



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

November 15, 2007

NEWS RELEASE

Recycling Issues Explored

Edmonton- Should milk containers be included in the deposit refund system? Should existing deposit levels on beverage containers be raised? These are just two of the many issues that the Legislative Assembly's all-party Standing Committee on Resources and Environment explored during its public consultation and deliberations.

The committee tabled its report in the House today outlining its recommendations for changes to the Beverage Container Recycling Regulation.

"Above all, the committee recognized that primarily this is an environmental issue," said Denis Ducharme, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake and Chair of the Standing Committee on Resources and Environment. "Throughout its deliberations the committee was focused on the goal of ensuring that the recycling program is convenient and effective for the Alberta public."

Some of the committee's recommendations impacting consumers include:

- Establishing different deposit rates for different sized containers (10 cents for containers one litre or less and 20 cents for beverage containers larger than one litre).
- Recommending an equal deposit rate of 10 cents on pop cans and beer cans.

"The committee felt that the easier things were on consumers, the higher the return rates would be," said Ducharme. "The review was focused on the need to improve the recycling of containers."

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He explained that the committee chose to include milk containers in the system but did have concerns over potential impacts to individuals and families.

“The committee is recommending the impacts of including milk cartons be monitored closely,” said Ducharme.

“It was equally important that we strengthen the role of the Beverage Container Management Board, ensuring that it will monitor service standards at depots, which will encourage public participation in beverage container recycling.”

The committee made a number of recommendations concerning the operation of the Beverage Container Management Board (BCMB) including:

- Maintaining the board’s current structure (12 members: four municipal and urban representatives, four manufacturers, three bottle depot representatives and one retail liquor store representative).
- The Beverage Container Recycling Regulation or the by-law should be amended to indicate what constitutes “consensus,” which effectively gives veto power to any member of the Beverage Container Management Board concerning decisions on handling commissions. An alternate proposal would be that a two-thirds majority be required to reach such decisions.
- Resolution of issues pertaining to the container collection system, such as whether or not the number of bottle depots in Alberta is adequate, be left to the BCMB.
- The BCMB should review deposit rates every two years and management of unredeemed deposits should be transferred to the BCMB.

A copy of the committee’s report and all its recommendations upon review of key issues to the Beverage Container Recycling Regulation is available on the committee’s website at: www.assembly.ab.ca/resourcesandenvironment,

The work of this committee was done at the request of the Minister of Environment, who asked the committee on July 11, 2007 to conduct a review of issues associated with the Beverage Container Recycling Regulation such as the beverage container collection system, milk containers, deposit levels, unredeemed deposits, service quality and two common collection agents.

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“We heard a number of views from the public as well as other interested groups,” explained Ducharme. “The committee received 114 written submissions and heard 14 oral presentations during public hearings in Calgary and Edmonton.”

The committee began its review during its first meeting on July 18, 2007, and held eight additional meetings to discuss the items within the scope of its review.

The Standing Committee on Resources and Environment is one of four all-party policy field committees established by the Assembly this spring.

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Backgrounder Attached

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Backgrounder

Standing Committee on Resources and Environment

Mandate: relates to the areas of energy, the environment, agriculture, sustainable resources and forestry.

Committee Membership:

Mr. Denis Ducharme, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake (Chair)
Dr. David Swann, MLA for Calgary-Mountain View (Deputy Chair)
Ms. Pearl Calahasen, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake
Mr. David Eggen, MLA for Edmonton-Calder
Mr. Gordon Graydon, MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti
Mr. Doug Griffiths, MLA for Battle River-Wainwright
Mr. Paul Hinman, MLA for Cardston-Taber-Warner
Mr. Ty Lund, MLA for Rocky Mountain House
Mr. Richard Miller, MLA for Edmonton-Rutherford
Mr. Leonard Mitzel, MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat
Mr. Frank Oberle, MLA for Peace River