

Date of Hearing: January 12, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 333 (Alanis) – As Amended January 5, 2025

SUBJECT: Recycling: glass beverage containers: market development payments

SUMMARY: Authorizes the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to allocate up to \$20 million annually for market development payments for noncontainer glass end users.

EXISTING LAW establishes the Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act (Bottle Bill), which:

- 1) Requires beverage containers, as defined, sold in-state to have a California redemption value (CRV) of 5 cents for containers that hold fewer than 24 ounces and 10 cents for containers that hold 24 ounces or more. Requires beverage distributors to pay a redemption payment to CalRecycle for every beverage container sold in the state. Provides that these funds are continuously appropriated to CalRecycle for, among other things, the payment of refund values and processing payments. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 14500 *et seq.*)
- 2) Defines “beverage” as:
 - a) Beer and other malt beverages;
 - b) Wine and distilled spirit coolers;
 - c) Carbonated water;
 - d) Noncarbonated water;
 - e) Carbonated soft drinks;
 - f) Noncarbonated soft drinks and sports drinks;
 - g) Noncarbonated fruit juice drinks that contain any percentage of fruit juice;
 - h) Coffee and tea drinks;
 - i) Carbonated fruit drinks;
 - j) Vegetable juice;
 - k) Wine and sparkling wine; and,
 - l) Distilled spirits. (PRC 14505)
- 3) Defines “beverage container” as the individual, separate bottle, can, jar, carton, or other receptacle in which a beverage is sold, and which is constructed of metal, glass, plastic, or any other material, or any combination of these materials. Specifies that “beverage container” does not include cups or other similar open or loosely sealed receptacles. (PRC 14505)
- 4) Authorizes CalRecycle to pay a market development payment to glass beverage container manufacturers who purchases recycled glass collected within the state for use in manufacturing new beverage containers in the state to develop markets for glass beverage containers. Specifies that the recycled glass must be collected, washed, processed, and used for manufacturing in the state. (PRC 14549.7)

- 5) Limits the glass market development payments to not more than \$150 per ton, and requires CalRecycle to consider the following when establishing the payments:
 - a) The minimum funding level needed to encourage in-state washing and processing of empty glass beverage containers collected for recycling in the state;
 - b) The minimum funding level needed to encourage in-state manufacturing that utilizes empty glass beverage containers collected for recycling in the state; and,
 - c) The total amount of funds projected to be available for glass market development payments, and the desire to maintain the minimum funding level throughout the year. (PRC 14549.7)
- 6) Authorizes CalRecycle to allocate up to \$60 million annually for glass market development payments through 2028. (PRC 14581(a)(13)(A))
- 7) Authorizes CalRecycle to allocate up to \$20 million annually for glass market development payments in years 2029-2030. (PRC 14581(a)(13)(B))

THIS BILL:

