

League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

January 27, 1987

St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch Letters to the Editor 345 Cedar Street St. Paul, MN 55101

To the Editor:

Governor Rudy Perpich, concerned about solid waste problems and job development in Minnesota, has announced that he will support the adoption of a beverage container deposit law for Minnesota - something the League of Women Voters has urged for the past ten years. Now working well in nine other states, such a law would:

- guarantee the retrieval of glass, plastic and metal beverage containers at a rate of 80 to 95 percent;
- 2. substantially reduce litter on roads, beaches and in parks;
- 3. reduce the rate of glass cuts in children playing in public areas;
- 4. enhance recycling programs for additional materials;
- 5. create new products, industries and jobs.

Container deposit laws are not the total answer to the solid waste problem but they interlock with other solutions. Mass burning plants experience far less "down time" when metals and glass are removed prior to burning.

Now is the time for the public to demand of legislators that this logical, effective answer to reducing a portion of the waste stream be adopted in Minnesota. Voluntary recycling programs are fine, but they aren't doing the job fast enough.

Why shouldn't we retrieve these raw materials and keep them in Minnesota to be turned into consumer products? New products equal new industries and jobs for the unemployed. And, yes, plastic <u>can</u> be recycled - if it is returned in large enough quantities. For more information contact your local League of Women Voters.

Sincerely,

Joan Higinbotham

President

Jeanne Crampton

Natural Resource Director

H:C/rk



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January 27, 1987

Minneapolis Star and Tribune Letters to the Editor 425 Portland Avenue Minneapolis, MN 55488

To the Editor:

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Joan Higinbotham

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Dear Members and Supporters of the Container Conservation Coalition:

As most of you must have realized by this time, the container deposit bills were not re-filed for this legislative session. Discussions with the League of Women Voters Board and our chief authors (Rep. Kathleen Vellenga and Sen. Eric Petty) convinced us that trying to pass the bills this session was a hopeless task. The Legislature is worshipping at the altar of "The Business Climate" --- witness what has happened to the Superfund Law---and environmental and societal issues are getting short shrift. We know that deposit laws are good business, and that the jobs issue is a red herring, but that argument falls on deaf ears at the Minnesota Legislature.

Well, onward and upward! Included with this packet is a description of the Metropolitan Council's Solid Waste proposal. The most pertinent points were recommendations to allow no deposit of untreated waste or recyclables in Metro landfills after 1990, and to institute mandatory source separation in the seven-county area by 1988. At this point it appears that the actual enabling bills (S.F. 866, H.F. 939) only ask the governmental units to consider instituting source separation, while maintaining the 1990 date for restricting landfill deposits.

Sen. Petty has introduced a bill, a copy of which is enclosed (S.F. 316) which would restrict the introduction of any plastic beverage container of less than one liter. His hope is to waylay the introduction into Minnesota of the so-called "plastic can" developed for use by the Coca Cola Company. (See news article enclosed.) The bill is not scheduled as yet for a hearing.

The news from New York is mostly good---the Beer Industry commissioned a study of the effects of the deposit law in New York State from Long Island University, and the report came out favorable to the law. (Statement enclosed.) In retrospect, it is probably a good thing our bill wasn't passed last year---we all know what the scapegoat would have been for the Brockway closing if it had! Meantime, down in Florida, there is some hope that their Legislature may actually pass a deposit law this spring. If that happens, there is a strong possibility that the industry may decide to consider a compromise on a national bill.

Sincerely, Seanne K. Crampton Jeanne Crampton, 3/28/85

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Conference N

VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

.NNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

February 27, 1984

The Honorable Gene Merriam G-24, Capitol St. Paul. MN. 55155

Dear Senator Merriam:

This letter is in lieu of public testimony on S.F. 1312. Please

circulate a copy among the members of your Committee.

As you will recall, at the time I testified in favor of S.F. 741, the Container Deposit bill, I indicated that the League of Women Voters of Minnesota also supported S.F. 1312 and its companion, H.F. 1361. We made a point of this support because of the attempts by opponents to S.F. 741 to insinuate that support of both bills was not compatible---a

position we do not buy, needless to say.

Since 1973, at the time the League of Women Voters of the U.S. adopted a solid waste position that said, "Action supporting policies to reduce the nonessential part of the waste stream, recover its nonreducible portion, then ensure safe disposal of the rest," we have supported whole-heartedly the concept of waste reduction by any feasible means. S.F. 1312 contains the impetus to accomplish a variety of waste reduction prior to disposal. Because the League of Women Voters of Minnesota does not have a specific position on the mechanisms to provide funding to accomplish such waste reduction, we will not address the feasibility of the method proposed in the bill.

Recycling and waste reduction are ideas whose time has come. Landfills are difficult to site, environmental concerns have strengthened, and energy shortages may still plague us in the future. The League of Women Voters has, individually and as a group, supported voluntary recycling. Many Leagues have been responsible for starting civic recycling programs. After ten years, however, we have had to admit that publicity and education can only do so much. Approximately one-third of the public will recycle just because it's the right thing to do, but the rest need a push---ease, economic incentive, or whatever. If S.F. 1312 can provide some of those incentives, particularly if diverse projects can be instigated, it will prove worthwhile. At the same time, the portion of the bill that covers closure and post-closure of landfills provides a necessary protection for the public.

We are convinced that there is no "one" answer to the waste problem--and that is one reason we can support both S.F. 1312 and S.F. 741, Container
Deposit. We urge members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources
Committee to consider the benefits of S.F. 1312, as well as the impacts of
possible funding methods.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources

Co-Chair

Rose: 1hr.



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Testimony presented to the

Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
by Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources Co-Chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Container Conservation Coalition Chair
January 30, 1984

"A great deal of misinformation has obscured rational discussion of job losses where 'bottle bills' have been debated... The experience of other states indicates that job losses have not been as severe as originally predicted, and further indicates that deposit laws may have been used as a scapegoat for general industry trends, particularly production declines due to other causes.

