

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore Favorable Test

Uploaded by: Adam Lindquist

Position: FAV

March 5, 2023

Mr. Chair and members of the committee,

The Waterfront Partnership submits this testimony in favor of SB 642 – The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

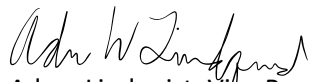
Representing major businesses and developers along the Baltimore Waterfront, we are a Business Improvement District responsible for maintaining, improving, and promoting Baltimore's Inner Harbor. In 2010 we set a goal, in partnership with Baltimore City, to have a swimmable and fishable Baltimore Harbor. To that end, we have supported many restoration efforts including creating Mr. Trash Wheel, supporting the statewide foam container ban, and supporting efforts to reduce plastic bag litter in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. We do this because it is good for the environment but also because it is good for business.

The businesses that make up Waterfront Partnership pay to add amenities to the waterfront, beautify the landscaping, and keep it clean. The less litter there is on the land and in the water, the more money we have to spend on events like Fleet Week and amenities the new skate park at Rash Field. Our current cleaning budget is \$1.5 million per year, but that money would be better spent on events, landscaping, and attractions that bring people to the Inner Harbor. This bill would simultaneously free up resources for promoting and beautifying the Inner Harbor while also making our waterfront more attractive to locals and tourists.

The Inner Harbor sits at the end of the Jones Falls stream, which drains 64 square miles of land in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. When it rains, a tremendous amount of litter comes down the Jones Falls and covers the Harbor. Over the past 10 years, Mr. Trash Wheel and the trash wheel family have been the last line of defense to prevent our Harbor from being covered with litter collecting over 1.8 million plastic bottles. That may sound like a lot, but this is only 0.05% of the beverage containers produced in Maryland every year that end up as trash or litter.

Capturing plastic bottles in our waterways is not a solution, it is an urgent problem, and we need this Bottle Bill to create a real solution to reduce beverage container litter.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB 735. Thank you for your time.



Adam Lindquist, Vice President, Healthy Harbor Initiative
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore
Adam@waterfrontpartnership.org
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore
650 S. Exeter St., Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21202



Maryland Residents Support the Maryland Bottle Bill!

We, the undersigned Maryland Residents are writing to express our strong support of the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB 735, SB 642), also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

We strongly believe that adopting this legislation will reduce the amount of litter ending up in our rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay. Since 2014, Mr. Trash Wheel has collected 1.8 million plastic bottles from the Baltimore Harbor. It's time to put him on a diet!

The Maryland Bottle Bill will introduce a deposit-return system for beverage containers, including plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and glass bottles. This system has been proven effective in other states at reducing litter, promoting recycling, and conserving resources. By placing a monetary deposit on beverage containers, consumers are incentivized to return them for recycling, thereby reducing waste in our streets, parks, and waterways.

Not only does the Maryland Bottle Bill have environmental benefits, but it also has economic advantages. Implementing a deposit-return system would create jobs in recycling and waste management industries, stimulate local economies, and reduce costs associated with litter cleanup and landfill disposal.

Furthermore, this legislation aligns with Maryland's commitment to environmental stewardship and

Chesapeake Bay restoration. By supporting the Maryland Bottle Bill, the State would demonstrate its dedication to preserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and combating climate change.

We urge you to carefully consider the benefits of the Maryland Bottle Bill and to take decisive action to support its implementation. Let work together to create a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future for our State and for generations to come. Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to seeing Maryland continue to lead the nation in environmental innovation and waste reduction.

Signed,

No.	First Name	Last Name	Address
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2	Joe	Starnes	4413 Glenmore Ave, Baltimore, MD 21206
3	Shawna	Zakrjewski	1421 Steuart St, Baltimore, MD 21230
3	Carly	Kriewald	7713 Dover Rd, Glen Burnie, MD 21060
4	Miranda	Prather	210 Larch Ct, Middletown, MD 21769-7825
5	Amber	Nicholls	2900 Lord Baltimore Dr LBB - Safety Baltimore Maryland 21244
6	Tess	Loys	4426 Buchanan Ave, Baltimore, MD 21211
7	Kenneth	Johnson	2704 Summerview Way, Annapolis, MD 21401
8	Erin	Hill	2809 Boston Street Apt 311 Baltimore, MD 21224
9	Leslie	Warren	3021 Hudson St, Baltimore, MD 21224
10	Paul	Roller	208 Coldbrook Rd., Baltimore, MD 21093
11	Courtney	Hollis	9923 Gable Ridge Terrace Apt. C Rockville, MD 20850
12	Tim	Schneid	10526 Willow Vista Way, Cockeysville, MD 21030
13	Kim	Brock	9 N Curley St, Baltimore, MD 21224
14	Margaret	Martin	334 Long Point Rd, Crownsville Maryland 21032
15	Jaime	Branaman	918 S Hanover St, Baltimore, MD 21230
16	Elizabeth	Francis	3800 Falls Road, Baltimore, MD 21211
17	Noelle	Wahl	1751 Covington Street, Baltimore, MD 21230
18	Spencer	Ellsworth	3138 Abell ave, Baltimore, MD 21218

19	Rachel	Meyer	213 S Castle St, Baltimore, MD 21231
20	Missy	Lauterbach	54 Stillwood Cir, Nottingham, MD 21236-2545
21	Sarah	Gaillot	244 S Chapel St, Baltimore, MD 21231
22	Nicole	Hartig	2917 Glenmore Ave, Baltimore Maryland 21214
23	Jeff	Powell	2169 Kyle Green Rd, Abingdon, MD 21009
24	Eliza	Pietila	12400 GLENBAUER RD, KINGSVILLE, MD 21087
25	Jamie	Barnett	12245 Jerusalem Rd, Kingsville, MD 21087
26	Sarah	Manuel	8145 Mission Hill Pl, Jessup, MD 20794
27	Daniel	Plaut	1447 Andre St, Baltimore Maryland 21230
28	Halena	Pawliuk	3024 pinewood ave., Baltimore, MD 21214
29	Jill	Vasbinder Morrison	2417 Fleet St, Baltimore, MD 21224
30	Whitley	D	po box 291, churchville maryland 21028
31	Michele	Johnston	102 Gentlebrook Rd, Owings Mills, MD 21117
32	Jim	Garrett	P.O. Box 816, Brooklandville, MD 21022
33	Deanna	Lethbridge	4328 sandy spring road, Burtonsville, MD 20866
34	Grace	Li	9611 Glendower Ct., Laurel, MD 20723
35	Lauren	Seserko	2 E Wells St Apt 262 Baltimore, MD 21230
36	Vanessa	Woolley	1416 e Baltimore st Apt 200 Baltimore, MD 21231
37	Paul	Whitley	197 Victory Lane, Bel Air, MD 21014
38	Paul	Smith	5507 Arabia Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21214
39	Sheila	Mahoney	2602 E Baltimore St, Baltimore, MD 21224
40	Kellie	Cooke	3318 O'Donnell St, Baltimore, MD 21224
41	Shannon	Snow	3711 Ednor Road, Baltimore, MD 21218
42	Chau	Nguyen	106 N Montford Ave., Baltimore Maryland 21224
43	Colleen	Miles	100 Harborview Dr Unit 409 Baltimore, MD 21230
44	Kara	Skipper	5444 Tilted Stone, Columbia, MD 21045

45	Ann	Snoeyenbos	5 Florida Road, Towson, MD 21204
46	Catherine	Hill	1110 S Carey Street, Baltimore Maryland 21223
47	Pailin	Wang	10238 Globe Dr., Ellicott City, MD 21042
48	Kim	DeFranco	3506 Gough Street, Baltimore, MD 21224
49	Charles	Starkey	7103 Copeleigh Road, Baltimore, MD 21212
50	JAMAR	STEPHENS	5402 Daywalt Ave, Baltimore, MD 21206
51	Robert	Matejka	2515 Boston St Unit 908 Baltimore, MD 21224
52	Michael	Netherland	7713 Dover Rd, GLEN BURNIE Maryland 21060
53	Stacey	Harman	13709 East Devonfield Drive, baldwin, MD 21013
54	Jen	Johnson	309 Royal Oak Dr, Bel air, MD 21015
55	MARGARET	GEBAUER	711 Glen Allen Dr, Baltimore, MD 21229
56	Nelson	Diaz	1335 South Hanover Street, Baltimore, MD 21230
57	Charlotte	Ball	12 Tyburn Ct, Lutherville Timonium, MD 21093
58	Jessica	Clayton	600 Carson Road, Huntingtown, MD 20639
59	Judy	Stone	106 Forest Drive, Catonsville, MD 21228
60	Beverly	Sikora	160 Linden Pl, Towson, MD 21286
61	Michelle	White	737 Martin Dr, Baltimore Maryland 21229
62	Joyce	Healy	12251 Yearling Ct, Ellicott City, MD 21042
63	Beth	Schap	3246 Abell Ave, Baltimore Maryland 21218
64	Pamela	Tate	7 East Churchill Street, Baltimore, MD 21230
65	Richard	Street	7434 Berkshire Rd, Baltimore, MD 21224-3310
66	Ellen	Pliska	207 Shady Nook Court, Catonsville, MD 21228
67	Patricia	Jonas	2809 Boston St Apt 237 Baltimore, MD 21224-4846
68	Barrie	Rhys	3307 Shannon Drive, Baltimore Maryland 21213
69	Erin	Koch	10 N Bond St, Baltimore, MD 21231
70	Rachel	Bukoski	4228 Falls Road, Baltimore Maryland 21211
71	Corinne	Mona	8492 Frederick Rd, Ellicott City, MD 21043

72	Louis	Fantinato	634 severn rd, Severna park, MD 21146
73	Damel	Goddard	102 Belmore Rd, Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093
74	Adam	Lindquist	8605 Drumwood Road, Towson Maryland 21286
75	Satchel	Kornfeld	9009 Charred Oak Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817
76	BETTY	MARKS	4 WAGNERS LA, BALTIMORE, MD 21221
77	Jody	O'Grady	306 Bonnie Meadow Cir, Reisterstown, MD 21136-6202
78	Russell	Bowie	1699 Leadenhall St., Baltimore, MD 21230
79	Robyn	Stegman	3305 Abell Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218

SB642 testimony favorable Bottle Deposit.pdf

Uploaded by: Alice Volpitta

Position: FAV



March 4, 2024

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (SB 642)
Position: FAVORABLE

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

Blue Water Baltimore is a local nonprofit organization with a mission to protect and restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. **On behalf of Blue Water Baltimore, I write to express our strong support for SB 642.**

Blue Water Baltimore, home of the Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, is part of the international Waterkeeper Alliance that is composed of over 350 watchdog organizations with a mission to protect and restore waterways all over the world. Our licensed Waterkeeper jurisdiction includes the entirety of the Patapsco and Back River watersheds, which means that Blue Water Baltimore is uniquely positioned among environmental NGOs in the region to focus on the health and prosperity of these waterways, and that of the people who live, work, and recreate around them.