- 1) Defines “noncontainer glass product” as a product that was manufactured, in whole or in part, using empty glass beverage containers that are not accepted for the manufacturing of new glass beverage containers and would otherwise be sent to landfill.
- 2) Defines “noncontainer glass end user” as a person who purchases a noncontainer glass product.
- 3) Requires CalRecycle to pay a market development payment to a noncontainer glass end user for the purchase of noncontainer glass product within the state.
- 4) Requires CalRecycle to determine the amount of the market development payment, not to exceed \$50 per ton. When determining the amount, authorizes CalRecycle to consider:
 - a) The minimum funding level needed to encourage in-state manufacturing of noncontainer glass products in the state;
 - b) The minimum funding level needed to encourage the purchase of a noncontainer glass product; and,
 - c) The total amount of funds projected to be available for market development payments and the desire to maintain the funding level needed throughout the year.
- 5) Authorizes CalRecycle to allocate up to \$20 million annually for market development payments for noncontainer glass end users.
- 6) Makes legislative findings regarding the use of glass pozzolan, a supplementary cementitious material (SCM) serving as an alternative to Portland cement, and glass recycling.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bottle Bill.** The Bottle Bill was established in 1986 to be a self-funded program that encourages consumers to recycle beverage containers and to prevent littering. The program accomplishes this goal by requiring consumers to pay a deposit for each eligible container purchased. Then the program guarantees consumers repayment of that deposit, the CRV, for each eligible container returned to a certified recycler. Statute includes two main goals for the program: (1) reducing litter; and, (2) achieving a recycling rate of 80% for eligible containers. Containers recycled through the Bottle Bill's certified recycling centers also provides a consistent, clean, uncontaminated stream of recycled materials with minimal processing.
- 2) **Eligible beverage containers.** Only certain containers containing certain beverages are part of the CRV program. Most containers made from glass, plastic, aluminum, and bimetal (consisting of one or more metals) are included. Containers for wine, spirits, milk, fruit juices over 46 ounces, vegetable juice over 16 ounces, and soy drinks have historically been excluded from the program. Container types that are cartons, pouches, and any container that holds 64 ounces or more have also historically been exempted. SB 1013 (Atkins), Chapter 610, Statutes of 2022, amended the program to include wine and distilled spirits, including those contained in boxes, bladders, pouches, or similar containers, beginning January 1, 2024. SB 353 (Dodd), Chapter 868, Statutes of 2023, further expands the program to include large juice containers beginning January 1, 2026.
- 3) **Ways to redeem containers.** Consumers have four potential options to redeem their empty beverage containers:
 - Return the container to a “convenience zone” recycling center located within ½-mile radius of a supermarket. These are generally small centers that only accept beverage containers and receive handling fees from the Beverage Container Recycling Fund (BCRF). During fiscal year (FY) 2019-20, convenience zone recyclers redeemed about 30% of beverage containers.
 - Return to a dealer that accepts them. In convenience zones without a convenience zone recycler, beverage dealers, primarily supermarkets, are required to either accept containers for redemption or pay CalRecycle an “in lieu” fee of \$100 per day. Few stores accept beverage containers for redemption.
 - Return the container to an “old line” recycling center, which refers to a recycler that does not receive handling fees and usually accepts large quantities of materials, frequently by truckload from municipal or commercial waste collection services. Traditional recyclers collect a little more than half of all CRV containers (58%).
 - Consumers can also forfeit their CRV and “donate” their containers to residential curbside recycling collection. In the 2019-20 FY, curbside programs collected about 12% of CRV containers. Curbside programs keep the CRV on these containers.
- 4) **Funding.** By adding new container types to the Bottle Bill, SB 1013 and SB 353 increased revenues in the BCRF due to an increase in unredeemed CRV funds. In order to incentivize recycling increased glass containers from the addition of wine and distilled spirits, SB 1013

authorized \$60 million annually from the BCRF for glass market development payments until January 1, 2028.

According to CalRecycle, it awarded only \$8.8 million in FY 2023-24. The department indicates that it projects to award \$11 million in payments in FY 2024-25 and \$50.5 million in FY 2025-26. According to the most recent report on the status of the BCRF, which was released last October and covers January through June 2024, the fund is operating at a modest surplus. However, as recycling rates for containers that were recently added, such as wine bottles, rise, the fund status may change. Prior Bottle Bill expansions have tended to result in increased revenues initially, and increased expenditures for CRV deposits further out as recycling rates increase.

The Bottle Bill also establishes glass processing incentive grants for expanding glass cullet processing in the state, as specified; \$4 million is available annually for this grant program. Another \$4 million is available annually for grants to increase the recycling of empty glass beverage containers from restaurants and on-site retail establishments. An additional \$1 million is available annually for grants to fund transportation costs for glass beverage containers.

- 5) **Pozzolan.** Ground glass pozzolan is an SCM that can replace up to 50% of Portland cement in the production of concrete. According to a life cycle analysis completed by the sponsor of this bill, ground glass pozzolan can reduce carbon emissions by approximately 95% per ton compared to conventional Portland cement.
- 6) **According to the author:**

AB 333 will help address California's environmental and recycling goals by diverting glass from the landfill to serve a beneficial purpose for many industries. This bill maximizes diversion, increases recovery, and optimizes the usage of recycled glass sourced from within California, aligning with SB 1013's goal of promoting in-state recycling and processing. As it relates to the end use for concrete, and cement AB 333 is of critical importance. California passed AB 2442 (Holden, 2022) and SB 596 (Becker, 2021), both with the support of the cement and concrete industries, which require significant decarbonization efforts. This bill will assist these industries by providing another tool in those efforts.

