Dear Governor Ferguson and Legislators,

Thank you for your leadership in advancing Washington's environmental priorities, exemplified by your support of the Recycling Reform Act. This landmark achievement underscores the state's commitment to producer responsibility and a modernized recycling system.

We are writing to express our strong support for the proposed Recycling Refund program (HB 1607/SB 5502) AKA the "Bottle Bill" - a common-sense, proven solution to continue tackling Washington's growing recycling and litter crisis.

In Washington, only about 30% of beverage containers - plastic, aluminum, and glass - are currently recycled. That means millions of bottles and cans end up as litter and ultimately, most of them enter our waterways impacting our wildlife. From a recent study by the WA State Department of Ecology, more than 26 million pounds of litter accumulate annually along Washington's roads. Beverage containers account for three of the top five types of litter collected along Washington's coasts each year.

The good news is that we already know what works. The proposed Recycling Refund program would place a 10-cent refundable deposit on beverage containers. When people return these containers for recycling or reuse, they get their deposit back. Drop-off locations would be conveniently available across the state - including easy, immediate refund centers - and the program would be funded by beverage companies, not taxpayers. Ten states and many Canadian provinces have bottle laws in place, with improved recycling rates and reduced litter rates (by more than 80%), keeping containers off roads and out of waterways while saving millions in cleanup costs.

This is a policy that enjoys broad bipartisan and statewide support. New polling shows that 67% of Washingtonians support the idea, and that support grows to 75% once people are given more information about how it works.

We urge you to support the Recycling Refund bill. This is one of four EPC priorities and something positive we can do in an otherwise tough legislative session.

Sincerely,

The WA Environmental Priorities Coalition and additional organizations:

350 WA
American Rivers
Audubon
Cascade Bicycle Club
Climate Solutions
Conservation Northwest
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Eastside Litter Busters
Environment Washington
Friends of the San Juans
Fuse
Futurewise
Heart of America Northwest
The Lands Council
League of Women Voters
Methow Valley Citizens Council
NRDC Action Fund
NW Energy Coalition
Ocean Conservancy
Orca Network
Puget Soundkeeper
RE Sources
Seattle Aquarium
Sierra Club
Sound Action
Spokane Zero Waste
Surfrider Foundation
Sustainable Bainbridge
The Nature Conservancy
The Story of Stuff Project
Toxic Free Future
Transportation Choices
Upstream
Washington Conservation Action
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
World Wildlife Fund
Zero Waste Washington