



**Testimony to the SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**SB 642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**

**POSITION: Support**

**By: Linda T. Kohn, President**

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Since the emergence of the environment movement in the 1970's, the League of Women Voters has advocated for policies that protect our planet and promote public health. The League believes in expanding reuse and recycling efforts, and is an active proponent of national beverage container deposit programs.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **supports SB 642**, which would establish the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, a beverage container deposit program to increase recycling and reduce litter pollution. Under this program, Marylanders would receive a 10-15 cent refund for each beverage container they return for recycling.

Recycling refund programs are proven to boost recycling rates and reduce litter. These programs also work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as they reduce the demand for virgin plastic production. Plastic products are made using fossil fuels - which have been established as a leading driver of the climate crisis. Maryland has established goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2031 and reach net-zero by 2045. **SB 642** would help the state achieve these goals by reducing our reliance on virgin plastic production.

**SB 642** would benefit the environment, and benefit all Marylanders. Expanding Maryland's recycling efforts is critical in order to protect the health of our communities, maintain the quality of our environment, and mitigate the climate crisis.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **strongly urges a favorable report on SB 642.**