

*A Resolution Submitted by the Town of Tecumseh, ON*



**ADVANCING CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRACTICES THROUGH IMPROVED WASTE DIVERSION AND BEVERAGE CONTAINER RECOVERY IN THE GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE REGION**

May 2026

WHEREAS the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin is one of the world's most important freshwater resources, containing over 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater and providing drinking water, transportation, recreation and economic opportunity to tens of millions of people in Canada and the United States.

AND WHEREAS marine and shoreline litter in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River threatens water quality, wildlife and ecosystem health.

AND WHEREAS plastic packaging and beverage containers are among the most commonly collected items in Great Lakes litter assessments, representing a highly preventable and recoverable waste stream.

AND WHEREAS experience in multiple international jurisdictions demonstrates that deposit-return systems for beverage containers can achieve exceptionally high recovery rates, with Norway reporting a 92.3 percent return rate in 2023.

AND WHEREAS beverage container deposit systems are already implemented in nearly all Canadian provinces.

AND WHEREAS jurisdictions with deposit-return systems continue to deliver strong results, including:

- In Ontario, The Beer Store's 2025 Responsible Stewardship Report found that its return system achieved a 75 percent recovery rate for containers in 2025, while the Ontario Deposit Return Program achieved a 71.1 percent recovery rate.

- In Quebec, one year after the 2025 expansion to plastic beverage containers, Consignaction reported that more than 750 million beverage containers had been returned through the modernized network since its rollout began, demonstrating strong public participation and the growing effectiveness of deposit-return systems.

AND WHEREAS effective recycling and waste management systems are essential to preventing beverage containers and other packaging from polluting our freshwater ecosystem, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting governmental waste reduction targets.

AND WHEREAS the Economic Transformation Action Plan of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative/Alliance des villes des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent identifies the promotion of circular economy practices as a key strategy to reduce waste, improve resource efficiency and limit pollution in the region's lakes and rivers, including through measures such as extended producer responsibility systems, waste recovery modernization and industrial reuse and recycling initiatives.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- The Cities Initiative supports the adoption or modernization of Recycling Refund (Deposit Return) programs across the region, consistent with best practices demonstrated in other jurisdictions around the world, as a critical tool to advance circular economy outcomes, improve material recovery and reduce waste leakage into freshwater systems.
- The Cities Initiative encourages Canadian governments to align deposit-return systems with broader circular economy strategies, including extended producer responsibility frameworks, waste reduction targets and efforts to modernize and harmonize recycling systems across jurisdictions.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT copies of this resolution will be distributed to: the Canadian Minister of Internal Trade and One Canadian Economy, Dominic LeBlanc; the Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Julie Dabrusin; the Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Victor Fedeli; the Ontario Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Todd McCarthy; the Quebec Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy, Bernard Drainville and the Quebec Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, Pascale Déry.