Baltimore City is one of the few jurisdictions in the United States with a waterway listed as "impaired" under the federal Clean Water Act for trash, and an accompanying Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for trash. **This means that trash is so prevalent in the streams that flow into the Baltimore Harbor that the Harbor itself is not meeting water quality standards and that significant efforts are necessary to stop the damage and heal our waterways.** Establishing a state-wide beverage container deposit program would reduce the amount of trash that enters the waste stream in the first place, and would ultimately lead to cleaner, healthier waterways in the Baltimore region and beyond.

In my role as your Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, I routinely patrol the local streams that flow into the Patapsco and Back Rivers to monitor water quality and seek out chronic sources of pollution. **I have seen first-hand the huge rafts of plastic bottles that get trapped and restrict flow in our storm drains and urban streams, which contribute to flooding during heavy rain events.** Swaths of trash, especially plastic bottles, act as high-water marks along the Gwynns Falls trail where the stream has crested the banks. The visible trash is only a fraction of what makes its way downstream into the Baltimore Harbor, the Patapsco River, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Plastic, glass, and metal bottle trash is a blight in our streets and our streams. But what if we could turn that trash into treasure? The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program will create a statewide deposit refund program for single use beverage containers similar to successful programs that already exist in other states. This will increase the monetary value of these bottles, which will therefore keep them out of our incinerators and landfills because people will be incentivized to recycle them properly.

This bill will result in:

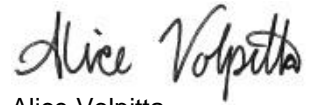
- Less trash in our streets, streams, and Harbor.
- Fewer plastic, glass, and metal bottles going to the BRESKO incinerator, which means cleaner air and less pollution in our environment.
- More space in our landfills.

Baltimore City led the charge to ban the use of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Foam in 2018 and that effort helped persuade State lawmakers to do the same shortly thereafter. Baltimore City and Baltimore County have joined other Maryland jurisdictions to ban single-use plastic bags from most restaurants and retail outlets, and we hope to see that change replicated on a state-wide basis soon. The next step needed to

tackle Baltimore's waterway trash problem is to establish a beverage container deposit program to reduce the number of plastic bottles that plague our shorelines; but we know that this effort cannot operate in a vacuum, and it will only be successful if it is implemented as a state-wide solution.

I am including a handful of pictures from our local waterways to show the prevalence of bottle trash in our streams and rivers (Attachments #1-5). **For all of the reasons outlined above, Blue Water Baltimore urges this committee to issue a favorable report on SB 642.**

Sincerely,



Alice Volpitta
Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper
avolpitta@bluewaterbaltimore.org

Attachment #1
Attachment #2
Attachment #3
Attachment #4
Attachment #5

Attachment #1: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated in the Powder Mill Run. Baltimore County, MD. 3/16/2014.



Attachment #2: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated at Masonville Cove. Baltimore City, MD.
3/24/2011.



Attachment #3: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated along the banks of East Branch Herbert Run. Baltimore County, MD. 4/14/2017.



Attachment #4: Bottle trash that has accumulated as a high-water mark at Ferry Bar Park. Baltimore City, MD. 8/28/2015.



Attachment #5: Plastic and metal bottles that have accumulated along the banks of the Gwynns Falls stream. Baltimore, MD. 2/11/2024.



SB642_BrooksF.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB642
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
March 5, 2024

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB642– Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. The purpose of this bill is to create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland to reduce beverage container litter, improve environmental quality, and reduce costs for local governments.

Of the 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland each year, only 23% are recycled. The other four billion containers a year are left to waste: in landfills, on roadsides, in waterways or even incinerated. Beverage container litter is pervasive. More than half of the trash captured in traps on the Anacostia River is beverage containers. The Environmental Protection Agency has declared the Anacostia watershed and Baltimore Harbor to be impaired with trash. Our state, with the largest estuary in the country – the Chesapeake Bay – also has two of the three water bodies in the country that are impaired by trash and regulated by the EPA under the Clean Water Act. Plastic litter floating down our waterways is contributing to a plastic pollution crisis. This debris breaks into smaller pieces that threaten both wildlife and human health.

To reduce litter wastage, and recover more of these containers for recycling, ten other states have implemented successful beverage container deposit programs. These programs aim to change consumer behavior by adding a small refundable deposit to the price of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the containers are returned for recycling. Two states– Michigan and Oregon - have even achieved recycling rates of 90% with a 10-cent deposit. Programs like this reduce littering and encourages recycling by providing consumers an incentive to return containers for refunds rather than discarding them.

How the Program Would Work

SB642 would add a 10-15 cent deposit on the price of beverages in glass, plastic, and metal beverage containers, depending on the size of the container. The deposits would be fully refunded when the empty containers are returned for recycling. The program would be designed to make return of empty containers and availability of refunds as convenient as possible to consumers and businesses.

Customers would return bottles with retailers at dedicated redemption facilities or at a retailer's place of business using reverse vending machines, a bag drop, or other redemption method. Based on experience in other states, the most convenient location to return containers for a refund is at a

retailer that sells beverages in redeemable beverage containers. This reduces the need for a separate trip to return them.

- Reverse vending machines accept individual containers, one at a time, counting and verifying that the containers were subject to a deposit, crushing them in the back of the machine, and issuing a scrip to the customer for the amount of the refund owed, which can be cashed in at the retailer's checkout. They also help to prevent fraud.
- Bag drops take the redemption outside of the retail establishment and are usually located in parking lots. Customers create an account and may leave multiple unsorted containers of different types in a program drop-off bag with their personal bar code affixed. The bags are collected by the system operator, counted and sorted off-site, and the customer receives the refunded deposits in their account.

Restaurants, bars, hotels, and large venues where customers consume beverages on the premises would be able to obtain a refund when the empty containers are picked up by the system operator. Both retail establishments and "on premises" sellers of beverage containers will receive a small handling fee per container for collection and preliminary sorting.

The program would be operated by a nonprofit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization selected by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), representing all producers that sell or distribute beverages in the state. MDE would provide substantial oversight, approving stewardship plans and annual reports, and setting the program's convenience standards and handling fees for redemption points. An Advisory Council of stakeholders will advise MDE on plan approval, implementation, and performance.

The program would be self-financed from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. The program pays for itself and is budget-neutral, as documented in the Fiscal and Policy Note. A portion of unclaimed deposits will fund a Beverage Container Recycling Refund Grant program, administered by MDE to finance projects to develop reusable and refillable beverage container systems, public water fountains and refill stations, and projects to reduce beverage container litter. This program is entirely budget neutral.

There would be no obligations for implementation or enforcement by local governments in the program. They will be eligible to set up their own redemption centers and receive a handling fee for returned containers, if they choose to. Most would realize cost savings from not having to finance the collection or processing of beverage container waste or recycling, or the cost of financing litter clean-ups. However, in the event that a local government can document a net loss that attributable to the deposit program, this initiative would provide compensation during the first two years of operation.

The Program's Targets

The deposit would be enforced beginning on January 1, 2027. Based on experience in other states, the program should reduce beverage container litter by at least 70-84%. Overall, this objective aims to achieve a 70% redemption and 65% recycling rate for beverage containers by December 2028 and a 90% redemption and 85% recycling rate by December 2031. At least 10% of all beverage containers sold in Maryland will be refillable by December 2034.

The Program's Benefits

SB642 would capture more than 3 billion additional beverage containers annually in Maryland, including 2 billion plastic bottles, thus reducing litter and plastic pollution while diverting those containers to recycling. There are many other benefits it would inspire:

- Quadruple Maryland's recycling rate for beverage containers, from about 23% to at least 90% of beverage containers sold in the state.
- Increase the availability of high quality, food-grade materials that can be used in the manufacture of new beverage containers and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars from the road.
- Provide cost savings for taxpayers and local governments. Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection and processing of the three-quarters of beverage containers currently being disposed of in the waste stream or littered.
- Create lots of new jobs in recycling and servicing redemption technologies. Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times as many jobs as landfilling or incineration of beverage containers.
- Serve as a launching pad for investments in reusable and refillable beverage containers, further promoting a circular economy and zero waste.
- Pose no burden on taxpayers. The program is budget neutral.

Conclusion

SB642 would make producers responsible for reducing beverage container litter and diverting empty beverage containers from disposal, increasing their recovery for recycling. Additional legislation is needed to hold producers responsible for reducing packaging, redesigning hard-to-recycle packaging for recyclability, and reducing its toxicity. These two measures complement each other, and both need to be passed.

We do not need to wait for completion of the Recycling Needs Assessment authorized as part of last year's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging bill to take action. The Recycling Needs Assessment will evaluate policies affecting Maryland's recycling system; it will not assess programs to reduce litter. We already know that Maryland has a beverage container litter and plastic pollution crisis and that bottle bills are a proven and effective solution for reducing beverage container litter. Three of the four states with an EPR for Packaging program already have independent bottle bills.

Maryland should extract best practices from other states in solving its beverage container, litter and waste challenges. SB642 has the potential to transform our State. Not only will it help reduce litter, but it will also improve environmental quality and reduce costs for local government.

For these reasons I am requesting a favorable report on SB642.

With kindest regards,



Benjamin Brooks

SB642_OnePager.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV

Maryland Needs a Bottle Bill!

HB 735 / SB 642

The Problem

About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually.¹ Despite widespread availability of curbside collection of recyclables and public recycling receptacles, only about a quarter of the containers (23%) are captured for recycling. Four billion containers a year, 2.6 billion of which are plastic, are left in the environment—in landfills, on roadsides, in waterways—or incinerated. The number littered is significant: Beverage containers are about half of the trash by volume in the Anacostia watershed's trash traps.²

Plastic beverage containers pollute our waterways and pose a threat to wildlife and human health. They break up into small pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Scientists estimate that we are ingesting up to a credit card's worth of plastic weekly.



Courtesy of Anacostia Watershed Society

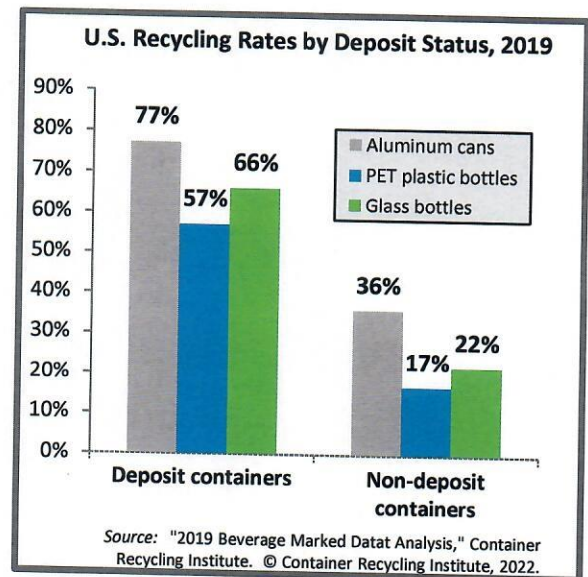
The Solution

Beverage container deposit programs, also known as “bottle bills,” are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. Ten states, covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful programs.³ They add a small deposit to the purchase price of beverage containers that is refunded to customers when the containers are returned for recycling. When empty beverage containers can be redeemed for cash, fewer are littered or likely to remain littered. Purchase the beverage, borrow the container! The refundable deposit is an incentive to return.