- --In Michigan, the National Can Company closed a plant in Livonia, Michigan, with a loss of 70 jobs 'as a direct result of the deposit law.' However, Stroh's Brewery had decided to produce its own cans instead of purchasing them from National, and opened a modernized competing facility in Fremont, Ohio. A contract loss cannot be attributed to the deposit law...
- --In Massachusetts, where the deposit law controversy has raged for years, the American Can Company threatened to close its Needham plant in 1975 if such legislation were passed. The legislation failed. The plant still closed the following month."

--MANDATORY DEPOSIT LEGISLATION:

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Office of Development Planning
March 1982, pages 13-14.

This study I have just quoted from was ordered by the New York State Legislature and used during their discussions on the possible benefits of a deposit law for New York State. In June of 1982, a deposit law was signed by the Governor of New York, and went into effect on September 12, 1983. I would also like to note that the state of Massachusetts eventually enacted a law, which was then forced to a citizen referendum last November but did pass.

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protection by Jeanne Crampton, LWMN, January 24, 1984 (page 2)

The job loss specter has followed Minnesota deposit law discussions for over ten years, and we think it is time it was laid to rest. We have no argument with workers who testify to fear of job loss - for them it is a real fear. We do, however, maintain that jobs are lost because of marketplace trends and decisions made in industry boardrooms. If a deposit law can be conveniently blamed for such loss, so much the better.

In 1961, the nonrefillable "throwaway" container entered the Minnesota market in volume. Between 1961 and 1976, at least eight breweries in Minnesota went out of business - Fleckenstein, Gluek, Duluth, Mankato, Peter Pub, Hauenstein, Fitgers and Grain Belt, with a total loss of 1,011 jobs. One of the reasons was that local or regional breweries could not compete with the national distributors once the large breweries were freed from the use of refillable containers. Now let me quote J.A. Murphy, a President of Miller Brewing Company, in a company publication called RESOLVE, printed in the late 1970's and called, "...a constructive approach to retunable beverage container legislation." It gives retailers a step-by-step guide for setting up a redemption area in their stores. On the first page, after stating that Miller opposes deposit laws, Mr. Murphy states, "However, we have learned from experience not to panic, but to face the fact that change is an inevitable way of life. Simply remember the precept that the CONSUMER is the BOSS, CONSUMER DEMAND has always guided our way to profits." The last sentence of the pamphlet says, "If there is one lesson retailers learned in Oregon and Vermont with the enactment of container legislation, it would be 'business as usual' until the consumer has clearly dictated his or her package preference." In other words, deposit laws have little or nothing to do with container mix changes. Consumer demand is what counts; but container change is what loses jobs - as witnessed by the small breweries in Minnesota. At the moment, we think consumers are on the verge of making a new choice - a preference for plastic containers. Plastic containers have taken over 20 percent of the soft drink market in the last five years, are moving into the liquor market on the East Coast, with beer containers now under development. Glass industry jobs are undoubtedly going to be lost in the future if the present trend to plastic continues.

We need to establish a mechanism <u>now</u> to retrieve those plastic containers - before they begin filling up landfills. The industry that produces them should begin <u>now</u> to research and develop products that can be manufactured from recycled plastic containers. The easiest, fastest way is to enact a deposit law that reclaims all beverage containers. Within one year of implementation we could

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be retrieving approximately 90 to 95 percent of all containers - glass, metal and plastic, as is happening in the nine states which have already enacted such a law.

Why can't Minnesota enact a container deposit law, retrieve all that raw material and begin developing manufacturing industries to use it - right her in our own state - employing our own workers?

To reiterate: With no particular container switch, except that predicated by consumer demand, we see no overall job loss. Moreover, we see no reason new industry cannot be developed using recycled materials, and we know, from experience in deposit states, that jobs will increase in transport, retail handling, and recycling. Michigan gained 4600 jobs, and the New York Report predicted a 5,000 to 6,000 job gain for N. Y. state.

Retailers have always opposed container deposit legislation on the grounds that it placed an unfair burden on them. There is no question but that the retailers are impacted under a deposit law. However, with the experience gained in the last ten years, we know that retailers will survive the enactment of a deposit law and in many cases experience a profit. One thing not generally advertised by distributors prior to the enactment of a deposit law is that they stand ready to step in and help their retail outlets whenever a deposit law becomes a fact of life. The pamphlet RESOLVE from which I quoted earlier is an example. It gives retailers a step-by-step explanation and printed diagram to guide them in the establishment of a redemption and storage area within their store. Interestingly, RESOLVE also quotes cost per case for handling returned containers, as developed in both Oregon and Vermont. Those costs are quite a bit less than what the industry indicates at deposit legislation hearings - even allowing for the inflated costs in the past five years or so.

Under the proposed Minnesota law, retailers would receive a 1¢ handling fee for each container redeemed. That fee is paid by the distributor, who is recompensed through the sale of redeemed material, and unclaimed deposit money. In Michigan, there was no dealer compensation, but in New York State it is 1½¢ per container.

Some distributors use establishment of redemption areas as a marketing tool, promising the retailer help with bins, carts, routine, etc., in exchange for added shelf space for their products. Retailers in deposit states have discovered that persons returning containers often stay to spend redeemed money and usually more. It is a traffic builder.

The proposed Minnesota law also would allow the establishment of redemption

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centers. Retailers could then refuse to redeem containers if there were such a center within a certain distance. Iowa law provided for the establishment of such centers, and they appear to work well there. (There are about 100 operating in Iowa at the present time.) I would like to quote from two letters I received recently - first from John M. Ely, Jr., Legislative Chair for the Cedar Rapids Sierra Club, and a former Iowa legislator: "These centers take every container that is printed with the five-cent deposit notation - even crushed containers. I've noticed stores in our locality vie competitively to give good service on returns, evidently a cheerful returns policy generates repeat store customers...In short, store managers appear satisfied with the workings of the law, even though it adds to their labor costs." (Iowa retailers are paid a 1¢ handling fee.) Mr. Ely's comments were confirmed by Mr. John Seyb of the Iowa Dept. of Air, Water and Solid Waste.

