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MEDIA RELEASE

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Container deposit law passes – but we can do better

The Boomerang Alliance of 44 groups today said the Baird government's signature environment protection policy – the container deposits scheme (CDS) – risks failing consumers on day 1, because the legislation did not establish sufficient convenient sites to collect drink containers and give refunds.

“While the government rejected commonsense amendments to the Bill, it still has a chance to make some improvements via the ensuing regulation and performance targets,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Boomerang Alliance.

“It's been obvious for some time that retail groups such as Woolworths have taken on the mantle of Coca Cola as the prime opponent of the best practice scheme promised by Premier Baird. These retailers are avoiding their part in the litter problem and have lobbied the government hard.”

“Our allies will be developing a campaign to target Woolworths and explain why Woollies is a big problem to their consumers. NSW, its environment and consumers can't afford to be saddled with a poor container deposit scheme.”

“While it is significant that NSW has a CDS law and that other states are soon to follow ushering in a new era of litter control and recycling – the absence of consumer-convenient collection points will blunt its environmental benefits. If a consumer can't find a convenient place to return their drink bottle or can – then they will revert to old habits. It's tremendously important that the scheme starts off

with maximum public confidence,” Mr Angel said.

“Our analysis of the best overseas CDS shows that retail/shopping centre locations for reverse vending machines delivers the best return rates and are the most cost effective. These schemes include a retail obligation to be linked to a collection point such as the carpark, shopping centre, adjacent pedestrian mall or even instore. The handling fee covers all costs,” Mr Angel said.

“We will continue to propose solutions to government.”