Deposit programs also dramatically increase beverage container recycling. The recycling rate for deposit beverage containers is 2-3 times higher than for containers not subject to a deposit, and the impact is greater with higher deposits. States with a 10-cent deposit have achieved container recycling rates of 90%.

How Will the Program Operate?

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction bill (HB 735/SB 642) would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers, depending on container size. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. The program would rely on reverse vending machines and other new technologies for convenient container redemption to achieve at least a 90% redemption rate.



¹ Container Recycling Institute, Beverage Market Data Analysis, based on 2019 data.

² Anacostia Watershed Society.

³ California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Vermont. Redemption rates in 2019 ranged from 59% to 91%. There are currently 72 container deposit programs worldwide in 61 countries. Increased interest in the past decade has been fueled by public concern about plastic pollution. Collins, Susan. 2020. "International Embrace," *Plastics Recycling Update*, Winter, pp. 38-43.

The program would be operated by a nonprofit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization selected by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), representing all producers that sell beverages in the state. MDE would provide substantial oversight, approving stewardship plans and annual reports, and setting the programs' convenience standards and handling fees for redemption points. An Advisory Council of stakeholders would advise MDE on plan approval, implementation, and performance.



A reverse vending machine

The program would be self-financing from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. Ten percent of unclaimed deposits would fund a Grant Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers.

What Are the Program's Benefits?

- **Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution, and an increase in water quality.** It would capture more than 3 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2 billion plastic bottles
- **Quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate.** The recycling rate, currently only 23% of containers sold in the state, would increase to more than 90% with the Bottle Bill.
- **Increase in high quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers.** When the targets are achieved, the program will generate an additional 11,305 tons of aluminum, 44,066 tons of PET plastic, 3,207 tons of HDPE plastic, and 140,923 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers.
- **Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.** By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars.
- **Savings for taxpayers and local governments.** Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection and processing of the ¾ of beverage containers currently being disposed or littered, as well as the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled curbside. The program will divert materials from costly landfills and incinerators. These disposal costs are currently borne by taxpayers and local governments.
- **Investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems.** Deposits are critical for development of refillable and reusable containers. The program will launch that transition.
- **Job creation.** Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times as many jobs as landfilling or incineration.

Support the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program(HB 735 / SB 642) to reduce litter, prevent plastic pollution, increase recycling, and conserve resources!



SB642_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV

High Grounds Cafe and Coffee Roasters Supports the Maryland Bottle Bill!

I'm writing to express my support for the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB 735, SB 642), also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

We support this bill because littered beverage containers are bad for our businesses and bad for the environment. Littered beverage containers on Maryland's beaches, in its waterways, in Baltimore Harbor, and in the Chesapeake Bay are bad for the state's recreation and tourism. Who would come to Maryland to fish on a river or a lake with beverage containers floating around them? Who would want to canoe down a river with beverage containers snagged on the shoreline? We also don't want our customers to encounter littered containers in our parking lots and on our premises.

Beverage container deposit laws are a proven, highly effective policy that will reduce litter and recover used beverage containers across the state. A small deposit would be added to the price of beverage containers sold in the state, and refunded when the empty containers are returned for recycling. This provides the incentive for the public not to leave beverage containers in the environment, and to pick them up for a refund when they're found. Ten U.S. states, covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful programs. Dozens of countries across the globe have adopted or are planning to adopt these laws to prevent litter and plastic pollution.

There are many other economic and environmental benefits of the Bottle Bill. It will divert about 200,000 tons of beverage containers from the waste stream annually, including about 2 billion plastic bottles that pollute our waterways and harm marine life. It will capture 90% of beverage containers for recycling, provide clean recycled materials for making new containers, reduce costs for local governments, create jobs, and support development of reusable beverage containers. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars.

These benefits will be achieved with little or no inconvenience to my business. The deposit we pay for any covered beverage containers we provide will be refunded when the stewardship organization picks up our empties for recycling. In addition, we will receive a small, per-container material handling benefit for providing them. We may even realize savings in the form of reduced costs for trash and recycling pick-up, for which we currently pay.

Please support the Maryland Bottle Bill! It's good for business and good for the planet!

Sincerely,
Michelina Pulley, Owner
High Grounds Cafe and Coffee Roasters
3201 Eastern Ave, Baltimore, MD 21224
mickiemiller08@gmail.com
2/21/24

Hunan Garden Restaurant Supports the Maryland Bottle Bill!

I'm writing to express my support for the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB 735, SB 642), also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

Restaurants, bars, hotels, and sports venues support this bill because littered beverage containers are bad for hospitality businesses like mine and bad for the environment. Littered beverage containers on Maryland's beaches, in its waterways, in Baltimore Harbor, and in the Chesapeake Bay are bad for the state's recreation and tourism. Who would come to Maryland to fish on a river or a lake with beverage containers floating around them? Who would want to canoe down a river with beverage containers snagged on the shoreline? We also don't want our customers to encounter littered containers in our parking lots and on our premises.

Beverage container deposit laws are a proven, highly effective policy that will reduce litter and recover used beverage containers across the state. A small deposit would be added to the price of beverage containers sold in the state, and refunded when the empty containers are returned for recycling. This provides the incentive for the public not to leave beverage containers in the environment, and to pick them up for a refund when they're found. Ten U.S. states, covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful programs. Dozens of countries across the globe have adopted or are planning to adopt these laws to prevent litter and plastic pollution.

There are many other economic and environmental benefits of the Bottle Bill. It will divert about 200,000 tons of beverage containers from the waste stream annually, including about 2 billion plastic bottles that pollute our waterways and harm marine life. It will capture 90% of beverage containers for recycling, provide clean recycled materials for making new containers, reduce costs for local governments, create jobs, and support development of reusable beverage containers. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars.

These benefits will be achieved with little or no inconvenience to my business. The deposit we pay for any covered beverage containers we provide will be refunded when the stewardship organization picks up our empties for recycling. In addition, we will receive a small, per-container material handling benefit for providing them. We may even realize savings in the form of reduced costs for trash and recycling pick-up, for which we currently pay.

Please support the Maryland Bottle Bill! It's good for business and good for the planet!

Sincerely,

Yang Feng Zhu, Owner
Hunan Garden Chinese Restaurant
11070 Cathell Road, Ocean Pines, MD 21811
Judyli1981@gmail.com



March 4, 2024

Hon. Brian Feldman, Chair
Hon. Cheryl Kagan, Vice-Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland State Senate

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Committee members,

I'm writing to express my strong support for the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (SB 642), also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill. I am Dr. Ernest Murphy, Managing Member of Hospitality Development Group, LLC which owns and operates Courtyard by Marriott in Bowie, Maryland, TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Bowie, Maryland and TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Annapolis Junction, Maryland.

I support this bill because littered beverage containers are bad for hospitality businesses like mine and bad for the environment. Littered beverage containers on Maryland's beaches, in its waterways, in Baltimore Harbor, and in the Chesapeake Bay are harmful for the state's recreation and tourism. Who would come to Maryland to fish on a river or a lake with beverage containers floating around them? Who would want to canoe down a river with beverage containers snagged on the shoreline? We don't want our customers to encounter littered containers in our parking lots and on our premises.

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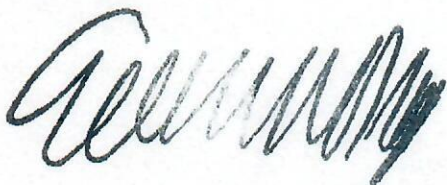
There are many other economic and environmental benefits of the Maryland Bottle Bill. It will divert about 200,000 tons of beverage containers from the waste stream annually, including about 2 billion plastic bottles that pollute our waterways and harm marine life. It will capture 90% of beverage containers for recycling, provide clean recycled materials for making new containers, reduce costs for local governments, create jobs, and support development of reusable beverage containers. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars.

These benefits will be achieved with little or no inconvenience to my business. The deposits we pay for covered beverage containers will be refunded when the stewardship organization picks up our empties for recycling. In addition, we will receive a small, per-

container material handling benefit for returning them. We may even realize savings in lower costs for trash and recycling pick-up.

Please support the Maryland Bottle Bill! It's good for business and good for the planet!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. W. M. M.', written in a cursive style.

Virtual Rally MD Bottle Bill Presentation 2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV



Baltimore City, MD
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore



Baltimore City, MD
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore



Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society



Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society

Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society



ANACOSTIA
WATERSHED
SOCIETY
EVENT

Others

Bottles & Cans

Styro-
foam



Potomac River, MD
Alice Ferguson Foundation



Potomac River, MD
Alice Ferguson Foundation



Potomac River, MD
Alice Ferguson Foundation



Potomac River, MD
Alice Ferguson Foundation



Back River, MD
Back River Restoration Association



Back River, MD
Back River Restoration Association



Berlin, MD
Lower Eastern Shore Sierra Club



Gwynns Run, MD
Blue Water Baltimore

**Glen Burnie, MD, near Sawmill Creek
Baltimore County Activist**



Masonville Creek, South Baltimore, MD
Baltimore County Activist





Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society

Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society

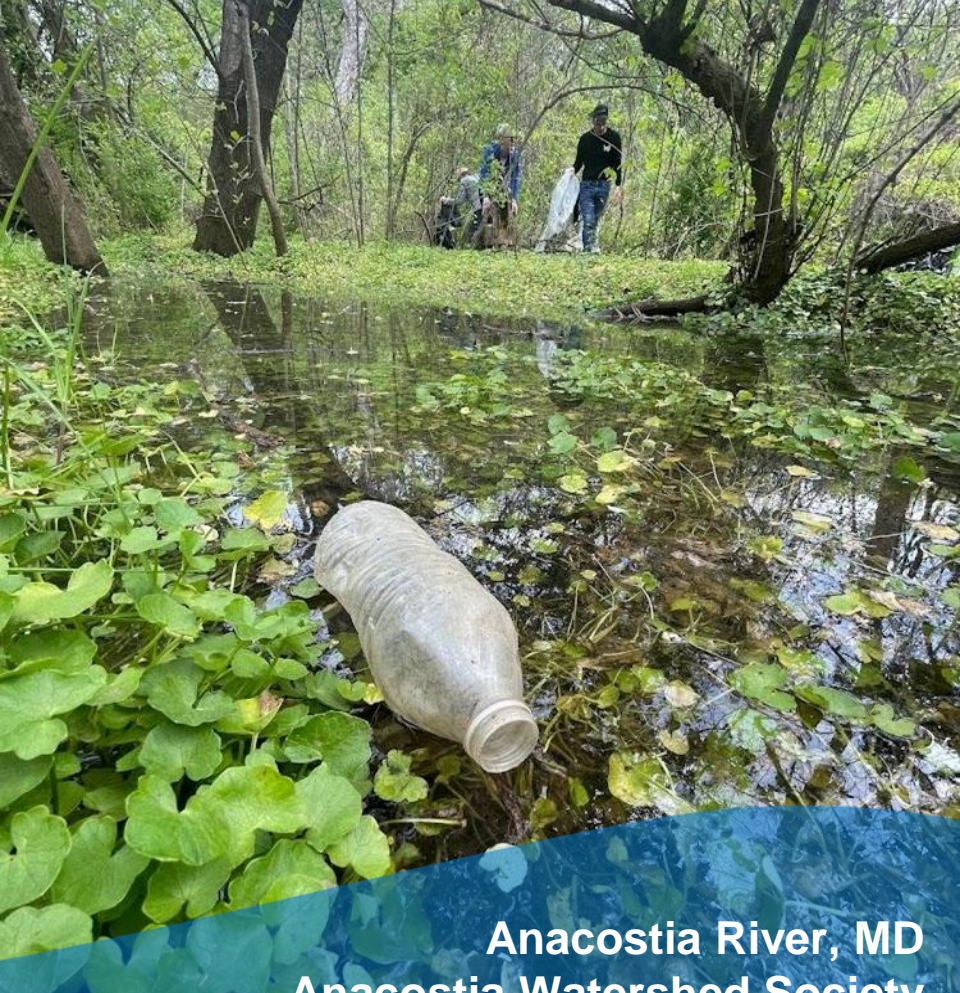




Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society



Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society



Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society

Anacostia River, MD
Anacostia Watershed Society





ANACOSTIA RIVERKEEPER®



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ANACOSTIA WATERSHED SOCIETY



Maryland Needs a BOTTLE BILL!



SB 642_LWVMD_FAV_2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Casey Hunter

Position: FAV



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

Date: March 5, 2024

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.**

SB0642_Beverage_Container_and_Litter_Reduction_Pro

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR SB0642

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0642 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

This bill, if enacted, creates the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund Program, beginning operation in January 2027. It will require -

- A small deposit added to the price of glass, plastic, and metal beverage containers (10¢-15¢)
- A refund of the deposit when the containers are returned to a convenient retailer or redemption facility for recycling

The program is implemented and financed by beverage producers and will have enforceable targets and strong oversight from Maryland Department of the Environment. It is expected that Maryland can recover $\geq 90\%$ of beverage containers with 3.5 billion fewer wasted containers/year as well as an overall reduction in litter and reduced costs to local governments. Additionally, it incentivizes investment in refillable beverage containers and increases availability of high-quality, food-grade materials.

This is clearly a direction that we should be going in. Our members support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

SB 642 oral testimony from Anacostia Watershed Soc

Uploaded by: Christopher Williams

Position: FAV



**Oral Testimony of
Christopher E. Williams, President and CEO
Anacostia Watershed Society
to the
Maryland Senate
Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling
Refund and Litter Reduction Program
March 5, 2024**

Good afternoon. I am testifying today on behalf of the thousands of members, supporters and volunteers of the Anacostia Watershed Society in Prince George's and Montgomery County, Maryland.

Five point two billion single use beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year. That's an average of over 14 million plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles purchased, used, and disposed of every day. That is a lot of waste that has to go

somewhere. Well, at least that stuff is recyclable, huh? That's a relief.

But, unfortunately, it isn't, because despite curbside pick-up, less than a quarter of all that trash is actually captured for recycling. The rest, 4 billion otherwise recyclable containers, never get into the recycling stream. For those keeping score, that's almost 2 bottles and cans per each of Maryland's 6.2 million residents *per day, every day*, going to rapidly filling, often leaking landfills, to incinerators to be burned into toxic air pollution, or into our neighborhood streets, parks, and rivers.

This plastic trash pollutes public spaces and fouls wildlife habitat, interfering with foraging, feeding, and other behaviors.

Moreover, as the plastic trash decomposes, it breaks down into microplastics that persist in the environment for many years.

Studies on the impact of microplastics and nanoplastics on fish and mussel species have found damaged digestive and reproductive systems, and an increased chance of mortality. And there is increasing and frightening evidence that humans are

ingesting more plastic every day, the damaging health effects of which are only beginning to be understood.

This is an environmental and impending public health crisis that needs to be forcefully addressed without delay. I can assure you that the much discussed, pending Recycling Needs Assessment will not provide a more effective and efficient solution than the type of deposit return/recycle system laid out in SB 642 that has dramatically increased recycling rates in 10 U.S. states and across Europe. We have decades of data to demonstrate that these systems reduce pollution and are remarkably cost effective. AWS strongly supports SB 642 and urges the Committee to favorably report out the bill.

Thank you.

SB 642 written testimony from Anacostia Watershed

Uploaded by: Christopher Williams

Position: FAV



Testimony of
Christopher E. Williams, President and CEO
Anacostia Watershed Society
to the
Maryland Senate
Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling
Refund and Litter Reduction Program
March 5, 2024

Good afternoon. I am testifying today on behalf of the 10,000 members, supporters and volunteers of the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS). The Anacostia watershed is a 176 square mile area drained by the Anacostia River, two-thirds of which is in Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland. The mission of AWS is to protect and restore the Anacostia watershed for all who live here and for future generations.

Of all the threats to river health that plague the Anacostia watershed – sewage overflows, toxic pollutants, urban run-off, sedimentation, wetlands and forest loss – the most starkly visible is trash. Particularly after a heavy rain, thousands of pounds of trash flows from streets, parking lots, and storm drains into streams across the watershed and ultimately into the river's mainstem. Every visitor to the river has seen the result, every eddy and small inlet cluttered with food wrappers, chip bags, single use plastic cups and lids, straws, and plastic beverage bottles. Of all the trash collected by AWS trash traps, which are designed to intercept trash flowing into the river, by far the most ubiquitous piece of trash is the plastic beverage bottle. This trash fouls wildlife habitat, interfering with foraging, feeding, and other behaviors, and is sometimes ingested by wildlife. Moreover, the data suggest that over 70% of the pieces of trash flushed into the river will ultimately sink beneath the surface, raising troubling questions about just how much plastic waste is accumulating on the riverbed and in the water column, and how much that unseen trash is affecting the fish, wildlife and plants of the Anacostia River ecosystem.

In addition, plastic bottles and other trash foul natural areas important to people. The 176 square mile Anacostia watershed is entirely urban and suburban, and many of the parks and green spaces in Prince George's and Montgomery County are along streams and creeks in the watershed. These spaces foster social interaction, exercise, play, and provide places to get away from the noise and bustle of the city. There is a growing body of evidence that access to urban

green spaces is vitally important for our mental, physical, social, and emotional health.¹ Specific benefits include a higher reported quality of life, lower stress, better mood, and a reduction in mental distress. However, the benefits of urban green space are diminished if the green space itself is stressful or unpleasant to be in. Visible litter makes the environment less inviting, and reduces these benefits.

As the plastic trash decomposes, microscopic pieces are chipped off. These microplastics persist in the environment for many years, and we are only beginning to learn about their potential negative impacts. For example, a study on the impact of microplastics on fish found damaged digestive and reproductive systems, and an increased chance of mortality.² Mussels, organisms essential to the health of the Anacostia watershed, can also be highly impacted by microplastics. Several studies from other watersheds have found that mussel populations exposed to microplastics suffer from reduced reproductive success, which reduces the resiliency of the population in the face of other challenges of living in an urban river.³ In other words, microplastics can have cascading health effects for the organisms and populations exposed to them including, potentially, humans. In fact, studies show that humans are ingesting more and more micro- and nano-plastics, and the damaging health effects are only just beginning to be understood.⁴

Five point two billion single use beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year.⁵ That is an average of over 14 million plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles purchased, used, and disposed of every day. However, despite curbside pick-up, **less than a quarter of all that trash is actually captured for recycling**. The rest, 4 billion otherwise recyclable containers, never get into the recycling stream. That is almost 2 bottles and cans per each of Maryland's 6.2 million residents **per day, every day**, going to rapidly filling, often leaking landfills, to incinerators to be burned into toxic air pollution, or into our neighborhood streets, parks, and rivers.

In AWS's corner of Maryland, the dedicated volunteers of AWS have removed on average about 42 tons of trash per year from the stream and wetlands of the Anacostia watershed since 1989. Today, almost 60% of that trash by weight is plastic bottles. We're proud of our clean-up efforts, but we can only round up a small fraction of the millions of beverage containers that foul the watershed so thoroughly that it is one of only three bodies of water in the U.S. that must be regulated for trash under the federal Clean Water Act (TMDL).

¹ Numerous studies support this conclusion. See <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10708-021-10474-7/tables/2>

² Buyun. Md Simul, *Effects of Microplastics on Fish and Human Health*, *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, vol. 10, March 2022

³ Scherer, Christian et al, *Interactions of Microplastics with Freshwater Biota*, *The Handbook of Environmental Chemistry* vol. 58

⁴ Kieran D. Cox, Garth A. Covernton, Hailey L. Davies, John F. Dower, Francis Juanes, Sarah E. Dudas, *Human Consumption of Microplastics*, *Environ. Sci. Technol.* 2019, 53, 12, 7068–7074, June 5, 2019

⁵ Container Recycling Institute, Beverage Marketing Data, 2019

AWS believes that SB 642 will significantly reduce litter and plastic pollution in the Anacostia and in all of Maryland's rivers and streams. Data from other jurisdictions that have implemented such programs are encouraging. In 6 of the 10 states with recycling/refund laws, researchers have examined the impact of the recycling/refund program on litter found on highways. These states— Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, Vermont, and New York— have seen a 40-80% decrease in container litter, which contributed to a 10-39% reduction in total litter.⁶

Data from river cleanups in Massachusetts, another recycling/refund state, suggest that their program has a substantial impact on the amount of litter in rivers, streams, and wetlands as well. In Massachusetts, only containers holding carbonated drinks (beer, malt, carbonated soft drinks) and mineral water were eligible to be returned. Beverage market share data showed that deposit eligible containers made up 76% of sales, and non-deposit eligible containers were 24% of sales. Yet data collected from river clean-ups revealed that deposit eligible containers made up only 19% of the containers collected and non-deposit containers made up 81%. The evidence strongly suggests that the incentive provided by the recycling/refund program in Massachusetts routed the bulk of eligible beverage containers to reuse and recycling, while containers with no such incentive littered the riverbanks.⁷

We are facing not just a “litter” problem in Maryland. This is an environmental and impending public health crisis that needs to be forcefully addressed without delay. The much discussed, pending Recycling Needs Assessment will not provide a more effective and efficient solution than the type of deposit return/recycle system laid out in SB 642 that has dramatically increased recycling rates in 10 U.S. states and across Europe. In fact, it has been demonstrated that return recycle incentive systems work and in hand and indeed are a necessary part of Extended Producer Responsibility programs. As stated above, in Maryland less than 25% of recyclable beverage containers are captured for recycling; in deposit/return states, that figure is 60% and higher, sometimes much higher. And we have decades of data to demonstrate these systems reduce pollution and are remarkably cost effective. There is no reason to delay and every reason to get deposit/return in place as soon as possible. AWS strongly supports SB 642 and urges the Committee to favorably report out the bill.