My second quote is from Judie Hoffman, League of Women Voters of Iowa
Natural Resource Chair, Ames, Iowa: "In Ames a couple has started a business
of picking up containers from stores...This is a case of <u>new</u> jobs being created.
In Ames we also have a redemption center run by disadvantaged and low-income
high school kids who have been in trouble. It has worked well as a job
training center."

Another suggested problem frequently mentioned by retailers is a fear of contamination from the storage of used containers. It appears to be an unfounded fear. Maine is specifically cited as having discovered no container-related contamination in over 5,000 retail health inspections. A letter to us from Michigan explains that they may have had a few problems early on, but that amending their law to allow retailers to refuse dirty containers took care of it. The Minnesota proposed law already conatins such a provision. To quote again from Judie Hoffman in Iowa: "Grocery stores don't 'smell like breweries.' Cans go into large plastic sacks and are picked up frequently. At the grocery store I go to they are picked up daily (twice on Saturday, no pickup on Sunday.)"

Reverse vending machines, recently introduced in the Twin Cities Area, will not negate the need for a deposit law. Equally at home in either deposit or non-deposit states, these machines redeem only aluminum cans, leaving glass and plastic to the landfill and roadside. At the same time it is obvious that reverse vending makes it easier for the retailer to redeem at least aluminum cans - and most retailers have been selling and successfully redeeming refillable glass containers for years.

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protention by Jeanne Crampton, LWVMN, January 24, 1984 (page 5)

What about litter? We can argue endlessly about what is worse: beer and pop containers, wine and liquor bottles, fast food plastics, cigarette butts, etc. We can only point out a few facts:

- -Deposit states report a dramatic drop in beverage container litter as well as a noticeable reduction in other forms of litter.
- -Containers are the least biodegradable and the longest-lasting, most visible part of roadside litter. (As evidenced in Minnesota when the snow melts?)
- -Broken glass is an accident-producing factor to both humans and animals.

A number of legislators have remarked that they would be glad to support "a comprehensive law attacking litter." We would be just as delighted, if we thought it could actually be accomplished. Litter laws have not proved remarkably effective in most of the states that have tried them. The point is, why spend to clean up, when it can be prevented in the first place? The person who drops a beer or pop container on the roadside in a deposit state pays for littering - right then and there. And someone else comes along a few minutes later and retrieves the container for the deposit that will be paid. We have not included milk, wine and liquor bottles in our proposed law for a very pragmatic reason: Our opposition already includes the container industry, some unions, and the retail grocers. We weren't sure we could overcome the money the liquor and milk industry can spend. If the Minnesota legislature wants to include those items and pass a deposit law, we would be glad to support it.

We are not so naive as to promote a container deposit law as the answer to all of our solid waste problems. There <u>is</u> no "one answer" to the problem of solid waste. Solutions will be numerous and varied - recycling, composting, waste-to-energy facilities, and landfilling of the unuseable residue. A deposit law will remove 4 to 6 percent waste from the waste stream. As the use of plastic bottles increases, we can expect the volume taken by those containers to increase. Some burning facilities have experienced difficulty with glass in the burners and on the tipping floor. There is no reason for the presence of glass and metal in those facilities anyway - why not get them out beforehand and reduce energy consumption?

The advantages of a deposit law are that it removes that 4 to 6 percent of waste right off the top, with no new technology needed, and provides at the same time a compatible atmosphere for additional forms of recycling. There are no new bureaucracies established in state government, and no particular administrative costs. (Neither Michigan nor New York appropriated any money in their

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Who pays? Well, who usually pays? We do - we always do, whether it's in the form of increased property taxes, "service fees," or a few cents increase in the price of merchandise. As new landfills are built, the cost of burying waste is going to skyrocket. Now is the time to start reducing our waste flow - before it gets to the garbage can. Deposit laws work - and work well. Why waste more time debating something we know works in other places, and has never been rescinded after implementation?



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by Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources Co-Chair
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January 24, 1984

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This letter is in lieu of public testimony on S.F. 1312. Please

circulate a copy among the members of your Committee.

As you will recall, at the time I testified in favor of S.F. 741, the Container Deposit bill, I indicated that the League of Women Voters of Minnesota also supported S.F. 1312 and its companion, H.F. 1361. We made a point of this support because of the attempts by opponents to S.F. 741 to insinuate that support of both bills was not compatible---a position we do not buy, needless to say.

Since 1973, at the time the League of Women Voters of the U.S. adopted a solid waste position that said, "Action supporting policies to reduce the nonessential part of the waste stream, recover its nonreducible portion, then ensure safe disposal of the rest," we have supported whole-heartedly the concept of waste reduction by any feasible means. S.F. 1312 contains the impetus to accomplish a variety of waste reduction prior to disposal. Because the League of Women Voters of Minnesota does not have a specific position on the mechanisms to provide funding to accomplish such waste reduction, we will not address the feasibility of the method proposed in the bill.

Recycling and waste reduction are ideas whose time has come. Landfills are difficult to site, environmental concerns have strengthened, and energy shortages may still plague us in the future. The League of Women Voters has, individually and as a group, supported voluntary recycling. Many Leagues have been responsible for starting civic recycling programs. After ten years, however, we have had to admit that publicity and education can only do so much. Approximately one-third of the public will recycle just because it's the right thing to do, but the rest need a push--ease, economic incentive, or whatever. If S.F. 1312 can provide some of those incentives, particularly if diverse projects can be instigated, it will prove worthwhile. At the same time, the portion of the bill that covers closure and post-closure of landfills provides a necessary protection for the public.

