



[HB841](#) – Environment – Plastic Bottle Waste Reduction – Water Bottle Filling Stations and Reporting
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Hearing Date: March 26, 2024

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Ruth, Allen, Charkoudian, Fair, Guyton, Healey, Kaiser, Lehman, J. Long, Stewart, and Terrasa

Submitting Organization: Less Plastic Please by Liz Feighner

Position: Favorable

[Less Plastic Please](#) is a Howard County based grassroots organization representing more than 200 subscribers. We are also a partner of the [Zero Waste Team](#) of [Howard County Sierra Club](#) and a [Beyond Plastics](#) Affiliate. We are urging **your support of HB0841**, which requires water bottle filling stations to be installed in all new construction for which a drinking fountain is required beginning October 2024, and requires a survey of water bottle purchases by state agencies in 2024 and alternatives for providing drinking water.

Reducing the production of plastics and creating a zero-waste economy is one of our top concerns. Less Plastic Please spearheaded campaigns with several organizations in Howard County to advocate for reducing single-use plastics through two successful bills, [Plastic Bag Fee](#) and [Plastic Reduction Law](#). We also hosted a [webinar on the Story of Plastics in 2020](#). As we highlighted during the discussion, plastic pollution is an environmental justice and public health crisis: Fracking, plastics production, litter, and disposal in landfills and by incineration harm communities of color disproportionately. We believe that social justice, racial justice and environmental justice are all part of a single, globally connected Movement for Justice.

Water bottle filling stations along with water fountains make it much easier for citizens to reduce the amount of single use plastic beverage containers being used by providing easy drink access without having to purchase a beverage in a single use container. This bill provides a healthy and less expensive choice for citizens that they wouldn't as easily have without the bill.

This bill identifies the quantity of plastic water bottles purchased in a year by state agencies, and looks at alternatives to buying these bottles. Plastic water bottles are a large portion of the plastic beverage containers sold in Maryland, and in 2019, fewer than a quarter of all plastic beverage containers were actually recycled and made into new products, despite what the vast majority of consumers want or believe is happening when they drop their plastic into recycling bins. The rest is incinerated or transferred to landfills, or ends up as litter on the side of the road.

We urge a favorable report for HB0841.

Submitted for [Less Plastic Please](#)

by Liz Feighner

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