

NEWS RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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COUNTY DEMOCRATS CALL FOR BIGGER, BETTER BOTTLE BILL

TROY--- Members of the Democratic Minority of the Rensselaer County Legislature are once again urging an update of New York's Bottle bill. They support Governor Spitzer's inclusion of a "bigger, better bottle bill" in his proposed 2007-08 state budget and hope to take action at this month's legislative meeting.

According to Legislator Peter Grimm, a member of the Legislature's Environment Committee, "We will be filing a resolution this month urging the State Legislature to support the Governor's bottle bill. We all share responsibility for keeping our communities clean and it is time that the State Legislature took this important step to update the bottle bill."

He noted, "This year marks the 25th anniversary of New York's bottle bill which has proven to be an effective recycling and litter prevention program. Bottled water, iced teas, sports drinks and other non-carbonated beverages were not popular back in 1982. Now that they make up one-quarter of the beverage market, it is time to update the bottle bill to reflect the changes in the industry."

District 4 Legislator Flora Fasoldt, co-sponsor of the resolution, said, " Governor Spitzer's bill would benefit the state's Environmental Protection Fund that supports local recycling programs, parks, waterfront revitalization, open space, farmland preservation and other programs to protect our land, air and water. That would be good news and an economic boost for local communities who are improving and preserving their environs. New York is out of step with many other states that require beverage companies to return unclaimed bottle deposits to benefit the public."

Governor Eliot Spitzer has estimated that \$100 million would annually go to the State Environmental Protection Fund from unclaimed deposits. His proposed executive budget for FY 2007-08 would update the bottle bill by including non-carbonated beverages and requiring beverage companies to transfer unclaimed deposits to the State Environmental Protection Fund. The "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill," endorsed by more than 400 groups, businesses and local governments, was passed by the New York State Assembly in 2005 and 2006.

Democrats in the Rensselaer County Legislature have repeatedly called for a "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" and filed legislation in 2003, 2004 and 2006.