

Cans Can Change

Many of Hawaii's residents are either in school, or send someone to school. When the government decides that money is tight, the axe often falls on public school funding. That's the reason why teachers have to buy materials out of pocket. It is the reason why school computers look like they came from the cold war. It is the cause for the continual shrinkage of food that should be reclassified as bio hazardous waste, and the reason that the bathrooms look like the last occupant was Armageddon. The crumbling public school facilities across Hawaii cause students to abhor going everyday. In short, the problem is what happens as a result of a lack of money going to schools.

Canned beverages "can" help. We often toss them into the trash without a second thought. Each can thrown away is five cents that's lost. In Hawaii, cans cost five cents more, which can be redeemed by turning them in to a company like HI-5. To many, having to drive to a far away collection site is the antonym of convenience. So we toss those cans, and with it, money that can go elsewhere.

In the 2008, not many people recycled. They had to collect recyclables themselves and take those items to a collection point, which was not convenient. Sounds familiar right? Hawaii found a way to fix that, and it was pretty simple: curbside bins, blue for recyclables, green for organic wastes. People just throw the respective items into the correct bin and trucks take it out. If this was done for cans, more people would recycle. But, you might ask, how would convenience help public schooling?

It's simple. Five cents a can goes to public schools funding directly. Five cents a can per person going to public schools might not seem like much, but the cash adds up. Twenty people only have to drink one canned beverage to donate a dollar. Drinking one can in a week is preposterous, when taking into account that many drink three or more canned drinks a day. If twenty people drink at least three cans a day, by the end of the week a total of four hundred and twenty cans will be collected. At five cents a can, this equates to twenty dollars towards public school. In a year of about fifty three weeks, twenty two thousand two hundred sixty cans will be used, and the cash total donated to schools by just twenty people in a year would be one thousand one hundred thirteen dollars. If just twenty people can do that, what would all of Hawaii do?

In the end, simply recycling can earn school money. We could recycle those cans that we often toss, and with it the five cents. We can save those pennies and improve our schools. It wouldn't take much more effort than tossing cans into a bin, and having it picked up. The solution would hit two birds with one stone: recycling and school funds.