

# Comprehensive, Cost Effective Recycling

- In the past 30 years the United States has made great strides in finding ways to recycle waste. Yet waste generation continues to rise.
- Bottle bills are less effective than comprehensive recycling programs and more costly to consumers. Creating and maintaining the infrastructure for handling the very small portion of our municipal solid waste stream represented by beverage containers is expensive. These costs of operation are passed on to consumers — levying a hidden tax.
- It costs four times more per ton to recycle under a traditional deposit program than through comprehensive curbside and drop-off recycling programs. It can cost 10 times more per ton to recycle non-carbonated containers through a deposit system than through comprehensive recycling programs.
- Michigan's recycling rate is 20 percent. The Great Lakes states average is 26 percent. The national average is more than 30 percent.
- Traditional bottle bills like Michigan's address only 3.1 percent of municipal solid waste. Adding non-carbonated beverage containers to Michigan's bottle bill will increase recycling by another 0.7 percent at most — at a cost of \$60 million per year to consumers.
- Comprehensive recycling programs typically address about 33 percent of municipal solid waste, and thus can facilitate meaningful improvements in Michigan's recycling rate. The convenience of curbside recycling means consumers can set recyclables out at the curb, rather than having to lug them to a store.
- Expanding the deposit law to include non-carbonated beverages will force recycling of less than 1 percent of municipal solid waste. Comprehensive recycling programs can accomplish up to 10 times more recycling for the same cost.

## Recycling Rate Averages

