

NO ON QUESTION 2

STOP FORCED DEPOSITS

Project Information

Ballot Measure Campaign

Campaign Coverage

Massachusetts

Results

Win 73.5

No on Question 2: Stop Forced Deposits

In December 2013, the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group (MASSPIRG) submitted nearly 100,000 signatures to the Massachusetts Legislature in support of an expanded bottle bill. When the legislature failed to pass the measure, MASSPIRG began collecting additional signatures to qualify the measure for the ballot. The initiative, Question 2, would have broadened the Commonwealth's existing \$0.05 beverage container deposit law to include nonalcoholic beverages like sports drinks, bottled water, and juice.

For bottlers and the beverage industry, the adoption of this law would have added an additional \$0.60 to the price of 12-packs and an additional \$1.20 to 24-packs. For grocers, the overhaul meant more redemption machines and finding storage space for additional returnables. All together, the expanded law would have cost an estimated \$68 million a year while increasing recycling rates by a meager 0.13 percent.

With initial polling placing public approval for an expanded bottle bill at a staggering 72 percent, the American Beverage Association and Massachusetts Food Association needed to act fast to reverse public opinion on the issue before Election Day. That's where Gunster Strategies came in.

We began by identifying messages that could convince voters that the bottle bill was ill-equipped to increase recycling rates. We also commissioned an economic impact study, arming us with information about how much Question 2 would cost Massachusetts and the impact it would have on Commonwealth recycling rates.

In a campaign that spanned less than ten months, we defeated Question 2 handily with 73.5 percent NO to 26.5 percent YES. In fact, more people voted "NO" on Question 2 than voted for or against any other person or issue on the ballot.