Incentives would increase outside scholarships

To the Editor:

I was deeply disturbed by Stewart Cobb's January 26th column on the impact of Massachusetts' new bottle bill. Mr. Cobb argues that the increased price of soda and other beverages, due to the cost of redeeming cans and bottles, would outweigh the benefits caused by the 10-cent deposit.

I have repeatedly heard Mr. Cobb's position of the magnitude of the benefit. On the other hand, I have been under the impression that the first interview results are suggestive. The long term benefits are not of the magnitude I had expected.

No doubt there is some inconvenience caused by the 10 cent price increase for canned and bottled beverages. But this inconvenience is not of the magnitude suggested. The long term benefits of using cans and bottles clearly outweigh the immediate difficulty of spending an extra dime and saving containers for future redemption.

Mr. Cobb further proposes that the new bill would lead to the influx of "Central Square bums" at MIT, "pawing through our trash" in search of unredeemed cans, valued at five cents space. This is hardly a realistic possibility. I doubt the Central Square poor would feel welcome given the attitudes suggested. The argument does finally raise my sympathy. If Mr. Cobb can only feel feel of contact with those who are so desperate that they must search through the trash for a mere five cents, then I pity his lack of human compassion. If he considers the MIT trash a potential source of "a good bit of money," then I worry about his knowledge of the world and the cost of living in this society. Indeed, if it were that the Central Square poor take the time and trouble to come to MIT, then I welcome them. At the very least, their presence might educate and sensitize Mr. Cobb to the quality of life for others who do not have the privilege of attending this esteemed institution.

J. Pohlan G.

Bottle bill's benefits outweigh its costs

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