⁶ Schuyler, Qamar et al, *Economic incentives reduce plastic inputs to the ocean*, Marine Policy, vol. 96, pp 250-255

⁷ Cohen, Russ, Worcester Earth Day Cleanup, April 2003; Cohen, Russ, Blackstone Valley Riverways Clean Up Day, October 2007, Massachusetts Riverways Program. See bottlebill.org

Testimony SB642 Ramos.pdf

Uploaded by: Councilwoman Odette Ramos

Position: FAV



Odette Ramos

Baltimore City Councilwoman

District 14

(410) 396 - 4814

odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov

100 N. Holliday Street, Room 506

Baltimore MD 21202

Testimony
SB0642 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
March 4, 2024

FAVORABLE

Honorable Chair Feldman and Distinguished Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I am writing to urge your support of SB0642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

SB0642 is an important bill that would provide Maryland with the ability to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and reduce the litter and pollution. It will allow jurisdictions to create our own programs to ensure that residents can return bottles and cans to redeem their deposit. It will also prohibit a producer from selling, offering, or distributing into Maryland a redeemable beverage container unless they have taken the necessary and appropriate steps with the Department of the Environment.

In Baltimore, we are working to reduce the use of the BRESKO trash incinerator and help our efforts in diverting waste from the landfills. This will also provide our City Council with the ability to create our own bottle recycling program—something that the Council has been wanting to implement since the 2013 bottle bill. Having the bottle bill in Baltimore City will incentivize cleaning up our streets and ensuring there is less waste in our landfills and incinerators.

Please issue a favorable report for SB0642.

Respectfully Submitted:

Odette Ramos
Baltimore City Councilwoman, District 14

SB642_IndivisibleHoCoMD_FAV_Konny.pdf

Uploaded by: Crystal Konny

Position: FAV



SB642 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

**Testimony before
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

March 5, 2024

Position: Favorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Crystal Konny, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in **support of SB642**, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. We appreciate the leadership of Senator Brooks and his colleagues for sponsoring this important legislation.

The bill establishes a program that will collect a small deposit for each bottle purchased. The deposits will be refunded when the container is returned to the retailer or a redemption facility. Retailers and redemption facilities receive a handling fee for processing the returned bottles. The program will be self-financing, creating no new costs for the taxpayers.

Approximately 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually, and fewer than a quarter are recycled. Three-quarters of the beverage containers end up as litter, or are incinerated or dumped in landfills. Containers that are left in the wild are very problematic. Such containers, especially plastic ones, are harmful to both the environment and to wildlife, particularly in marine environments like the Chesapeake Bay.

This legislation will increase the source of recycled materials for use in new bottles, and will work hand in hand with HB168, Maryland's Postconsumer Recycled Content Program bill which will stimulate the demand for materials to be recycled.

Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs. The states with a 10-cent deposit, such as Michigan and Oregon, have a 90% recycling rate. It would be fantastic if Maryland could say the same.

I live in a neighborhood of houses, townhomes, and garden apartments. The view from my home includes a drainage ditch that shortly leads to the Middle Patuxent River and, eventually, to the Chesapeake Bay. Litter washes up in this ditch, including many beverage containers. This bill would give the neighbors an incentive to keep the bottles out of the ditch, keeping Maryland's waterways and neighborhoods cleaner.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to pass the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. It is long-overdue. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. **We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.**

Crystal Konny
Columbia, MD 21044

SB 642 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Debbie Cohn

Position: FAV

Committees: Education, Energy and the Environment
Testimony on: SB642-Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 5, 2024

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering this testimony. SB642 would establish a recycling refund program for beverage containers under which customers pay a deposit when purchasing beverage bottles and receive the deposit back when returning the container to a source of sale.

Problem: About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold each year in Maryland. Only 1.2 billion (23%) are captured for recycling. Four billion containers a year are left in the environment. Many are littered along roadsides and in waterways, with local communities having to pay to collect and dispose of them properly. I see this every time I walk or jog. Regardless of the route I take, I find beverage containers strewn in the gutter, near playing fields, and along roadways. I often come back with 8-10 discarded beverage containers. This litter would stop with a deposit/refund beverage container bill.

Solution: SB642 would establish a Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and reduce litter and their associated costs to local governments and Maryland's waterways. Purchasers of beverage containers would be charged a deposit which would be refundable upon return to any point of sale.

Refundable deposit bottle bills work. They significantly increase the percentage of beverage bottles that are returned for reuse. The ten states¹ with recycling refund programs have 50% less litter than other states. States with a 10-cent deposit have achieved beverage container recycling rates of 90%. Beverage bottle deposit and refund programs save counties and taxpayers money since jurisdictions do not need to collect and process littered beverage containers or fund as many litter collection programs in their streams and waterways. Any deposit fees that are never redeemed pay for the reverse vending machines and other costs of administering the program.

I first experienced the impact of modern refund/deposit bill when I visited Munich for several days. I was taking our used beverage containers to a recycling bin in a nearby park when I met a pensioner collecting beverage containers littering the park. As we spoke about what she was doing, she took me to a nearby market, showed me the reverse vending machine, demonstrated how it worked and then took the deposit slip from the vending machine to collect cash from the check-out counter. People on a limited income will be motivated to return strewn beverage containers on which they did not pay the deposit fee.

¹ CA, CT, HI, IA, ME, MA, MI, NY, OR, VT.

For these reasons I urge the Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report for this sensible bill – SB642.

Thank you.

Deborah A. Cohn

SB0642 Letter of Support - Constellium SE_03.04.24

Uploaded by: Delphine Dahan Kocher

Position: FAV



300 East Lombard Street, 17th floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
(443) 420 7881

March 4, 2024

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

Support for SB 0642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I am writing to convey our strong support for SB 0642.

Constellium is a global industry leader in the production and recycling of aluminum products, with its U.S. headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland. We supply the packaging, automotive, and aerospace markets, and recycle both scrap and used beverage cans (UBCs). We are a public company, listed on the New York Stock Exchange, with 12,000 employees and over \$7.5 billion in revenue.

As a company that recycles just in the United States more than 20 billion beverage cans a year, the availability of scrap is critical to our operations. We manufacture aluminum cansheet that our customers use to produce cans for popular beverages such as Coke, Pepsi, and Budweiser, and our products currently include more than 70% recycled content. We strive to promote the circularity of our products by recycling used cans and transforming them into new ones. Ensuring a steady supply of UBCs is one of our top priorities, and we use UBCs from across the United States.

Using recycled cans instead of primary aluminum also allows us to significantly decrease our CO2 emissions, one of our key public commitments in terms of sustainability, and one that our customers and investors follow closely. Recycling aluminum emits 94% fewer emissions than producing primary metal. Without recycled aluminum, our carbon emissions would increase by close to 50%, while today we committed to decrease them by 30% in 2030.

Unfortunately, at around 45%, the overall recycling rate for UBCs in the U.S. is still quite low. With demand for product packaged in aluminum cans expected to increase significantly, cansheet producers like Constellium will be forced to rely increasingly on primary aluminum, much of which is imported. By itself, SB 0642 will have a measurable impact on the availability of recycled UBCs as data from the United States and globally proves that deposits are the most effective way to increase recycling. And if other states follow, we will be able to do better as a country.

SB 0642 would also contribute to Maryland's economy, in addition to protecting the environment. The aluminum can recycling rate in Maryland is currently around 23% according to the 2024 State of Recycling Report from the Recycling Partnership. Concretely, this means that close to 1 billion cans are being sent to landfill every year. If we were to recycle them instead, and reach a 90% rate, we would generate around \$20 million of additional revenue for the State of Maryland in addition to reducing waste.

Thank you for your willingness to take on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Dahan-Kocher', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delphine Dahan-Kocher
Delphine Dahan-Kocher
VP Group Communications and Public Affairs North America
Constellium
Office: +1 443 420 7860
Mail: delphine.dahan-kocher@constellium.com

Maryland Catholic Conference_FAV_SB642.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenny Kraska

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 6, 2024

SB 642

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 642. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 642 would establish a Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Fund and Litter Reduction Program within the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), administered by the Office of Recycling. The purpose of the program is to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers in the State.

This legislation establishes a framework for "producers" and "beverage container stewardship organizations" to develop and implement beverage container stewardship plans. Plans would be submitted to the Maryland Department of the Environment for approval. A grant program would be formulated to support the goals of the program, provisions for redemption facilities, an advisory council, and enforcement provisions.

In his encyclical letter "*Laudato Si'*," Pope Francis reminds us of our sacred duty to safeguard the Earth, our common home, and to preserve its beauty and resources for present and future generations. Beverage container waste in particular poses a significant threat to the integrity of creation, contaminating our oceans, rivers, and landscapes, and endangering the health of wildlife and ecosystems. As custodians of God's creation, we are called to take decisive action to address this ecological crisis and restore harmony to the natural world.

Plastic bottled water consumption in particular continues to contribute to environmental degradation and exacerbate the global water crisis. This legislation would promote a significant reduction in plastic bottle pollution and promote a partnership to reduce the same with those whose business endeavors perpetuate their distribution and use.

The MCC appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 642

WDC 2024 Testimony_SB642_FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: JoAnne Koravos

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**Senate Bill 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund
and Litter Reduction Program
Education, Energy and Environment Committee – March 5, 2024
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2024 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of SB 642. Every year in Maryland, around [four billion beverage containers end up in the landfill](#), littering the parks and watersheds, or even worse they will end up as pollution in the air after being incinerated. [Plastic bottles break into microplastics that are consumed by wildlife, and end up in our food and water, causing health issues for humans as well as animals.](#)

Senate Bill 642 would create a container deposit return system that will reduce litter and plastic pollution in Maryland's rivers and watersheds, increase water quality and create green jobs in Maryland. [Container deposit return systems have been implemented successfully in dozens of jurisdictions across the world.](#)

Senate Bill 642 would incentivize residents to return containers, including plastic bottles, which would reduce incineration of plastic containers and divert them from landfills. Senate Bill 642 will not just increase the number of containers that are returned for recycling, but will also create a higher quality of recycled material which significantly increases the likelihood that the container is actually used to manufacture a new product, versus [single-stream recycling](#) where all recyclables are mixed in together resulting in residues and contamination.

