

March 19, 1973

My name is Wendy Page and I am the Recycling Coordinator at the Ecology Center. I am speaking on behalf of the Ecology Center.

The effort to protect and enhance the environment is a cause that is unquestionably vital, all encompassing, and in the greatest need of support from citizens, government and industry. The proposed Ecology Center Beverage Container Ordinance is the first legislation that the Ecology Center has requested Council to pass for environmental protection. We very much appreciate the fact that the ordinance has received the wide support.

We would like to thank Council for the time its members have spent in consideration of the ordinance, especially those who served on the Tri-Party Committee and those nine members of Council who have agreed to sponsor the ordinance: William Colburn, Gerald DeGrieck, Robert Faber, Lloyd Fairbanks, Mayor Robert Harris, John McCormick, Nelson Meade, Norris Thomas, and Nancy Wechsler.

We would also like to thank the Legislative Research Center at the University of Michigan Law School, the City Attorney's office, the Mayor, the University of Michigan's Environmental Law Society, the City Administrative offices, and the many volunteers who helped with information-gathering and petitions.

I have with me petitions with the signatures of 2123<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Ann Arbor citizens supporting the Ecology Center's ordinance. The petition reads as follows...

...This beverage container legislation is a significant and highly necessary step toward sound solid waste management and will provide a variety of benefits to the citizens of Ann Arbor.

The first benefit is the reduction of litter. Estimates of beverage container content in litter range from 19.7-49%. The

Ecology Center ordinance will serve as a deterrent to potential litterers. By placing a deposit on each beverage container, there is an ~~xxx~~ economic incentive for returning beverage containers to stores instead of throwing them on Ann Arbor's roadsides. Deposits also encourage individuals and groups to pick up roadside containers and redeem them for deposit. In Oregon, where state-wide beverage container legislation has been in effect since October, 1972, the Highway Department reports no beverage containers in its litter collections.

The second benefit of the ordinance is its value as a step toward improved solid waste management in the city of Ann Arbor. All steps which reduce the volume of materials entering the municipal solid waste stream, help the City realize tax dollar savings both in the area of collection costs as well as ~~xxx~~ through extending the life of Ann Arbor's sanitary landfill. At present, beverage containers represent approximately 50% of the glass and metal food containers in municipal refuse.

The ~~third~~ third benefit is reduction of cost to the consumer. A price survey done in November, 1972 by the Ecology Center showed that ~~that~~ that beverages are less expensive in returnable containers than those in non-returnable containers. Soft drink beverages in non-returnables cost from 15-70% more per ounce than the same beverages in returnables. Beer in non-returnables cost from 7-14% more than in returnable beverage containers.

Passage of the ordinance will provide benefits to many Ann Arbor citizens who have expressed their concern about the environment by participating in the Ecology Center's recycling programs. Over 50,000 visits have been made to our station to bring in recyclable materials. This proposed ordinance provides a system which is far more convenient than recycling so-called convenience

packaging represented by non-returnable bottles and cans.

Separating glass by color and removing metal rings or smashing cans and then sorting them before making a separate trip to a recycling station could hardly be called a convenience when compared with placing a deposit on a container and returning it as part of a regularly scheduled shopping trip.

State legislation requires that each store accepts for redemption the brand and size beverage container that it sells. This legislation, which was enacted in 1972, increases the ease for consumers to return containers, and helps assure accessibility to stores for redemption, protecting the consumer against forfeiture of deposit.

In addition to the local environmental benefits, the Ecology Center's Beverage Container Ordinance will have the additional ramifications of conservation of natural resources used in container production. National figures show that one returnable bottle will do the job of at least 15 <sup>throw-away</sup> non-returnable beverage containers. Even if one were to recycle each of those containers, it consumes much more of our limited energy resources to melt down the old container and create a new one for each drink, than to just wash the bottle for each drink.

Mr. Bruce Hannon of the Center for Advanced Computation, at the University of Illinois, showed in his testimony for the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1972 that 4.4 times more energy is consumed by non-returnable glass containers than by the returnable glass system for soft drinks. The comparable ratio for beer in a bi-metal can system is 4.4 times that for returnable glass. An Aluminum can system consumes 3.9 times the energy as a glass returnable system.

In conclusion, supporters of the Ecology Center ordinance to regulate beverage containers feel that the ordinance will provide Ann Arbor residents benefits as taxpayers by reducing litter and solid waste, as consumers by insuring that beer and soft drink beverages are readily available in their least expensive container, and as environmentally concerned citizens by conserving natural resources and energy involved in the container system.

We feel that after an initial readjustment period, store owners and distributors will find no problems with the returnable system which has been used exclusively for years and which continues to be used <sup>in</sup> other countries.

Again, we wish to express our appreciation to all those people who have given the Ecology Center assistance in preparing this ordinance; to those storeowners ~~whom~~ who have continued to stock returnable beverage containers, and to those citizens who have consistently purchased their beverages in only returnable containers.

Thank you.