



December 11, 2019

Mr. Thomas Feyer
Letters Editor
The New York Times Company
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018

Dear Mr. Feyer:

The New York Times' video op-ed "[The Great Recycling Con](#)" failed to mention aluminum and steel, which have an authentic recycling story. Can manufacturers use these infinitely recyclable materials to make steel food cans and aluminum beverage cans. Unlike the materials mentioned in the video, cans are accepted everywhere, and they are simple to recycle since the whole container is recyclable.

Cans have an authentic recycling story because cans are valuable and there is an existing circular system in the United States for cans. Recyclers want the aluminum and steel in cans because they are two of the most valuable materials in the recycling stream. For example, the aluminum beverage can industry's most recent [sustainability key performance indicator report](#) found that aluminum is worth \$1,317/ton; PET plastic is worth \$299/ton and glass is worth – (\$20)/ton. The can industry buys the materials and recycles them into new cans or other useful, recyclable products. That is why the average aluminum beverage can has 73 percent recycled content and the average steel food can has up to 35 percent recycled content. There is no need to wait for the economics to work or an invention. Cans are recycled at scale today; there is a 50 percent recycling rate for aluminum beverage cans and a 71 percent recycling rate for steel food cans.

Portraying the entire recycling system as a con ignores a product made of an infinitely recyclable material that *is* recycled in large volumes. We encourage *The New York Times* to please mention cans and its authentic recycling story in future recycling articles.

Sincerely,

Scott Breen
VP of Sustainability
Can Manufacturers Institute
1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW; Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-236-4677