With SB 642, Maryland can create a robust and effective container deposit return system that will protect the environment and the economy. Every year we wait, another four billion beverage containers enter our environment. We need to act now.

We ask for your support for SB 642 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

Elisabeth Liisi Fidler
WDC Subcommittee on the
Environment

Cynthia Rubenstein
Chair, WDC Advocacy

BaltimoreCounty_FAV_SB0642.pdf

Uploaded by: John Olszewski

Position: FAV

JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive



JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

WILLIAM J. THORNE
Legislative Associate

BILL NO.: **SB 642**

TITLE: Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter
Reduction Program

SPONSOR: Senator Brooks

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 5, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** SB 642 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program as a common-sense approach to boosting recycling rates and saving valuable landfill space across Maryland.

Baltimore County currently supports residential recycling by offering curbside pick-up of recyclables in our most populous communities. These materials are then brought to a County-operated Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) where they are sorted, baled and sold to third parties for further processing or reuse. This process provides a modest revenue stream for the County to run the facility and continue offering curbside recyclables collection.

However, we know that even with residential recycling, as a County, we are not capturing all recyclable materials generated by businesses, multi-family housing, or residents outside of our current curbside service area. SB 642 creates a mechanism by which these other recyclable materials can be captured. Increasing rates of capture for recyclable materials, whether through our own MRF or a Statewide container refund will benefit Baltimore County’s municipal landfill by diverting these materials and reduce litter along our roadways and riverbanks.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 642 from the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.

SB 642 - CBF - FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Julieta Rodrigo

Position: FAV



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

Senate Bill 642

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Date: March 5, 2024
To: Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee

Position: **Favorable**
From: Julieta Rodrigo, Urban and
Community Resilience Manager

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 642 which establishes the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and reduce the litter, pollution, and costs associated with beverage containers

Most plastic beverage containers in Maryland are not recycled.

Although recycling programs have existed in Maryland for many years, less than one-quarter of the 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in the state in 2019 were recycled and reused.¹ This means that the remaining 4 billion containers were left in the environment, to meet their fate of landfilling, incineration, or littering. In addition to the negative impacts of plastic pollution on the aesthetic and environmental health of our ecosystems, this is a large waste of resources, as virgin plastic requires large amounts of fossil fuels, the extraction and burning of which result in higher greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. Incineration of plastic bottles also contributes to poor air quality in Maryland, releasing nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and other pollutants that worsen residents' health and affect the acidity and balance of our Chesapeake Bay.²

Plastic beverage bottles contribute to microplastic pollution and environmental damages.

Contrary to the popular belief that plastic pollution largely ends up in the ocean, most of the plastic pollution that makes its way into the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay stays in and along local waters. Indeed, about 94% of microplastics – particles measuring 5 millimeters or less in diameter – that feed into the system via its rivers stay in the system, with an additional 5% carried to the ocean and 1% remaining in the water column.³ Microplastics threaten the health of the biodiversity that lives within the Bay watershed, as well as the health of the residents that consume seafood. For example, microplastics can physically block or fill up an animal's gut, potentially reducing its ability or desire to feed. Microplastics can also cause behavioral changes as their presence changes a fish's buoyancy or swimming behavior, which can make the fish more susceptible to predators. Microplastics also can carry toxic chemicals into the fish's body, which

¹ Container Recycling Institute, 2022. "2019 Beverage Market Data Analysis."

² "CBF Study: Baltimore Incinerator Causes \$55 Million in Health Problems per Year." *Chesapeake Bay Foundation*, 11 Dec. 2017, <https://www.cbf.org/news-media/newsroom/2017/maryland/cbf-study-baltimore-incinerator-causes-55-million-in-health-problems-per-year.html>.

³ Pipkin, Whitney. "The Chesapeake Bay Is a 'Sink' for Plastic Pollution." *Bay Journal*, Bay Journal Media, 13 Oct. 2021, https://www.bayjournal.com/news/pollution/the-chesapeake-bay-is-a-sink-for-plastic-pollution/article_ca6f12ec-21fd-11ec-b0c4-cf096494dd62.html.

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could bioaccumulate as the fish consumes other prey that have ingested plastics, and eventually make its way to human consumption.⁴ All of these factors threaten the health of our ecosystem, as well as threaten the longevity and safety of Maryland's seafood industry.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter.

Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont).⁵ Together, they average a 60% recycling rate for beverage containers, compared to 24% in states without these programs.⁶ The recycling rate for deposit beverage containers is much higher than for containers not subject to a deposit, and it increases with a higher deposit amount. The two states that offer a 10-cent redemption refund, Michigan and Oregon, have the highest beverage bottle recycling rates in the nation, reaching 75%⁷ and 85% recycling rates in 2022⁸, respectively. Producer responsibility has been a successful approach toward providing a cleaner and safer future for residents, and we recommend that Maryland take this opportunity to protect its citizens and ecosystems from the harmful effects of abundant plastic production and consumption.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 642.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

⁴ Pipkin, Whitney. "Picture of Chesapeake Microplastics Grows Clearer." *Bay Journal*, Bay Journal Media, 7 June 2021, https://www.bayjournal.com/news/pollution/picture-of-chesapeake-microplastics-grows-clearer/article_87bd3606-c3e1-11eb-bdc4-4f1a3864c6f9.html.

⁵ "Redemption Rates and Other Features of 10 U.S. State Deposit Programs." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/images/Allstates/10-state%20Summary%208-5-22r.pdf>.

⁶ "Bottle Bills", Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.container-recycling.org/index.php/issues/bottle-bills>.

⁷ "Michigan." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/current-and-proposed-laws/usa/michigan>.

⁸ "Oregon." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/current-and-proposed-laws/usa/oregon>.

APR written testimony support MD SB642_recycling r

Uploaded by: Kate Bailey

Position: FAV

March 4, 2024

Dear Senator Feldman and members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Plastics Recyclers, I am **submitting testimony in support of SB642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**. This is a proven solution to reduce litter, recycle more beverage containers, and build a more resilient domestic supply chain. This bill will take plastic bottles off the streets and out of the waterways of Maryland, and instead put them back into the hands of U.S. manufacturers to be made into new packaging.

[The Association of Plastic Recyclers \(APR\)](#) is a US-based non-profit and the only North American organization focused exclusively on improving the recycling of plastics. APR members are the entirety of the plastics recycling industry from design to collection to recovery to remanufacturing. Plastics recycling is what APR does every day. APR understands the challenges facing the industry and the solutions needed to scale recycling effectively as a key solution to reduce plastic pollution and waste and move toward a more sustainable, circular economy.

This bill is a win-win for the environment and the economy. Recycling refunds will:

Reduce litter and plastic waste.

Beverage containers are among the most littered items across beaches, parks, streets, and other public areas. Recycling refunds are proven to [reduce bottle litter by 30-50%](#), and [70% of US residents want the government](#) to take action to reduce plastic waste and litter.

Significantly increase plastics recycling.

Plastics recycling works every day all across the US. Nearly [5 billion pounds](#) of plastic were recycled in the US in 2020. This is led by states with bottle deposit programs where over [70% of plastic beverage containers are collected and recycled](#). With more deposit policies, U.S. plastic recyclers would have access to more material. [Recyclers could process 50% more](#) soda bottles, water bottles, milk jugs and other common plastics today using our country's existing infrastructure if they were able to access more material.

Support US jobs.

Five billion pounds of post-consumer plastics are recovered for recycling from US sources each year, and more than [92% of plastics are recycled within](#) North America, supporting jobs and local economies across the country. [Recycling plastics, metal, glass, paper, and other materials supports over 680,000 jobs](#) and contributes more than \$37.8 billion in wages and \$5.5 billion in tax revenues across the U.S.

Strengthen domestic supply chains.

Recycling provides companies with the raw feedstocks to make new products. By collecting and reusing our plastics domestically, we strengthen local supply chains, reduce global market volatility, and keep more value circulating in local economies.

Reduce carbon pollution.

Plastics recycling also saves energy, reduces pollution, and reduces use of fossil fuels. Recycling #1 and #2 plastic bottles can save [75 to 88% of the energy used to make virgin plastics and reduce GHG emissions by 70%](#).

Business leaders are calling for policy to drive change.

Business leaders around the US are calling for state and federal legislation to accelerate investments in recycling to meet their circular economy goals. The [US Plastics Pact supports bottle deposit policies](#), and the [major U.S. trade associations representing plastics, glass, and aluminum](#) all support deposit policies.

US companies want to buy more recycled plastics but supply is lacking

Major consumer goods companies, [such as Nestle, Procter & Gamble, and PepsiCo](#), have made substantial commitments to use more recycled plastic in their packaging. Recycling rates for PET water bottles and soda bottles need to nearly triple by 2025 to meet this demand. Without greater participation in recycling, companies will need to import plastics from other sources outside the U.S. to meet these goals.

Complementary policy but independent of EPR for packaging

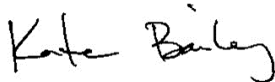
Both recycling refunds and EPR for packaging are needed solutions to collect more plastic packaging for recycling. Recycling refunds is the most proven, effective solution for collecting and recycling plastic beverage containers, while EPR for packaging improves recycling for both containers and many other plastic packaging formats. Recycling refunds can also substantially reduce litter, providing a critical complementary benefit to EPR for packaging. It is important to recognize these two

policies are both complementary and independent, and we urge the legislature to consider these as both-and policies, not an either-or approach. While Maryland is currently conducting [a study on EPR for packaging](#), this bill does not need to wait for that analysis.

Moving forward

We encourage you to move this bill forward and continue to work with stakeholders on further refinements to make it a model for the entire country. APR staff are available at your convenience to discuss these comments and share further technical, regulatory, and policy information. Please do not hesitate to contact Kate Bailey, Chief Policy Officer, at katebailey@plasticsrecycling.org.

Sincerely,



Kate Bailey
Chief Policy Officer, Association of Plastics Recyclers
katebailey@plasticsrecycling.org

SB642 Beverage Container Recycling Refund FAVORABL

Uploaded by: Kelly Doordan

Position: FAV



Testimony On: SB 642 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Submitted by: Zero Waste Montgomery County
Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment
Position: Support
Date: March 5, 2024

Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record. My name is Kelly Doordan and I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of Zero Waste Montgomery County. We strongly SUPPORT S.B. 642 (Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program).

The program would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. Without this program, billions of containers sold in Maryland are being incinerated, landfilled, or left to pollute Maryland's streets and waterways. Importantly, this program offers Marylanders a self-financing and proven program to reduce beverage container litter and increase recycling of high quality materials. Unclaimed deposits would fund a grant program to increase reuse and further recycling, helping our state move toward zero waste and saving local governments money in water cleanup and trash disposal costs.

