

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL HOTLIST: FEBRUARY 12, 2026



House HOT LIST

At various times during Legislative Session, the Environmental Priorities Coalition sends out a “Special Supplemental Hot List” on an issue of immense importance and urgent timing. This is one of those moments. Please read below and thank you for all that you do for the environment.

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House Floor Action

HB 1607: Concerning recycling and waste reduction.

1. Washingtonians are sick of all the litter by our roads and in our open spaces. A recent study by Ecology found that 42 pounds of beverage containers are littered per mile along our highways. Beverage container litter accounts for 3 of the top 5 types of litter collected along Washington’s waterways. Ultimately, most of these bottles and cans enter our waterways, impacting wildlife like salmon, orcas and coastal birds.
2. HB1607 will reduce waste and increasing recycling rates specifically for beverage containers by creating a refund program. Currently, we only recycle 30% of beverage containers in WA. That means a larger number of bottles and cans are ending up in our landfills or as litter.
3. Bottle bills in other states have been shown to drive up recycling rates for beverage containers north of 90% and reduce beverage container litter by 80%.
4. The bill recognizes small producers, like craft breweries, may have a harder time participating in the program, so there’s a de minimis exemption for entities below \$5m in annual gross revenue. This is the same treatment we offer them under packaging EPR.
5. People will be able to return their bottles and cans, individually or in bags, for immediate refunds or through an online account at convenient locations near them. People will be able to designate funds in their online account to their child or grandchild’s college account. And nonprofits, including school PTAs, service groups, food banks and others can give out special bags and



SUPPORT

Possible Floor Vote

people can have their refunds go to them. In Oregon, thousands of nonprofits use this as very successful fundraisers.

6. The convenience standard for collection locations will be determined by an Equity, Accessibility, and Community Perspectives Recycling Refund Model Study conducted by Ecology.
7. In Oregon, under their bottle program, major grocers provide a 20% bonus when people spend their refunds at their stores, so for example, \$2.00 becomes \$2.40.
8. Under the bill, the recycling refund system would start January 1, 2030, leaving a long implementation timeline so that infrastructure can be built and all of the program components can be put into place. Payments to the state, to cover their oversight and other costs, would start May 1, 2027.
9. **The fiscal note is a positive for the state, with the program bringing in new B&O tax revenue and other revenue which directly offsets costs, so the passage of this bill now is unusually timely.**
10. Passing HB1607 now will allow for the program to be developed alongside the Recycling Reform Act (passed in 2025). They work together. Ecology's study showed that a bottle and can recycling refund program combined with the 2025 Recycling Refund Act would increase our current residential recycling rate from 40% to 70% by 2032.

Please vote yes on HB 1607 when it comes up for a vote this week.
Thank you for all that you do on behalf of the environment.

