

Pride of Place (POP)

The litter & recycling solution based on a Tennessee bottle bill

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1. A PUBLIC FORUM ON THE BOTTLE BILL

TN BOTTLE-BILL FORUM

Thursday, September 17, 2009

6:30-8:30 pm (central time)

Agricenter International (near Shelby Farms)

Memphis, Tennessee

Sponsored by Scenic Tennessee and Greenlife Provisions

Thanks to some energetic supporters in Shelby County, including James Brown of Greenlife Provisions, we've finally been motivated to organize something many of you have urged all along: An informed, nonpartisan public roundtable on Tennessee's proposed container deposit legislation.

The panel-style event, to be held in the 600-seat indoor amphitheater at the beautiful Agricenter complex in Memphis, will feature:

- * respected national experts on bottle bills, redemption systems and recycling in general
- * local perspectives on the Tennessee bill, both for and against
- * ample time for the audience to ask questions and contribute to the responses

Early indications are that we will have lots of press coverage and a BIG turnout. Five of the bill's cosponsors live in Shelby County; there's a great deal of local interest in the bill; and the Shelby County Commission may be considering a resolution endorsing the bill at around the same time. (See the next item for an update on our 95-county endorsement campaign.)

I'll send more information over the coming 6 weeks, but in the meantime I have these requests:

1. Circulate this message to your colleagues, especially if they live in the area.
2. If you think you will attend, let me know.
3. If you live in the area and can help out in large or small ways, let me know that also. We'd like to add to our organizing committee; we'll also need volunteers as ushers, etc., on the night of event.
4. If you have ideas, suggestions or useful resources (such as a contact in the audio-visual business who can supply tabletop mikes!), please share.
5. **CONTRIBUTE \$\$!** Between venue costs, insurance and so on, this event is going to cost about \$1,000, more if out-of-towners need reimbursement for lodging or airfare. Because it's designed to inform the public rather than advocate for a particular outcome, you can make a tax-deductible donation to Scenic Tennessee, designated for the forum. You can either send me a check made out to Scenic Tennessee (using my Mount Juliet address below), or you can donate online at <http://www.scenictennessee.org/join.html>. Where the form asks for your membership amount, check "Other" and write in both the amount and "for bottle-bill forum." You can also note this in the "comments" box. Once you've completed the personal information, you'll be redirected to Paypal to complete the payment. Note: a donation of \$20 or more automatically makes you a member of Scenic Tennessee, or renews your existing membership. If you don't want to be a member, say so in the comments box.

2. 95-COUNTY ENDORSEMENT CAMPAIGN

We're still battling 1000! The bill got another county endorsement last month (Moore County, 10 to 5). Added to Loudon, Hickman and Maury, this brings us to four endorsements. In the meantime, Bedford, Cheatham, Carter, Hardeman, Roane, Shelby and Sumner are all preparing to vote on the resolution.

County endorsements are a key strategy for the bill, but we need local voices to help win them. If you live in any of the 91 counties that have not yet endorsed the bill, please contact me! I'll give you everything you need and guide you through every easy step. This bill practically sells itself; it just needs local salesmen!

3. DELAWARE BOTTLE BILL RESCUED

In discussing the bill with others, you may hear it said that Delaware just became the first state to repeal its bottle bill. Fortunately, this is not true. The Delaware bill is by far the weakest in the country (it actually exempts aluminum cans!), and the legislature did indeed vote to repeal it--but this was done in a rather last-minute maneuver engineered by opposition forces, with virtually no public awareness that such a move was even afoot. When the news broke, there was a massive public outcry; and after getting more calls on it than anything else he's dealt with in his six months in office, the governor vetoed the repeal! He called for the legislature to return to the issue next year, with a plan to "mend it, not end it."

4. "SAVE THE NRC" ONLINE POLL

As you may have heard, the National Recycling Coalition is in dire financial straits and is considering a merger with Keep America Beautiful as a way to pay off its debts and cut costs. This survey is an unofficial tally of public response to the merger. To read more about the issues and cast a vote, go to <http://www.savethenrc.org>.

For the record, I am against the merger. KAB, as you may know, was formed in 1953 by beverage companies and similar corporate interests to guard against further regulation of their littered products. This was about the time that deposits were being phased out in favor of throwaway containers, and in 1953 Vermont had just banned throwaway glass beer bottles. In the years since, KAB and/or many of its local affiliates, including Keep Tennessee Beautiful, have worked quietly or vocally to defeat deposit legislation such as ours. In my opinion, NRC needs to maintain its independence.

5. PARADE MAGAZINE'S ONLINE BOTTLE-BILL POLL

There's another national online poll, this one from Parade Magazine, asking simply if the U.S. should have a uniform, national bottle bill. To cast a vote, go to:

<http://www.parade.com/news/intelligence-report/archive/090726-the-push-to-expand-bottle-bills.html>

Here's how the numbers are currently running:

Should we have a national bottle bill?

Yes 62%

No 38%

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