The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600, Australia

To all Federal Members of Parliament in the Senate

The Greens Bill in the Senate put forward by Senator Scott Ludlam for a 10c deposit on every drink container in the country is a very worthy initiative, and we enthusiastically support it. A deposit scheme has worked well in South Australia for many years. This is the best solution for drink container litter and a thriving recycling and reuse industry.

We are conservation volunteers in Melbourne and frequently see the problems that drink container litter causes:

* abandoned drink containers are a visual blight on our landscape and in our waterways
* drink containers block drains, litter filters, waterways and inlets
* drink containers break down extremely slowly or not at all in the environment, leading to an accumulation of containers on land and in waterways
* drink containers contribute enormously to the volume of landfill
* terrestrial and marine animals become trapped in drink containers
* wasps, ants, flies and pest insects breed in drink containers
* the contents of drink containers pollute soil and water
* the task of clearing drink container litter is an unnecessary nuisance and cost to councils, agencies, business and the general public
* litter begets more litter - it's human nature to abandon litter if others do.

Changing behaviour is difficult but it can be encouraged. Anti-litter campaigns need to be stepped up and stiffer litter fines introduced. All school children could be educated about the problems that abandoned drink container litter causes, about the value of recycling and reuse, and be encouraged to pick up their own litter and that of others. Children will then educate their parents and others in the community. A 10c deposit will provide an incentive to return containers and collectors will be gainfully occupied.

We thank the Senate for this Inquiry. Please, please do pass this essential legislation for a national 10c deposit on every drink container - just imagine our landscapes without drink container litter - what a wonderful thing to see, and what angst, cost, labour and raw materials would be saved!

Good wishes, Dr Brian and Nina Earl