

ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY

RESOLUTION NO. 2505

RE: Resolution Urging New York State Legislature to Increase Recycling and Reduce Municipal Waste Management Costs by Expanding the NYS Returnable Container Act

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (the "Agency") is engaged in Solid Waste Management and Recycling in Ulster County, and

WHEREAS, empty wine, spirit and beverage glass containers comprise an estimated 90,000 tons of curbside recyclables statewide, and

WHEREAS, such empty glass bottles are not economically viable to recycle as part of curbside recycling programs throughout New York State because the bottle break and become contaminated with paper, plastic, and other non-glass materials at local recycling recovery and sorting facilities, and

WHEREAS, there are no economically viable markets to recycle this contaminated, broken glass material into new glass bottles, and, therefore, the unwanted glass becomes a significant financial burden to New York State's local communities to sort, transport, and properly dispose of, which totals millions of dollars statewide, and

WHEREAS, such broken glass ends up contaminating other recyclable materials such as paper and corrugated cardboard at local material recovery facilities, thereby diminishing the value and marketability of recovered paper products, and

WHEREAS, significant environmental benefits would be realized, including the avoidance of one ton of carbon dioxide for every six tons of container glass recycled if breaking and contaminating this glass could be prevented, and

WHEREAS, if this glass could be recovered for recycling it could be endlessly reprocessed into new glass containers with no loss in quality or purity, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Returnable Container Act, also known as the Bottle Bill, has proven to be the most effective method to reduce litter and increase the recovery and recycling of various glass beverage containers, including glass beer and soda bottles, and

WHEREAS, glass beverage containers with a deposit, such as beer and soda, have an economically viable market because they are source separated, and

WHEREAS, several other states recognize the environmental and economic benefits of including wine, spirit, and other glass beverage containers in their respective Bottle Bill systems, including California, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine and Vermont, and

WHEREAS, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency believes that expansion of the New York State Returnable Container Act to include wine, liquor and other glass beverage bottles will dramatically increase recycling of these other glass containers, create new recycling jobs for clean, uncontaminated glass and reduce municipal costs to manage these materials as part of the municipal curbside recycling collection programs, and

WHEREAS, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency is committed to the New York State solid waste management hierarchy which emphasizes waste reduction, reuse and recycling first, all of which would be served by expanding the bottle deposit system to include these additional glass containers thereby creating more recycling of these containers and fewer trashed, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency does hereby strongly urge the New York State Legislature to expand the Bottle Bill as outlined above to include wine, liquor and other glass drink containers as a means to reduce litter, increase recycling, create new recycling jobs, as well as reduce the significant financial burden such containers place on local municipalities as part of curbside recycling collection program, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be distributed to the appropriate state elected officials and shall take effect immediately.

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

Vote: Ayes _____

Nays _____

Absent _____

Date: June 2, 2020