39 amounts retained by the comptroller for use under the beverage container
40 assistance program pursuant to subdivision five of section 27-1012 of
41 this title, and within the limits of appropriations therefor, the
42 commissioner shall make state assistance payments to municipalities,
43 qualifying small businesses, and not-for-profit organizations located in
44 the state, upon application, for the cost and installation of reverse
45 vending machines located or to be located in the state. Such state
46 assistance payments shall not exceed fifty percent of the costs of
47 equipment, [~~and/or the acquisition~~] installation and/or rehabilitation
48 of real property or structures located or to be located in the state
49 related to the collecting, sorting, and packaging of empty beverage
50 containers subject to the provisions of this title. [~~Such payments may~~
51 ~~include costs related to the establishment of redemption centers,~~
52 ~~including mobile redemption centers.~~] For the purposes of this section,
53 municipalities and not-for-profit organizations shall have the meaning
54 as defined in section 54-0101 of this chapter and qualified small busi-
55 nesses shall mean a dealer[~~, distributor~~] or redemption center as
56 defined in this title that employs less than fifty employees. Preference

1 for these funds shall be given to registered redemption centers that do
2 not utilize any reverse vending machines. Preference for these funds
3 shall also be given to municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, or
4 qualified small businesses that do not have a registered redemption
5 center within one mile.

6 § 13. Subdivision 1 of section 27-1013 of the environmental conserva-
7 tion law, as amended by section 7 of part F of chapter 58 of the laws of
8 2013, is amended to read as follows:

9 1. The commissioner is hereby empowered to promulgate rules and regu-
10 lations governing (a) the circumstances in which deposit initiators,
11 dealers and distributors, individually or collectively, are required to
12 accept the return of empty beverage containers, including beverage
13 containers processed through reverse vending machines and make payment
14 therefor; (b) the sorting of the containers which a deposit initiator or
15 distributor may require of dealers and redemption centers; (c) the
16 collection of returned beverage containers by deposit initiators or
17 distributors, including the party to whom such expense is to be charged,
18 the frequency of such pick ups, a process for safe pick ups, and the
19 payment for refunds and handling fees thereon; (d) the right of dealers
20 to restrict or limit the number of containers redeemed, the rules for
21 redemption at the dealers' place of business, and the redemption of
22 containers from a beverage for which sales have been discontinued; (e)
23 ~~[to]~~ the right of redemption centers to have timely, transparent, and
24 safe pick ups and transparent verification of container counts; (f) the
25 department shall issue registrations to persons, firms or corporations
26 which establish redemption centers, subject to applicable provisions of
27 local and state laws, at which redeemers and dealers may return empty
28 beverage containers and receive payment of the refund value of such
29 beverage containers ~~[, such]~~, subject to a review that considers safety
30 and accessibility, and shall be renewed every ten years. As of April
31 first, two thousand twenty-seven, such registrations shall be issued at
32 ~~[no cost]~~ the cost of one hundred fifty dollars. Should the department
33 require ~~[by]~~ any additional regulations adopted pursuant to this para-
34 graph ~~[that redemption centers must obtain a registration as a condition~~
35 ~~of operation,]~~ any redemption center in business as of [March first, two
36 ~~thousand thirteen]~~ April first, two thousand twenty-six that previously
37 provided the department with the notification information required by
38 regulations in effect as of such date may continue to operate as if the
39 department had issued such redemption center a registration required by
40 regulations adopted under this paragraph; provided, however, that such
41 redemption center shall provide the department with any other informa-
42 tion required by regulations adopted pursuant to this paragraph. The
43 department may, after due notice and opportunity of hearing, pursuant to
44 the provisions of section 71-1709 of this chapter, deny an application
45 or revoke a registration. In determining whether or not to revoke a
46 registration the commissioner shall at a minimum, take into consider-
47 ation the compliance history of a violator, good faith efforts of a
48 violator to comply, any economic benefit from noncompliance and whether
49 the violation was procedural in nature. The commissioner's determination
50 to revoke a registration is subject to review under article seventy-
51 eight of the civil practice law and rules; ~~[and (f)]~~ (g) the operation
52 of mobile redemption centers in order to ensure that to the best extent
53 practicable containers are not proffered for redemption to a deposit
54 initiator or distributor outside of the geographic area where such
55 deposit initiator sells containers and initiates deposits; (h) yearly
56 information provided to the department from dealers and redemption

1 centers including number of containers redeemed and any other informa-
2 tion required by the department; and (i) climate mitigation including
3 targets within chapter one hundred six of the laws of two thousand nine-
4 teen and recommendations on improving redeemed container recycling
5 rates.

6 § 14. Section 27-1005 of the environmental conservation law, as added
7 by section 4 of part SS of chapter 59 of the laws of 2009, is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 § 27-1005. Refund value.

10 No person shall sell or offer for sale a beverage container in this
11 state unless the deposit on such beverage container is or has been
12 collected by a registered deposit initiator and unless such container
13 has a refund value of not less than five cents, and beginning April
14 first, two thousand twenty-seven, a refund value of not less than ten
15 cents, which is clearly indicated thereon as provided in section 27-1011
16 of this title.

17 § 15. Section 27-1018 of the environmental conservation law is
18 REPEALED.

19 § 16. The multi-agency bottle bill fraud investigation team, led by
20 the department of environmental conservation and first announced on
21 October 23, 2023, shall submit a report to the governor, the temporary
22 president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly no later than
23 one year after the effective date of this act. Such report shall
24 include, but not be limited to, any findings of pervasive beverage
25 container redemption fraud in New York state, and any recommendations
26 for legislative action in response to such fraud.

27 § 17. This act shall take effect April 1, 2026; provided, however,
28 that section one of this act shall take effect April 1, 2027; provided,
29 further, that section two of this act shall take effect April 1, 2030;
30 provided, further, that the amendments to subdivision 6 of section
31 27-1007 of the environmental conservation law made by section four of
32 this act shall take effect immediately; and provided, further, that
33 section fifteen of this act shall take effect January 1, 2039, with any
34 proceeds transferred to the environmental protection fund established
35 pursuant to section 92-s of the state finance law. Effective immediate-
36 ly, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation
37 necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are
38 authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.