

NEWS RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR BIGGER, BETTER BOTTLE BILL

TROY--- A resolution introduced by the Democratic Minority of the Rensselaer County Legislature supporting Governor Spitzer's "bigger, better bottle bill" has received bipartisan support in committee and is expected to be adopted at Tuesday's monthly meeting.

According to Legislator Peter Grimm, a member of the Legislature's Environment Committee, "We are pleased that the Majority members have joined us in co-sponsoring this call for an expanded 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."

Democrats in the Rensselaer County Legislature have repeatedly called for a Bigger, Better Bottle Bill and filed legislation in 2003, 2004 and 2006. This year marks the first time the Republican Majority has supported the bottle bill. "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.

Grimm noted, "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."

District 4 Legislator Flora Fasoldt, a 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.