We already have years of data from our waste characterizations and recycling reports, along with estimates of numbers of beverage containers sold in the state and how much litter removed from our waterways is from beverage containers. We do not need to wait for another report to tell us what we know is needed now. For example, in Montgomery County, while only 1.2 percent by weight of our non-recycled trash is categorized as PET #1 "bottle bill" plastic bottles, that translated to an estimate of more than 9,100 tons of PET #1 bottles that were disposed rather than separated for curbside recycling in 2023.¹

Trash dumped in waterways is a health hazard for people, wildlife, and fish, and has negative aesthetic and economic impacts. The Anacostia River is so impacted by trash pollution that it was the second waterway in the nation that compelled the U.S. EPA to establish as requiring a

¹ Montgomery County, MD, Department of Environmental Protection, MSW Management System Analysis, *Request for Expressions of Interest, Shady Grove Transfer Station Waste Tonnage and Composition Data*.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for trash.² Beverage container litter is currently about half the volume of trash in Anacostia River trash traps,³ meaning efforts to encourage beverage container litter reduction and recycling have not been effective and we need to do more.

This legislation would:

- Enable Marylanders to enjoy the benefits of a program that has measurably reduced beverage container litter in other states.
- Protect our streets and waters from beverage container litter that clogs storm drains, clutters streams, and breaks down into microplastics that pollute our state's waters.
- Implement an evidence-based program to improve recycling rates to as much as 90% backed by decades of experience in more than ten other states.
- Prevent billions more beverage containers from being destroyed in incinerators or landfills or littered to pollute our streets and waters.
- Help Maryland move toward zero waste and circular economy systems where we keep materials circulating in our economy at the highest and best value. Beverage container refund programs provide different incentives and build out different types of infrastructure compared to other recycling programs. The beverage containers collected in deposit/refund systems are cleaner and better suited for remanufacturing or reuse than containers sorted out from trash or single stream recycling systems.

Please pass the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program this year. Thank you for your consideration.

² <https://www.epa.gov/dc/steps-taken-reduce-trash-anacostia>

³ Anacostia Watershed Society

HB0735SB0642_Town_of_Brentwood_testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren R

Position: FAV



BRENTWOOD Maryland

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

**THE TOWN OF BRENTWOOD SUPPORTS HB075/SB0642
MARYLAND BEVERAGE CONTAINER RECYCLING REFUND AND
LITTER REDUCTION PROGRAM.**

For the Honorable Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee; Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee; Senator Augustine; Delegates Fennell and Ivey.

This legislation would reduce plastic pollution and litter, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create jobs through a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers, depending on container size.

About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold annually in Maryland. Despite the widespread availability of curbside collection of recyclables and public recycling receptacles, only about a quarter of the containers (23%) are captured for recycling. Four billion containers a year, 2.6 billion of which are plastic, are left in the environment – in landfills, roadsides, waterways – or incinerated. According to the Anacostia Watershed Society, beverage containers are about half of the trash by volume in the watershed’s trash traps.

Humans are being exposed to both plastic particles and chemical additives being released from plastic debris according to *Environmental Science and Technology* (2016). The material is fragmenting, leaching, and spreading throughout the biosphere, including indoor and outdoor air, soil, and water systems. Not only is human microplastic consumption estimated at annual ranges from 39000 to 52000 particles, but microplastics are ingested by marine life, injuring, and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Consumers who meet their recommended water intake through bottled sources may be ingesting an additional 90000 microplastics annually, compared to 4000 microplastics for those who consume only tap water.

A solution for Maryland is beverage container deposit programs, also known as *bottle bills*, which are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. Ten states have longstanding, successful programs that add a small deposit to the purchase price of beverage containers that are refunded to customers when the containers are returned for recycling. The recycling rate for beverage containers in these programs is 2-3 times higher than for containers not subject to a deposit. States with a 10-cent deposit have achieved container recycling rates of 90 percent compared to Maryland’s of 23 percent of containers sold in the state.

As a vibrant community in the Anacostia Watershed along the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River just outside of Washington DC, the Town of Brentwood has frequent litter and trash clean-ups to free our community of pollution. Brentwood is one of the most densely populated areas of Prince George’s County. With over 3800 residents, we are 51 percent

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www.brentwoodmd.gov





Latino/Hispanic with a median income at 58 percent of the Area Median Income. Brentwood is recognized federally as a historically disadvantaged community. The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool of the White House Council on Environmental Quality identifies Brentwood as a community faced with significant burdens. Environmental justice is a real concern for municipal leadership and the community.

This legislation would also provide savings for local governments since beverage producers would finance the costs of the collection and processing of three-quarters of beverage containers currently being disposed or littered and the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled curbside. The program will also divert materials from costly landfills and incinerators, which are costs borne by taxpayers and local governments. Until Maryland can place the burden where it belongs – on producers of these materials – it is still placed on local governments and residents, and disproportionately on historically disadvantaged communities. Brentwood asks that the Committee, our Senator, our Delegates, and the Governor pass the bills.

Sincerely,

Town of Brentwood Mayor and Town Council



SB0642_Bottle_Deposit_EEE_CJW_FAV (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Testimony on: SB0642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 5, 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB0642. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of nearly 30 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on SB0642.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction aka the “MD bottle bill” is a very sensible bill. It is an easy, low-hanging fruit solution to reduce plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the energy needed to produce new beverage containers.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. This bill would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit, depending on the size of the container. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the bottle is returned and is estimated to achieve a 90% return rate.

This program would be self-funded from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. So while the state and local counties are grappling with extremely tight budgets, the program established by the bill would not cost the state at all and relieve the counties and ultimately the taxpayers from the burden of expensive waste/recycling costs.

This bill would provide a high rate of return for containers by creating incentives for the development of refillable and reusable containers. It isn't cost effective to produce reusable containers if they are not being returned as part of a circular and zero waste economy. We also note recycling refund programs for beverage containers go hand in hand with legislation passed last year initiating the process to adopt producer responsibility for packaging. It is estimated that 40 to 60 percent of packaging is beverage containers according to the National Stewardship Action Council. Producer responsibility programs help us reduce our volume of waste. Recycling refund programs help us reuse and recycle a major portion of the packaging waste stream.

The State of Maryland needs to protect our waterways and our beloved Chesapeake Bay from plastic and litter pollution and this bill will accomplish this goal. The MLC Climate Justice Wing strongly supports SB0642 and urges a FAVORABLE report in Committee.

350MoCo

Adat Shalom Climate Action

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Chesapeake Earth Holders

Climate Parents of Prince George's

Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition

Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County

Echotopia

Elders Climate Action

Fix Maryland Rail

Glen Echo Heights Mobilization

Greenbelt Climate Action Network

HoCoClimateAction

IndivisibleHoCoMD

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Mobilize Frederick

Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Mountain Maryland Movement

Nuclear Information & Resource Service

Progressive Maryland

Safe & Healthy Playing Fields

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee

The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

WISE

SB0642_Bottle_Deposit_EEE_LPP.org_FAV .pdf

Uploaded by: Liz Feighner

Position: FAV



Bill: [SB0642](#): Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Hearing Date: **March 5, 2024**
Bill Sponsor: **Senators Brooks**, Rosapepe, Muse, Waldstreicher, Gile, Carter, Kagan, Jackson, Augustine, Kelly, Lewis Young, M. Washington, Hettleman, Lam, Benson, and Elfreth
Committee: **Education, Energy, and the Environment**
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 urge support of SB0642**, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, which would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent deposit that is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling.

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.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction aka the “MD bottle bill” is a very sensible bill. It is an easy, low-hanging fruit solution to reduce plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the energy needed to produce new beverage containers. This could also be called the Back-to-the-Future bill as we easily did this before years ago and would be much better off had we gone back in time and continued bottle deposits instead of switching to single-use beverage containers.

In Howard County, to our disappointment, we learned that all those glass bottles that we have been so diligently recycling are not going to be made into new bottles but are used as landfill

cover. This bill would assure most glass bottles would be recovered instead of used as landfill cover.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. This bill would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit, depending on the size of the container. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the bottle is returned and is estimated to achieve a 90% return rate.

This program would be self-funded from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. So while the state and local counties are grappling with extremely tight budgets, the program established by the bill would not cost the state at all and relieve the counties and ultimately the taxpayers from the burden of expensive waste/recycling costs.

This bill would provide a high rate of return for containers by creating incentives for the development of refillable and reusable containers. It isn't cost effective to produce reusable containers if they are not being returned in order to create a circular and zero waste economy.

The state of Maryland needs to protect our waterways and our beloved Chesapeake Bay from plastic and litter pollution and this bill will accomplish this goal.

We urge a **favorable report for SB0642**.

Submitted for [Less Plastic Please](#)
by Liz Feighner
LessPlasticPleaseHoCo@gmail.com

CRI Supports MDSB642 03-04-2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Madeline Walker

Position: FAV



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March 4, 2024

Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee
Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chairman; Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
West Miller Senate Office Building, Room 2
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: CRI Supports SB 642: Maryland Beverage Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

We are writing in support of Senate Bill 642, “Maryland Beverage Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program,” a bill that would establish a beverage container deposit program in Maryland.

We applaud the bill for:

1. Incorporating most beverage types into the proposed deposit program, including **wine and liquor**. Doing so will generate clean, high-quality glass that is desired by glass manufacturers, and will help alleviate the pressure that the state has been experiencing to find aggregate uses for glass collected through municipal programs.
2. Specifying a **deposit of 10¢ for containers less than or equal to 24 fluid ounces and 15¢ for containers more than 24 ounces**, with options to increase the refund value in the future.
3. Including **robust performance targets** as well as a description of the penalties for not completing these targets.

Ten cents is a strong financial incentive for people to return containers rather than throw them in the trash or litter them. Michigan and Oregon, the two U.S. states with dime deposits, have achieved much higher redemption rates—76% and 86% respectively in 2022—than the deposit states with 5¢ deposits (where reported redemption rates range from 38% to 70%). When consumers who purchased the drinks do not take bottles and cans in for refund themselves, there are always other people and groups ready to do the redemption for them to generate income.