We are convinced that there is no "one" answer to the waste problem--and that is one reason we can support both S.F. 1312 and S.F. 741, Container
Deposit. We urge members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources
Committee to consider the benefits of S.F. 1312, as well as the impacts of
possible funding methods.

Sincerely,

Janne Crampton, Natural Resources

Co-Chair

Sally

4330 Wooddale Ave. S. St. Louis Park, MN. 55424 January 20, 1984

The Honorable Darril Wegscheid 14374 Genesee Avenue Apple Valley, MN. 55124

Dear Senator Wegscheid:

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me Wednesday. I did appreciate it very much.

I have enclosed bits and pieces of information from my files on deposit legislation---items that reflect different aspects of container deposit laws from different geographical areas. As I indicated on the telephone, we have used the New York Report (prepared for the New York Legislature prior to their adoption of a deposit law) and have found it to be perhaps the most accurately documented and objective publication on the subject. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota prepared a report based on the N.Y. study, entitled, "Container Deposit Laws: Who Benefits, Who Pays?", which was delivered to your office (and to the rest of the legislators) sometime last spring. We are presently revising that report, and hope to publish it in a more readable format soon.

Like you, we believe recycling --- in every shape and form --- is the ultimate answer to the solid waste problem. We are also convinced that there is no "one answer" to those problems. Recycling all reclaimable materials, composting, waste-to-energy facilities, and, for the absolute end residue, landfills, should all be considered in solid waste management. We are a long way from achieving all of the above, however, and thus are supporting a beverage container deposit law as a vehicle for getting started on the road to solid waste containment. We recognize that such a law removes, at most, about 4 to 6 percent of the waste stream from a landfill. However, containers are the least biodegradable material entering a landfill, and remain long after food and fiber wastes have decomposed. That same point can be made about litter---there may be more paper and plastic on the roadways, but the pop and beer cans and bottles are there longer. Opponents often use the argument, based on counting cigarette stubs and various paper items equally with containers, that cans and bottles make up a smaller percentage of the total litter picture, and can therefore be ignored--or that a "litter tax" is a fairer way to attack the problem. Litter laws tax everyone, and backhandedly attack the problem after it has been committed. With a deposit law, the litterer pays when the container is discarded. Litter laws are popular with the Container industry, and union people. I have a study, published by the MPCA in 1980, on litter laws, if you have any further interest in the subject.

I think I discussed the problems of retailers rather thoroughly on the telephone, but if you have further specific questions, I will be glad to try and answer them. The proposed Minnesota law, unlike Michigan, does allow the retailer a 1¢ handling charge for each container, the cost of which is ultimately paid by the bottler or distributor, who is recompensed by a combination of unclaimed deposits and the sale of recycled material.

As is probably only too evident, I could go on for several pages about the advantages of deposit laws---but I think I'll stop here. My LUV compatriot in Iowa called tonight to tell me she had mailed a packet of material on Iowa's law, which, she said, "...would make anyone want a deposit law, if they read it!" (Her original letter to me is included in the enclosed material) Please let me know if you have other questions. I'll answer them as best I can.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources Co-Chair League of Women Voters of Minn.

Chair, Container Conservation Coalition

5932 Wooddale Ave. S. Edina, MN. 55424 January 5, 1984

Minneapolis Star and Tribune 425 Portland Av. Minneapolis, MN. 55488

To The Editor:

Congratulations to the Red Owl Country Stores! After years of having retail grocers oppose container deposit legislation on the grounds that it would completely disrupt their business to have to cope with empty containers, it is refreshing to learn that it is possible.

Reverse vending machines were developed in a partial response to retailers demands in states that already have enacted deposit laws—nine so far—and we hope that it is readily apparent to everyone that if reverse vending machines can refund 3¢ and a coupon for six cans, they can also refund 5¢ per can, as they would if Minnesota had a deposit law.

Redeeming aluminum cans is a start, but don't forget that we also have many "throwaway" glass beverage containers, and an increasingly larger amount of plastic ones that will have to be coped with as well. If we really expect to reduce landfill use, and reduce the amount of broken glass on roadsides, we must establish a method of retrieving all beverage containers (and eventually all containers) from our waste stream. We urge citizens to contact their legislators to suggest that they give consideration to the container deposit bills (H.F. 683; S.F. 741) that are presently awaiting action.

Contrary to popular opinion, container deposit laws do not cause unemployment, and in fact, create jobs. Nor should there be any dramatic price increase, unless the industry decides to make the law a scapegoat. Prices in states with deposit laws compare favorably with those in non-deposit states.

Sincerely,

Many Gremsly

Nancy Grimsby, Natural Resources Co-Chair League of Women Voters of Minnesota

Jean Tews, President

V.S. Please - of you print this, clo met use ban-the can" in the headline. Orposit legislation does not him anything!



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

Testimony presented to the
Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
by Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources Co-Chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Container Conservation Coalition Chair
January 30, 1984

"A great deal of misinformation has obscured rational discussion of job losses where 'bottle bills' have been debated... The experience of other states indicates that job losses have not been as severe as originally predicted, and further indicates that deposit laws may have been used as a scapegoat for general industry trends, particularly production declines due to other causes.

- --In Michigan, the National Can Company closed a plant in Livonia, Michigan, with a loss of 70 jobs 'as a direct result of the deposit law.' However, Stroh's Brewery had decided to produce its own cans instead of purchasing them from National, and opened a modernized competing facility in Fremont, Ohio. A contract loss cannot be attributed to the deposit law...
- --In Massachusetts, where the deposit law controversy has raged for years, the American Can Company threatened to close its Needham plant in 1975 if such legislation were passed. The legislation failed. The plant still closed the following month."

--MANDATORY DEPOSIT LEGISLATION:

BENEFITS AND COSTS FOR NEW YORK

Office of Development Planning
March 1982, pages 13-14.

