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AlterNet.org
77 Federal Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94107

Don Hazen
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Tara Lohan
Tara@altnet.org

Dear Mr. Hazen & Ms. Lohan,

I read with interest altnet.org's September 17, 2015, online article by Tara Lohan titled "[Why America's Deadly Love Affair with Bottled Water Has to Stop.](#)" I am writing because I believe we may share some common ground.

In this article, Ms. Lohan writes, "A [Harris poll](#) in 2010 found that 23 percent of respondents switched from bottled water to tap (the number was slightly higher during 2009 recession)." The link in this sentence takes us to a Harris Poll press release, which I believe is the real news Altnet.org should be reporting to its community: "[Fewer Americans Going Green.](#)"

The fact that fewer people are concerned about the environment is a real concern to manufacturers of bottled water. For many decades the industry has made significant progress in reducing its environmental footprint. Efficiencies in bottling, processing, and packaging have seen vast resource and water-use reductions. Bottled water currently uses the least energy and water compared to all other packaged beverages. Unlike some other beverages, virtually all bottled water packaging is 100 percent recyclable, and bottled water drinkers recycle more often than consumers of other products.

The fact that people are making the switch from sugary drinks to bottled water is a positive step – for people personally and for the overall public health of Americans.

However, there is new credible, published research that shows when you remove bottled water as a packaged beverage of choice, people will consume other packaged beverages at higher rates of consumption, and not necessarily turn to tap water. This study, published in the [American Journal of Public Health](#), found a bottled water ban caused per capita soda consumption to increase as well as an increase in garbage. (Incidentally, a 16.9 oz bottled water weighs 9.89 grams compared to 23.9 grams for a carbonated beverage bottle).

“Packaged drinks” are a modern day convenience, and as your article correctly points out, people are choosing bottled water instead of sugary drinks. Research shows that when bottled water isn’t available, people choose other packaged drinks, not necessarily tap water. And now we learn from the Harris Poll that people aren’t as concerned about protecting the environment as in the past. This is very concerning.

I believe the bottled water industry and environmentally concerned citizens like yourselves could work together to encourage people to understand why recycling is worthwhile and important for our planet. Perhaps there is an opportunity here?

Thank you for reading my letter and giving my thoughts your attention. I am happy to speak with you directly about this important story.

You can learn more about bottled water by visiting www.bottledwater.org.

Sincerely,

Chris Hogan
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