

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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Commissioner

June 18, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Mr. Robert Mellion, Esq
Executive Director
Massachusetts Package Store Association
30 Lyman Street - Suite #2
Westborough, MA 01581

Dear Mr. Mellion:

Thank you for your letter of May 28, 2020. MassDEP recognizes that these are challenging times and moreover, that many aspects of daily life have been impacted by COVID-19 and the need to limit its transmission. We acknowledge that your members and other essential businesses are operating while instituting numerous measures for maintaining a safe environment for both workers and customers.

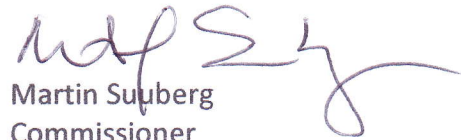
As you know on May 29, 2020, MassDEP announced plans for the resumption of redemption obligations for retailers. In your letter, you articulated concerns about these plans and specifically, about potential exposure to COVID-19 in the course of carrying out collection of beverage containers. Ensuring the safety of essential workers and the public is of the highest priority. Implementing these critical measures at all times -- in particular, frequent hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizers and the wearing of gloves and masks -- will help mitigate any potential risks. To that end, I would draw your attention to the [Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development's Guidance Regarding the Operation of Essential Services](#) and [Reopening: Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces](#). Along with these procedures, MassDEP has suggested some [additional guidance pertaining to redemption](#) that I hope you will find to be helpful.

The resumption of retailer redemption services is designed as a phased approach, to help ensure an orderly transition and in consideration of the health and safety needs of all stakeholders. As you know, Reverse Vending Machine operations resumed as of June 5, 2020 for and over-the-counter redemption will be fully online as of June 19, 2020. All retailers are to resume redemption obligations of accepting the same size, type and brand of deposit beverages that they sell.

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We appreciate the efforts put forth by your members and all essential businesses during this time. If you have additional questions, please contact Deputy Division Director Greg Cooper at greg.cooper@mass.gov or 617-292-5988.

Sincerely,



Martin Supberg
Commissioner