This study I have just quoted from was ordered by the New York State Legislature and used during their discussions on the possible benefits of a deposit law for New York State. In June of 1982, a deposit law was signed by the Governor of New York, and went into effect on September 12, 1983. I would also like to note that the state of Massachusetts eventually enacted a law, which was then forced to a citizen referendum last November but did pass.

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protection by Jeanne Crampton, LWVMN, January 24, 1984 (page 2)

The job loss specter has followed Minnesota deposit law discussions for over ten years, and we think it is time it was laid to rest. We have no argument with workers who testify to fear of job loss - for them it is a real fear. We do, however, maintain that jobs are lost because of marketplace trends and decisions made in industry boardrooms. If a deposit law can be conveniently blamed for such loss, so much the better.

In 1961, the nonrefillable "throwaway" container entered the Minnesota market in volume. Between 1961 and 1976, at least eight breweries in Minnesota : went out of business - Fleckenstein, Gluek, Duluth, Mankato, Peter Pub, Hauenstein, Fitgers and Grain Belt, with a total loss of 1,011 jobs. One of the reasons was that local or regional breweries could not compete with the national distributors once the large breweries were freed from the use of refillable containers. Now let me quote J.A. Murphy, a President of Miller Brewing Company, in a company publication called RESOLVE, printed in the late 1970's and called, "...a constructive approach to retunable beverage container legislation." It gives retailers a step-by-step guide for setting up a redemption area in their stores. On the first page, after stating that Miller opposes deposit laws, Mr. Murphy states, "However, we have learned from experience not to panic, but to face the fact that change is an inevitable way of life. Simply remember the precept that the CONSUMER is the BOSS, CONSUMER DEMAND has always guided our way to profits." The last sentence of the pamphlet says, "If there is one lesson retailers learned in Oregon and Vermont with the enactment of container legislation, it would be 'business as usual' until the consumer has clearly dictated his or her package preference." In other words, deposit laws have little or nothing to do with container mix changes. Consumer demand is what counts; but container change is what loses jobs - as witnessed by the small breweries in Minnesota. At the moment, we think consumers are on the verge of making a new choice - a preference for plastic containers. Plastic containers have taken over 20 percent of the soft drink market in the last five years, are moving into the liquor market on the East Coast, with beer containers now under development. Glass industry jobs are undoubtedly going to be lost in the future if the present trend to plastic continues.

We need to establish a mechanism <u>now</u> to retrieve those plastic containers - before they begin filling up landfills. The industry that produces them should begin <u>now</u> to research and develop products that can be manufactured from recycled plastic containers. The easiest, fastest way is to enact a deposit law that reclaims all beverage containers. Within one year of implementation we could

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protection by Jeanne Crampton, LWVMN, January 24, 1984 (page 3)

be retrieving approximately 90 to 95 percent of all containers - glass, metal and plastic, as is happening in the nine states which have already enacted such a law.

Why can't Minnesota enact a container deposit law, retrieve all that raw material and begin developing manufacturing industries to use it - right her in our own state - employing our own workers?

To reiterate: With no particular container switch, except that predicated by consumer demand, we see no overall job loss. Moreover, we see no reason new industry cannot be developed using recycled materials, and we know, from experience in deposit states, that jobs will increase in transport, retail handling, and recycling. Michigan gained 4600 jobs, and the New York Report predicted a 5,000 to 6,000 job gain for N. Y. state.

Retailers have always opposed container deposit legislation on the grounds that it placed an unfair burden on them. There is no question but that the retailers are impacted under a deposit law. However, with the experience gained in the last ten years, we know that retailers will survive the enactment of a deposit law and in many cases experience a profit. One thing not generally advertised by distributors prior to the enactment of a deposit law is that they stand ready to step in and help their retail outlets whenever a deposit law becomes a fact of life. The pamphlet RESOLVE from which I quoted earlier is an example. It gives retailers a step-by-step explanation and printed diagram to guide them in the establishment of a redemption and storage area within their store. Interestingly, RESOLVE also quotes cost per case for handling returned containers, as developed in both Oregon and Vermont. Those costs are quite a bit less than what the industry indicates at deposit legislation hearings - even allowing for the inflated costs in the past five years or so.

Under the proposed Minnesota law, retailers would receive a  $1 \, t$  handling fee for each container redeemed. That fee is paid by the distributor, who is recompensed through the sale of redeemed material, and unclaimed deposit money. In Michigan, there was no dealer compensation, but in New York State it is  $1 \, t \, t$  per container.

Some distributors use establishment of redemption areas as a marketing tool, promising the retailer help with bins, carts, routine, etc., in exchange for added shelf space for their products. Retailers in deposit states have discovered that persons returning containers often stay to spend redeemed money and usually more. It is a traffic builder.

The proposed Minnesota law also would allow the establishment of redemption

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protection by Jeanne Crampton, LWVMN, January 24, 1984 (page 4)

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My second quote is from Judie Hoffman, League of Women Voters of Iowa
Natural Resource Chair, Ames, Iowa: "In Ames a couple has started a business
of picking up containers from stores...This is a case of <u>new</u> jobs being created.
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Reverse vending machines, recently introduced in the Twin Cities Area, will not negate the need for a deposit law. Equally at home in either deposit or non-deposit states, these machines redeem only aluminum cans, leaving glass and plastic to the landfill and roadside. At the same time it is obvious that reverse vending makes it easier for the retailer to redeem at least aluminum cans - and most retailers have been selling and successfully redeeming refillable glass containers for years.