- 7) **Glass disposal and recycling.** CalRecycle's most recent comprehensive waste characterization study was conducted in 2021, and found that glass makes up approximately 2.3% of California's waste stream. According to *What's in California's Landfills: Measuring Single-Use Packaging and Plastic Food Service Ware Disposal (2025)*, approximately 154,000 tons of glass bottles and jars are disposed in California's landfills, making up 0.39% of California's waste stream.

According to Californians Against Waste, the amount of glass collected for recycling in California is approximately 750,000 tons annually. Approximately 35 tons are non-glass residuals, leaving around 715,000 available for recycling. Of that, about 533,000 tons are recycled in state and an additional amount is exported to Mexico for recycling, leaving somewhere in the neighborhood of 100,000 tons left for possible recycling into pozzolan.

In recent years, California has moved toward funding circular recycling to support the development of a circular economy. For example, the state limited the glass market development payments to bottle-to-bottle recycling in 2022. This bill would provide funding for “downcycling,” or recycling materials into products that won’t continue to be recycled in the future. However, the author’s office notes that this bill is limited to noncontainer glass that would otherwise be landfilled.

- 8) **This bill.** This bill awards up to \$50 per ton for noncontainer glass, as defined by the bill, recycling in the state, up to \$20 million annually. Since only approximately 100,000 tons of noncontainer glass are likely available for this purpose, \$20 million is excessive. Moreover, it is not clear what percentage of noncontainer glass would be from beverage containers (which generate CRV revenues) or from other glass sources in the recycling stream (which don’t), making it difficult to determine how much money from the BCRF, if any, is appropriate for market development payments using that fund source. A significant portion of glass that is collected for recycling is from packaging subject to the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act, which establishes a producer responsibility program for packaging. If pozzolan made from recycled glass is a viable use for this material, the bill’s sponsor may wish to work with the program’s producer responsibility organization to encourage investments from producers in this technology.

9) **Suggested amendments:**

- In order to ensure that adequate funding remains for programs that promote circular recycling, and given the amount of noncontainer glass available for pozzolan in the state’s recycling system, the *committee may wish to amend the bill* to reduce the appropriation from \$20 million to \$5 million and the amount of the market development payment from up to \$50/ton to up to \$30/ton and sunset this provision in 2030.
- In order to offset transportation costs for noncontainer glass product, the committee may wish to amend the bill to authorize up to \$1 million annually to be spent on transportation costs through 2030.
- Since noncontainer glass generally contains a significant quantity of non-glass contaminants (i.e., labels, lids, etc.), the *committee may wish to amend the bill* to specify that the incentive is available on the glass portion of the material.
- In order to clarify what the market development payments are used for, *the committee may wish to amend the bill* to replace the definition of “noncontainer glass product” with a definition of “waste glass product” that specifies that the glass cannot be used in the production of beverage containers or fiberglass and would otherwise be sent to landfill.
- Make related technical and clarifying changes.

10) **Prior legislation:**

AB 899 (Ransom), Chapter 627, Statutes of 2025, raised the cap on glass market development payments from \$50 to \$150 per ton and authorized CalRecycle to expend up to \$20 million annually for the payments through 2030. This bill also expanded the focus of these payments from glass wine bottles to all glass beverage containers and authorized CalRecycle to set different limits.

SB 1013 (Atkins), Chapter 610, Statutes of 2022, among other things, added wine and distilled spirits to the Bottle Bill. This bill established various small grant programs to incentivize the recycling of beverage container glass in the state and clarified that glass quality incentive payments may be awarded for glass beverage containers that meet specified criteria. This bill also established a glass market development payment of up to \$50 per ton for glass beverage container manufacturers who purchase recycled glass collected within the state for use in the manufacture of new beverage containers and appropriated up to \$60 million annually for this program through 2028.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

Aggreplex (sponsor)
Holliday Rock Company, Inc.
Mitsubishi Cement Corporation

Opposition

Californians Against Waste
Glass Packaging Institute
Republic Services

Analysis Prepared by: Elizabeth MacMillan / NAT. RES. /