**No Room for Compromise**

Under Initiative and Referendum, voters must accept or reject a proposal as written. The healthy give and take of the legislative process often produces consensus and a better bill, but Initiative and Referendum eliminates these opportunities.

**Money Talks**

If you think big dollars drive elections, the power of the purse is multiplied in Initiative campaigns. The initial signatures required in this process are often gathered by people paid by special interests, not volunteers. The slickest thirty-second ads, direct mail and the scariest slogans often carry the day.

**Battle of the Special Interests**

Initiatives are often proposed by special interest groups to pass laws which previously have been rejected by the legislature. Other interested parties then get involved, often acting out of concern for their own profits. No one speaks for the average citizen, who often ends up footing the campaign bill through higher prices and poorly considered public policy.

**Lack of Accountability**

Unlike legislators or a governor, the campaigns which support or oppose Initiatives do not have to face the voters in a future election. They can say anything to the voters with no fear of reprisal. In other words, who is held accountable? No one. In Virginia, the General Assembly is accountable.

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*This material is brought to you by the following litter tax-paying businesses and their representatives:*

7-Eleven, Inc.
American Beverage Association
Ball Corporation
Giant Food LLC
Glass Packaging Institute
Kroger
MillerCoors
Minit Mart
Owens-Illinois
Safeway, Inc.
Stop-In Food Stores, Inc.
Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association, Inc.
Virginia Beverage Association
Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association, Inc.
Virginia Petroleum, Convenience and Grocery Association, Inc.
Virginia Retail Federation
Virginia Retail Merchants Association
Virginia’s business community has consistently opposed bottle bills (container taxes) when these bills have been considered by the General Assembly. Why? Because we know there’s a better way to reduce litter and encourage recycling: by creating an environment where personal responsibility, not government-mandated schemes, helps keep Virginia clean.

- Over thirty years ago, we worked with legislators to fashion Virginia’s unique community-based litter control laws.
- The hallmark of these statutes was the creation of dedicated litter/recycling taxes willingly paid by beer distributors, soft drink distributors and retailers. Since 1981, for example, more than $48 million has been provided to help Virginia localities fight litter and manage recycling. In FY 2010, more than $1.5 million in litter/recycling taxes were sent “back home” for these programs.
- In 1995, the General Assembly worked with business to create the Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board comprised of representatives of each of the litter/recycling tax-paying entities, as well as a local program manager and a representative of the general public. The Board works closely with DEQ to establish policies for the effective use of litter/recycling tax revenues.
- In 2006, business and the General Assembly collaborated on statutory changes that: required that 90% of annual litter/recycling tax collections be returned to Virginia localities for their own litter control and recycling programs; earmarked 5% of these taxes for special projects to enhance local programs; and stipulated that up to 5% of these funds may be used by the Department of Environmental Quality for actual administrative support of these efforts.
- At the 2009 General Assembly, the business community renewed its commitment to local programs by supporting legislation redirecting to Virginia localities the 5% of litter/recycling taxes formerly earmarked for special projects. This means that local program managers decide the best use for 95% of all litter/recycling taxes collected in the Commonwealth.

Return on Investment – Almost 1,200%
Total grant dollars to Virginia localities from litter/recycling tax collections: $1,514,879. Local dollars plus in-kind matching contributions: $11,061,966. Local volunteer hours worked (at $20.93/hour): $7,387,390. Return on investment from annual litter/recycling tax collections: almost 1,200%.

Staff – 747
Most local programs have at least one full- or part-time employee who is typically assisted by volunteers. In FY 2010, the 747 local program employees (full- and part-time) worked more than 553,439 hours in litter control, education and recycling activities.

Value of Volunteer Hours – $7,387,390
Volunteers play a critical role in the success of Virginia’s litter control and recycling programs. These volunteers contributed more than 352,957 hours of service in FY 2010, a contribution of almost $7.4 million toward the success of local litter and recycling efforts.

Clean-Up Events Held in FY 2010 – 7,877
Local programs sponsor a wide variety of clean-up programs where volunteers donate their energies to clean areas where litter is present or where illegal dumping has occurred. In FY 2010, almost 74,000 volunteers participated in 7,877 clean-ups, which yielded more than 30,509 cubic yards of litter.

Ecology Clubs – 148 Across Virginia
More than 4,000 young people across the Commonwealth participate in nearly 148 Ecology Clubs.