Testimony to Subcommittee on Environmental Protention by Jeanne Crampton, LWVMN, January 24, 1984 (page 5)

What about litter? We can argue endlessly about what is worse: beer and pop containers, wine and liquor bottles, fast food plastics, cigarette butts, etc. We can only point out a few facts:

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A number of legislators have remarked that they would be glad to support "a comprehensive law attacking litter." We would be just as delighted, if we thought it could actually be accomplished. Litter laws have not proved remarkably effective in most of the states that have tried them. The point is, why spend to clean up, when it can be prevented in the first place? The person who drops a beer or pop container on the roadside in a deposit state pays for littering - right then and there. And someone else comes along a few minutes later and retrieves the container for the deposit that will be paid. We have not included milk, wine and liquor bottles in our proposed law for a very pragmatic reason: Our opposition already includes the container industry, some unions, and the retail grocers. We weren't sure we could overcome the money the liquor and milk industry can spend. If the Minnesota legislature wants to include those items and pass a deposit law, we would be glad to support it.

We are not so naive as to promote a container deposit law as the answer to all of our solid waste problems. There is no "one answer" to the problem of solid waste. Solutions will be numerous and varied - recycling, composting, waste-to-energy facilities, and landfilling of the unuseable residue. A deposit law will remove 4 to 6 percent waste from the waste stream. As the use of plastic bottles increases, we can expect the volume taken by those containers to increase. Some burning facilities have experienced difficulty with glass in the burners and on the tipping floor. There is no reason for the presence of glass and metal in those facilities anyway - why not get them out beforehand and reduce energy consumption?

The advantages of a deposit law are that it removes that 4 to 6 percent of waste right off the top, with no new technology needed, and provides at the same time a compatible atmosphere for additional forms of recycling. There are no new bureaucracies established in state government, and no particular administrative costs. (Neither Michigan nor New York appropriated any money in their

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Subcommittee on Environmental Protection,
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by Jeanne Crampton, Natural Resources Co-Chair
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January 24, 1984

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## STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR-ELECT

ST. PAUL 55155

DEC 1 5 1982

December 9, 1982

Ms. Jeanne K. Crampton League of Women Voters 555 Wabasha St. Paul. MN 55102

Paure

Dear Ms. Crampton:

Thank you for your recent letter to the Governor-elect's office concerning legislation for can and bottle deposit law.

My role on the transition team is to review ideas for new legislative and policy initiatives. We will retain your letter and, when we have selected our permanent office staff and agency heads, we will be able to give your ideas further consideration.

As you can imagine, we do not have the staff resources to allow us to generate all the ideas we need to chart new directions for the state. We therefore, must rely on ideas initiated from others. Your help in this process is greatly appreciated.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Tom Triplett Transition Staff

TT:lz

## file

#### DEPOSIT LEGISLATION ACTION COALITION MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, December 16, 1982, 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: League of Women Voters of Minnesota office, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul. Between 10th Street and Freeway #94, second floor.

PURPOSE: To discuss strategy regarding deposit legislation during the 1983 legislative session.

#### **AGENDA**

- 1. Introduction of those present.
- 2. Indentification of groups or individuals indicating support or interest.
- 3. Proposed bill (as of 12/10/82 we do not yet have a formal bill ready for filing but we have a general outline.) Two questions still to be discussed: Should liquor and wine bottles be included? And, what entity should retain unredeemed deposits? (Should it remain with brewers or distributors as in Michigan or should it be retained by the state for alleviation of deposit impacts?)
- 4. Chief Author: Senator Greg Dahl is still interested in carrying the bill and is presently seeking house authors. We decided not to pursue contact with legislators until we could go with bill in hand. (The economic situation and special session has slowed things down somewhat!)
- 5. Division of labor: Who does what when?
- 6. Next meeting: January 6, 1983.
- 7. Adjourn by 11:45, noon at the latest.

Please call Nan Grimsby, 922-9403 or Jeanne Crampton, 926-8760, or LWV office, 224-5445 if you cannot attend.



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

#### NEWS MEMO

#### NOTICE OF NEWS CONFERENCE

WHO: Container Conservation Coalition

WHAT: News Conference to announce formation of a coalition to support container deposit legislation as a jobscreating mechanism for Minnesota.

WHEN: Friday, January 21, 1983, 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Room 4, State Capitol Building

CONTACT: Jeanne Crampton, (612) 926-8760

LWVMN Natural Resources Co-Chair

Container Conservation Coalition Chair



# Container Conservation Coalition

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota (LWVMN) and twelve other organizations and individuals recently formed a coalition known as the CONTAINER CONSERVATION COALITION (CCC) to work for the passage of a container deposit law for Minnesota. Representative Kathleen Vellenga (DFL), Dictrict 64A, St. Paul and Senator Eric Petty (DFL), District 62, Minneapolis, will be chief authors of the bill.

The CCC is basing its campaign on the following points:

- 1. Information from other deposit states indicates there will be a net job gain following enactment of a deposit law.
- 2. There is a potential for the development of new industries to use the 80 to 92% return of material (glass, metal, plastic) that a deposit law engenders. (The return of material is much higher under a deposit law than it is under voluntary recycling.)
- 3. With a deposit law, costs for litter pickup and landfill expansion will be reduced, and energy to manufacture new containers will be conserved.
- 4. There will be no attempt to dictate to the marketplace the type or variety of beverage container to be used. (The deposits will be standard on all beverage containers that are nonrefillable and will remain as they are now on refillable containers.)

LWVMN recently published an eight-page report on container deposit laws that refutes some of the arguments used by the opposition in the past. We are convinced that a law mandating recycling and/or reuse of beverage containers makes sense and we believe a majority of Minnesotans agree with us.

The deposit bill we are urging be passed would place a five-cent deposit on soft drink and malt beverage containers (as it is in Iowa) and there would be a reimbursement for the redeemer (either retainer or recycler) to cover the costs of implementation.

