

**Nancy J. Meyer
Chair
Prince George's County
Solid Waste Advisory Commission
c/o Kevin Roy Serrona
3500 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772**

Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair
Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Maryland Senate
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 1, 2024

Dear Senator Feldman and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (PGCSWAC) which was established "to provide community input, guidance and advice to the County Executive and County Council on matters relating to solid waste management in the County". The powers and duties of the PGCSWAC include providing review, recommendations, and impacts of various plans, reports, operations, budgets and impacts of County actions related to solid waste management and resource recovery. We also seek and support input from citizens, business and industries throughout the County.

PGCSWAC's powers and duties includes recommending local and state legislation necessary to accomplish effective solid waste management. The PGCSWAC is made up of concerned local citizens, advocates, and professionals in fields relating to solid waste management, resource recovery and environmental stewardship.

Our concern today is the critical necessity of passing and **implementing Senate Bill 0642, The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill** now which would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland.

Despite enormous local efforts in Prince George's County to address litter that is prolific on our roads, our parks, our waterways, and commercial areas, litter and its deleterious impacts, remains more than a persistent problem.

The ubiquitous presence of litter says a lot. And none of it is good. The material impact degrades our precious habitats, fouls our waterways, is ingested by birds and animals and creates unnecessary work that never realizes success. Its presence denigrates and depresses our communities, our business and our neighborhoods. And beverages are one of the biggest contributors to litter.

In one year alone, in Maryland, approximately 5.2 BILLION beverage containers are sold. And despite the widespread availability of curbside recycling, only 23% of these containers are recycled. And 2.6 billion of the 4 billion containers left are available to be disposed of in the trash, and unfortunately all around our communities.

Ten states already have passed legislation to incentive the return of Beverage containers to redemption centers and is being considered by several others. In those ten states, nine of those states boast the highest recycling rates in the country.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill would provide reverse vending machines for convenient redemption in order to achieve at least a 90% redemption rate. The program would be self-financing from fees paid by producers, revenue from material sales and penalties.

The benefits are many. There would be an enormous reduction in beverage container litter, a quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate, an increase in the quality of recycling material going to market, a reduction in greenhouse gas, savings for tax payers and local governments, and job creation. And of course, a much cleaner Prince George's County.

Please support the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill (SB 0642). We need to pass this bill now. Other states have demonstrated the success of this legislation and we need to follow suit this year.

Sincerely yours,



Nancy J. Meyer

CC: Honorable Eric Olson, Councilmember, District 3
Prince George's County Council
Kenneth Battle, Committee Chair
Transport, infrastructure, Energy and Environment
Prince George's County Council
Marilyn E. Naumann, Associate Director
Resource Recovery Division, Dept. of Environment
Barbara Sollner-Webb, Vice-Chair,
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Na'ilah Dawkins, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Charles L. Renninger, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
David C. Brosch, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Mouhaman S. Kola, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
William L. Walmsley, Jr, Commissioner
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