



Maryland PIRG



HB 841 Environment – Plastic Bottle Waste Reduction - Water Bottle Filling Stations and Reporting

Date: March 25, 2024

Position: Support

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee:

We enthusiastically support the goal of reducing plastic waste and encouraging use of reusable water bottles. According to the OECD, global **production of plastic is projected to triple by 2060**. One of the key drivers of the increase is packaging including single use plastic bottles.

Locally, in Maryland, at the Baltimore Waterfront Partnership's 2023 annual count of trash in "one" dumpster, **5430 plastic bottles** were found. The Trash Wheels can collect 16 dumpsters worth of trash during a single rainstorm. We have all noted the proliferation of plastic trash and bottles along our roadways. We must do

better.

HB 841 increases opportunities for Marylanders to save money and use a reusable water bottle. As we have seen at airports and schools, these water refill stations work. People use them. Let's make this the norm. HB 841 gets this policy option underway efficiently – adding the stations with public drinking water fountains in new construction.

HB841 also requires the State to determine how many single use plastic water bottles it uses. This data will inform options for the State to reduce its own reliance on single use plastics.

We commend and thank Delegate Ruth and co-sponsors for initiating this common sense and effective proposal.

Contact: Shari Wilson (shari@trashfreemaryland.org)

Alice Ferguson Foundation

Blue Water Baltimore

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Environmental Justice Ministry Team, Cedar Lane UU Congregation

Environment Maryland

Go Green OC Campaign

Little Falls Watershed Association

Maryland PIRG

Mr. Trash Wheel

National Aquarium

Plastic Free QAC

Trash Free Maryland

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore

Associate, Zero Waste USA