We would be delighted to have you join with us in this effort. If you or your organization would like to join the coalition, please call LWVMN at (612) 224-5445, or use our WATS line (800) 642-9663. Obviously, a campaign such as this needs money for material reproduction, postage, etc. Coalition members are donating lobbyists, paid and voluneer, and the LWVMN has funded costs to date. Now we must ask for donations to continue lobbying and public education. If, for whatever reason, you are sympathetic to the cause, but don't care to be listed as a coalition member, please consider making a donation to our working fund. Checks should be made out to the Container Conservation Coalition and sent in care of the LWVMN, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, MN 55102. Our report will be mailed to anyone joining the coalition and/or making a donation. We look forward to your support.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Crampton, Chair Container Conservation Coalition



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA \* ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 \* TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

February 21, 1983

Mr. Bruce Blumenthal Mr. Allen Blumenthal Universal Can, Inc. 2075-B Ellis Avenue St. Paul, MN 55114

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your letter of February 3, 1983, which took issue with the League of Women Voters of Minnesota's and the Container Conservation Coalition's position on container deposit laws. I would be very glad to meet with you to discuss such laws but thought I would address the points in your letter in writing so that Coalition members would know that a response had been made.

About "government meddling". Like so many other emotional disagreements, this very much depends on "the eye of the beholder". We don't consider deposit laws "meddling" to any greater degree than income tax, fees for waste removal or tax credits for pollution control equipment. It's a fairly simple mechanism for insuring the return of an empty container to a recycler instead of the local roadside or landfill.

To respond to the other arguments as you numbered them in your letter:

- 1. We are quite willing to agree that 7% may be too high a figure; 5% may be closer to the actual condition. (5% to 6% is the figure currently quoted the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.) That figure reflects conditions in the entire state, not just the metro or near-metro area, and does include glass and plastic containers. We seriously question a recycling rate of 60% on aluminum cans over the entire state. It is our understanding that when the 60% recycling rate is used, it includes cans from two deposit states, Iowa and Michigan, that are "imported" to Minnesota. The recycling rate on glass bottles is about 2%; that on the "PET" plastic bottle is ½ of 1%. One thing to keep in mind is that while beverage containers may only constitute 5% of landfill volume, they are not biodegradeable as is paper, fabric and food waste and, therefore, do not disappear over a period of time.
- 2. As you may have noticed, Mary Ayde, of White Bear Recycling is a member of the Container Conservation Coalition and both she and Ms. Joan Nelson of Recycling Unlimited, St. Paul, have consulted with the Chief Authors of the deposit bill and support its passage in Minnesota, as does Richard Wybierala.
- 3. The question of litter can be debated endlessly, depending on the figures and statistics used, but the State of New York, prior to the passage of their

deposit law in June, 1982, published a comprehensive report on container deposits, Mandatory Deposit Legislation: Benefits and Costs For New York, Office of Development Planning, March, 1982, and said:

"The State of Vermont has conducted the most thorough study of litter reduction following enactment of mandatory deposit legislation. Vermont reports a 35% reduction in total highway litter volume and has calculated that its roadside littler pick-up costs have decreased by more than 31% despite inflation. This reduction includes a decrease in all types of litter, not merely containers. Michigan, too, reports this 'spill-over' effect to other types of litter.

...Perhaps more important than the actual percentage reduction, which is in dispute, is a consideration of the type of litter containers represent. They are among the least degradable components in the litter stream and the most dangerous. The Resource Conservation Committee, a nine-agency federal task force, reported that at least 10-million could be saved annually in medical bills through implementation of a national mandatory deposit law."

The Container Conservation Coalition is not saying that a deposit law will end littering but there will be an overall reduction and it will be a reduction of the most dangerous portion. (One reason the Minnesota Coalition of Bicyclists is supporting the legislation is their members' first-hand experiences with roadside broken glass.

- 4. Fluctuations in the economy will probably always affect the marketplace to some degree. To insist that it is useless to effect energy and material savings wherever possible because demand may lessen at some point in the future doesn't make sense. With a deposit law, material would be returned in large, guaranteed amounts, allowing container manufacturers to contract to buy recycled material somewhat as they do now for virgin materials.
- 5. We would like to suggest that this country has always prided itself on meeting technological challenges and we think it will continue to do so. States that presently have deposit laws are seemingly having no problems selling their returned containers. As we noted above, used containers are not a perishable commodity they could be stockpiled during slow periods. We think the State of Minnesota, in cooperation with its schools and universities and its "hi-tech" industries might very will be able to develop new products from recycled containers. (Plastic is already used as a filler for sleeping bags and outerwear; and crushed glass can be used in road surfacing, as well as new bottles.)
- 6. Why not? Also, we're not talking about end users "locating" in Minnesota. We're saying Minnesotans need to develop industries to benefit Minnesota.
- 7. The State of Michigan conducted a survey of price changes directly after their bottle bill went into effect but according to an investigation by a Legislative Committee, "The final conclusion of the committee in this area is crucial: consumer prices cannot be used as a gauge for determining the degree of impact the deposit law has had on industry costs. It has been impossible to determine how much of the retail increase is directly attributable to the law change and additional industry costs." The report was

published in December, 1980, and although there may have been an initial price increase, prices now seem to have leveled off to that of surrounding areas with no deposit laws. As a frequent visitor to Michigan, I conducted my own, admitedly unscientific "price survey" last August. I compared prices in a large supermarket in a city of 10,000 population in a western, lower penninsula tourist area (Manistee-Traverse City) with stores here, two days apart. Much to my surprise (I had expected higher prices in Michigan) I found that on national brands there was little or no difference in price. Prices varied higher and lower in each place and the variety of container was similar.

In discussion with a member of the DNR staff in Michigan, it was learned that there have been no administrative costs to the State of Michigan to implement the law, since the deposits originate within the industry itself and are refunded by retailers.

We think <u>now</u> is the time to do something about container retrieval and we'd be happy to see retrieval of much more than beverage containers. We are convinced that a beverage container deposit law would work well and can indeed be a sort of pilot project for the retieval and recycling of other materials. The economy, good or bad, can only benefit from the increase in jobs and the conservation of energy that a deposit law would bring.

