



Shaun A. Suhoski, *Town Manager*
Email: ssuhoski@townofathol.org

Bridget A. Sullivan, *Administrative Asst.*
Email: selectmen@townofathol.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Nipping Nips
DT: February 19, 2019

Dear Board:

I've been thinking about the prevalence of nip bottles on our streets for some time. Before "Joe Potato" passed away we had a cordial talk about the bylaw banning single-use plastic bags which then veered into a discussion about the prevalence of plastic litter (predominantly "nips" and plastic water bottles) throughout the community and region.

We brainstormed a couple of ideas including whether the state could add these bottles to the bottle deposit law, and/or whether Athol's town government could create a local program to help control the burgeoning population of discarded Fireball and other nips in the community. I've also heard members of your Board talk about this issue and I'd like the Town to take some action.

Therefore, tonight I'm requesting the Board's policy direction on whether to support legislation to include nips and plastic water bottles in the state's Beverage Container Recovery Law (the "Bottle Bill").

Recently I've read about a couple north shore communities (Salem, Gloucester) where elected leaders have voted to support adding nip bottles (and potentially plastic water bottles) to the state's bottle deposit law. House Bill 3528 would amend the law to include nips up to 100 milliliters in the law. See quick summary from change.org:

State House Representative Randy Hunt of Sandwich has filed a Bill (House Bill H3528) that would add a 5-cent deposit on the sale of "nips." The Bill will give consumers an incentive to return empty nip bottles for the 5 cent deposit, rather than toss them onto the streets.

The Bill defines a nip as "any sealable bottle, can, jar or carton which is primarily composed of glass, metal, plastic or any combination of those materials that has a capacity of not more than 100 milliliters and is produced for the purpose of containing an alcoholic beverage."

Note that in the last session H3528 was referred favorably from committee in the prior legislative session but did not get acted upon before the session closed. State Rep. Susannah Whipps is a co-sponsor of the legislation which has been re-filed for the current term. Obviously, there are logistics to work through on a larger scale involving liquor distributors and retailers, but getting the conversation going may help prod action. Thank you for your consideration and thoughtful guidance.