Sincerely,

Ganne Crampton, Chair

Container Conservation Coalition

JC/rk



# UNIVERSAL CAN, INC.

2075-B Ellis Avenue • St. Paul, MN 55114 • (612) 644-4236

"The Aluminum Can Recyclers"

Ms. Jeanne Crampton League of Women Voters of Minnesota 555-Wabasha St.Paul, MN. 55102 February 3,1983

Dear Ms. Crampton,

We think a dialogue is in order. As a three-year old company in the business of recycling aluminum beverage containers, and more recently as a recycler (purchaser) of glass, bi-metal (steel) and plastic beverage containers, we believe we have some insight into the "beverage container/litter problem". We would like very much to discuss with you why we believe deposit legislation in Minnesota is unnecessary-and will make ourselves available to meet with you for such a discussion.

Our opposition to deposit legislation is, simply, that we do not believe in government meddling in the free-enterprise system. It has been pointed out to us, and we agree, that legislation could potentially be a great economic advantage to U-CAN and other recyclers. However, if we are opposed in principal to this type of legislation, we must remain opposed despite any economic advantages to our company.

Allow us to briefly indicate some of the areas of disagreement, based on the CCC news conference statement and the league's "container deposit laws - who benefits: who pays?":

1. We suggest that the figure of a 7% reduction in landfill volume is obsolete for Minnesota. Figures quoted are all prior to 1980. Since that time three major container recycling companies have been born (MSD-R in St.Paul, ERR in St.Peter and ourselves), each of us having multiple collection points. Prior to 1980 it is estimated that fewer than 20% of the aluminum cans were being recycled. In 1983 we expect this to approximate 60%. Although we are unaware of any statewide studies of glass, bi-metal and plastic, the rate of their recycling has increased substantially (although probably not at the same rate). It is apparent to us that the 7% figure is not even close to reality.

2. In our opinion, most other recyclers (which include the scrap metal processors)

are opposed to legislation - not just labor and the industry.

3. The CCC states that "savings" will occur due to the reduction of litter and adding new landfills. We must disagree. The MPCA estimates that over 79% of the waste stream is combustibles, with yard waste and all paper comprising 18.5% and 33% respectively. Litter collection will still be necessary until a way is found to remove these items from the waste stream. The same is true of landfills. It seems to us that deposit legislation is the "tail wagging the dog" - the largest problem is not being dealt with.

4. To state that there is a 95% energy saving in the use of aluminum cans is correct. However, to our knowledge, there is no known technology that allows for more than a 60%-40% mix of cans -vs- alumina. Therefore, we point-out that there have been times in the past three years where the supply of aluminum cans has exceeded the

demand. That brings us to our final points.

Bruce ! Allen Blument

5. For many reasons (such as lack of technology) it is impossible for industry today to absorb all the bi-metal and plastic that is currently being recovered-or would be recovered under legislation. Therefore, it will be necessary for landfills to accept the "overage".

6. In most cases it is highly unlikely that "end users" will locate plants in

Minnesota, for a variety of reasons.

7. Frankly, we believe it is very poor judgement to suggest that Minnesotan's should incur additional expenses, especially during the current - ongoing financial crisis.

We are conservationists. We want a clean environment for Minnesota. We want to conserve natural resources. We do not want to overburden our landfills. We differ in that we think the free enterprise system will do the job - indeed, is doing the job. We solicit your help in suggesting how we can do a better job.

Sincerely,

Bruce Blumenthal President Allen Blumenthal Secretary/Treasurer cc: Minnesota Audubon Council Kevin Proescholdt

> Minnesota Coalition of Bicyclists Eric Schulman

Poor Richard Inc. Richard Wybierala

Common Cause Joyce Williams

Minnesota Public Interest Research Group - Marcia Janssen

S.P.E.A.C. (Student Group) c/o Dr. Ray A. Nelson

MSD Recycle David Locey St.Paul Audubon Sherry Dragula

Metropolitan Inter-County Assn. Marie Silver

Sierra Club Nelson French

White Bear Recycling Mary E. Ayde

Joint Religious Legislative Coalition - Samuel I. Horowitz

Robert Eikum, Environmental Consultants



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

February 21, 1983

The Honorable Rudy Perpich Governor of Minnesota 130 State Capitol St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Perpich:

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has formed a group called the Container Conservation Coalition (CCC) which includes Common Cause and the Minnesota Audubon Council (see list) to work for the passage of a container deposit law in Minnesota. I have written about our intentions to Tom Triplett and discussed the matter with Frank Altman, but the person I'd really like to talk to is you.

Attached is a copy of the press release we used at our January 21st press conference and a letter from the Blumenthal brothers of Universal Can, Inc., (local recyclers) and my reply. I have included the letters since I think they delineate some of the more common arguments about container deposit legislation.

We are not implying that a deposit law will rejuvenate Minnesota - but we do know that there has been a net job gain in states that have adopted such laws and we know that we can't continue to stick energy producing materials in the ground to be lost to society forever.

If you don't want to read all this junk, let me come talk to you for 15 minutes - I can talk very fast!

Sincerely,

Jeanne Crampton Chair, Container Conservation Coalition Natural Resources Co-chair, LWVMN

JC/rk enc.

cc: Tom Triplett
Frank Altman

file



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

March 8, 1983

Mr. Dave Lacey, Executive Vice President Minnesota Soft Drink Association 2353 Rice Street North Roseville, MN 55113

Dear Mr. Locey:

Some time ago you indicated by telephone that you would be sending me material relevant to the statement in your January 19, 1983, news release that, "In 1982, over 60% of Minnesota soft packaging was either reused or recycled".

I haven't received that material as yet, and I really would like to see it. Specifically, I'd like to know the number of containers sold in the state, by type (glass, refillable or non-refillable, aluminum, steel and plastic); number recycled by type; if containers from other states (identify) are recycled in Minnesota; and in what amounts.

Thank you for your offer of help.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Crampton

Natural Resources Co-Chair

JC/rk