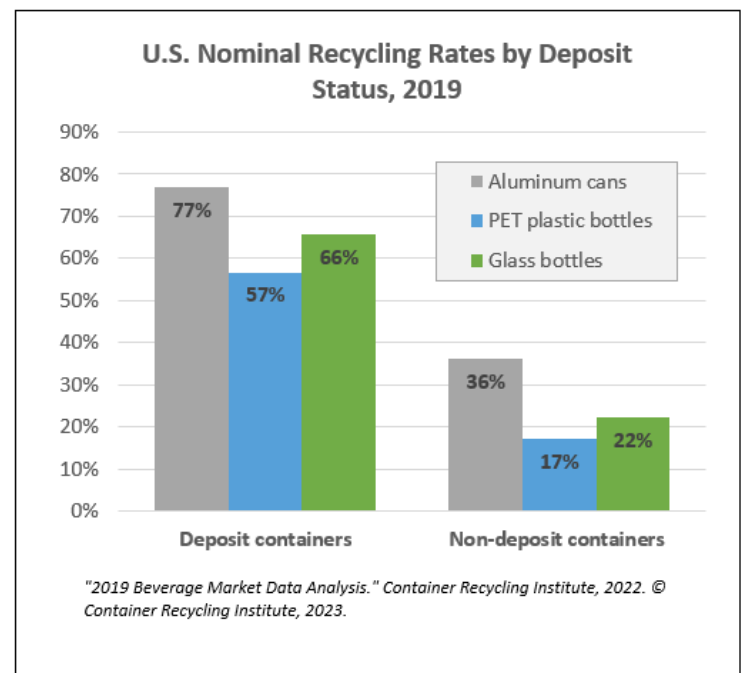
For more than 50 years, beverage container deposit laws, or “bottle bills,” have been successful in achieving recycling rates that are up to 3 times higher than those of bottles and cans without deposits. As the graphic on the following page shows, more than three quarters (77%) of aluminum cans with a deposit were recycled nationwide in 2019, in contrast to just over one third (36%) of cans lacking a deposit. The differences for bottles are more pronounced: 57% vs. 17% for non-deposit PET plastic, and 66% vs. 22% for non-deposit glass.

Increasing beverage sales nationwide has led to burgeoning bottle and can waste. **Based on national statistics, CRI estimates that 76% of the 5.9 billion beverage bottles and cans sold in Maryland in 2021 were wasted:** littered, landfilled, or incinerated. That level of consumption and wasting represents a significant burden on taxpayers and ratepayers: whether through city-run recycling programs or municipally-contracted trash pick-up and disposal.

Deposits have multiple benefits, including:

- **Achieving higher recycling rates** than municipal programs alone.
- **Transferring** the financial and operational responsibility for recycling from the local taxpayer to the producers of disposable beverage containers.
- **Adding value to local and regional economies** through the sale and processing of scrap materials.
- **Avoiding greenhouse gas emissions and reducing energy use** by displacing virgin materials in manufacturing.
- **Reducing litter** that is expensive for public and private entities to clean up, that causes injuries to people and domestic animals, and that adds to harmful ocean plastic waste.
- **Promoting job growth;** it is estimated that there are more than 26,000 jobs resulting from the existing deposit return systems in the 10 states where the law exists.

If Maryland were to pass this deposit bill, CRI estimates that the state would recycle **3.3 billion additional containers annually—or just over 208,000 tons of metal, glass, plastic and paper—** over and above the recycling currently taking place. By reducing the need to make new bottles and cans from virgin materials, this additional recycling would eliminate about 212,304 tons of greenhouse gas emissions: **an amount equivalent to taking almost 46,000 cars off the road for a year.**



We are optimistic that there will be strong markets for deposit containers generated in Maryland, in part because multiple global beverage brands have made public commitments to increase their use of recycled materials, as the below table shows.

Selected plastics reduction commitments by global brands		
Company	Timeframe	Commitment or target
Coca-Cola	by 2030	Equivalent of 100% of containers collected and recycled
Coca-Cola	by 2030	Average 50% recycled content in bottles
Danone	by 2025	100% of packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable
McDonald's	by 2025	100% of guest packaging from renewable, recycled or certified sources
Kraft Heinz	by 2025	100% of packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable
Nestlé	by 2025	100% of packaging recyclable or reusable

Reprinted from CRI's Winter 2018 newsletter

© Container Recycling Institute, 2018

These lofty goals can only be met through the increased availability of high-quality beverage bottles and cans for use as feedstock in new containers. Deposit programs consistently generate such high-quality bottles and cans. For example, deposit-grade PET bottles have recently had a value of 17.75¢ per pound, ***twice the value of non-deposit, curbside PET*** (9¢ per pound).

Deposits on beverage containers are now available to more than 553 million people worldwide. With the announcement of multiple new deposit laws in 2022 and 2023 (including Uruguay, Singapore, Poland, and Czechia), **631 million people will have access to deposit programs by 2025**. This trend is projected to continue as more nations realize that deposits are a vital part of the solution to the problem of bottle and can waste and plastic pollution.

In sum, CRI supports the passage of a beverage container deposit law in Maryland. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Susan Collins
President, Container Recycling Institute

About the Container Recycling Institute: CRI is a nonprofit organization and a leading authority on the economic and environmental impacts of beverage containers and other consumer-product packaging.

National Aquarium - SB 642 - Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Maggie Ostdahl

Position: FAV



NATIONAL AQUARIUM®

Date: March 5, 2024

Bill: SB 642 – Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction

Position: Support

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **Senate Bill 642 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**, which will reduce pollution, decrease costs of waste management, and increase recycling rates.

Reducing litter from beverage containers across Maryland is related to all the National Aquarium’s strategic conservation goals: saving wildlife and habitats, combatting climate change, and stopping plastic pollution. Every year about four billion beverage bottles, more than half of which are plastic, are not captured by Maryland recycling systems and are instead incinerated or left as litter in the environment. Waste incineration adds greenhouse gas emissions and harmful air pollution to the atmosphere while also disincentivizing better waste management practices including source reduction, reuse systems, recycling and composting. To make matters worse, trash incinerators are often sited in underserved and overburdened communities. This bill would lead to fewer beverage containers burned as trash, therefore supporting improved air quality and environmental justice.

Meanwhile, plastic beverage bottles left in the environment break down into smaller pieces that endanger wildlife, contaminate the global food web, and transport toxins harmful to human health. The burden and costs of mismanaged waste that becomes plastic pollution, including many beverage containers, are varied, complex and borne primarily by municipalities, communities, and taxpayers. Nationally, the U.S. spends at least \$11 billion to clean up trash that is ‘leaked’ into the environment. Closer to home, the Maryland Department of Transportation estimates expenditures of approximately \$8 million annually to remove truckloads of litter, including beverage containers, from roadways. During the past two years, the National Aquarium worked with hundreds of dedicated volunteers to pick up more than 26,000 plastic beverage containers – and ours is one of many organizations that conduct regular cleanups throughout the state. In short, many Marylanders’ time and capacity as well as millions of dollars could be better allocated when this legislation offers a proven policy solution.

Maryland should not keep kicking the proverbial can (or bottle) down the road. Refundable bottle deposit programs currently operating in ten other U.S. states have been shown to be highly effective policies that recover beverage containers and increase recycling rates while reducing litter and associated costs of mitigation. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 642.**

Contact:

Ryan Fredriksson
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SB642_MDSierraClub_fav 5March2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Martha Ainsworth

Position: FAV



Maryland Chapter
P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: SB 642 – “Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program”
Position: Support
Hearing Date: March 5, 2024

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports SB 642. The primary objective of this bill is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution in Maryland. It would create a beverage container deposit program with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers. The deposit would be refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. By attaching value to empty beverage containers, fewer are littered and those that are littered do not remain in the environment. These programs have been shown to be highly effective in the U.S. and around the world for reducing beverage container litter and diverting containers from disposal. They also produce a number of other important benefits, highlighted below.

The problem

Beverage container litter in Maryland has reached crisis levels and is a major source of plastic pollution, posing threats to the environment and human health. About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year, but only about a quarter (1.2 billion) are recycled.¹ Four billion containers annually are wasted – left in landfills, on roadsides, in waterways, or incinerated. More than half of these wasted containers are plastic. Beverage containers, most of them plastic, account for half or more of the trash in trash traps on the Anacostia River watershed.²

Maryland’s beverage container litter problem is so severe that the Environmental Protection Agency declared the Anacostia watershed to be impaired with trash in 2010 and made the same determination in 2014 for the watershed surrounding Baltimore Harbor. Our state, home to the largest estuary in the country – the Chesapeake Bay, also has the dubious distinction of having two of the three water bodies in the country that are impaired for trash and regulated by the EPA under the Clean Water Act.

Plastic pollution from beverage containers poses a threat to wildlife and human health. The containers break into ever smaller pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Plastic particles have been found in the food we eat, the air we breathe, and in most human organs. Scientists estimate that we are ingesting up to a credit card’s worth of plastic weekly.³ The impact of plastic ingestion on human health is of great concern.

The solution

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have

¹ Container Recycling Institute (CRI). “2022 Beverage Market Data Analysis (BMDA)” for Maryland, based on 2019 data.

² Anacostia Watershed Society, Anacostia Riverkeeper.

³ Dahlberg and University of Newcastle, Australia. 2019. *No Plastic in Nature: Assessing Plastic Ingestion from Nature to People*. Commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund.

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs.⁴ Beverage container litter in those states was reduced by 70-84%.⁵ A study of coastal litter in debris surveys in Australian and U.S. states with and without container deposit legislation found that the share of containers in states with container deposit legislation was 40% lower than in states without the laws.⁶ According to a 2011 analysis of the impact of a beverage container deposit system in Maryland, "... there is little evidence that any other program, in and of itself, is nearly as effective as deposit programs at reducing litter rates."⁷

The power of a refundable deposit on consumer behavior not only reduces litter but has an enormous impact on recycling rates for beverage containers covered by these programs. Recycling rates for beverage containers in the ten deposit states in 2019 averaged 75%, ranging from 59% to 91%, compared with an estimated 23% in Maryland, with no deposit (Exhibit 1). Two states – Michigan and Oregon – have achieved recycling rates of 90% with a 10-cent deposit. Deposit beverage containers are 2-3 times more likely to be recycled than are containers not subject to a deposit (Exhibit 2). The ten deposit states represent 27% of the U.S. population but contribute 48% of U.S. beverage container recycling.⁸

The Maryland Bottle Bill (SB 642)

The Maryland Bottle Bill, which would initiate a deposit as of January 1, 2027, has benefitted from lessons learned over the past 50 years for successful beverage container deposit programs.

- It would maximize the impact on reducing beverage container litter and waste by including all beverages in metal, plastic, and glass containers⁹ and setting a deposit level that will motivate the public to change behavior: 10 cents for containers 24 fluid ounces or less and 15 cents for larger containers, up to 3 liters.
- It would require beverage producers to take responsibility for financing and implementing the program, with significant oversight from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The program would be implemented by a non-profit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization of all beverage producers selling or distributing redeemable beverage containers in the State. MDE's responsibilities include: appointing the Stewardship Organization; approving a Stewardship Plan and annual reports; and setting convenience standards and handling fees, among others. An Advisory Council of stakeholders would advise MDE on approval of the Stewardship Organization, its stewardship plan, annual reports, and program implementation and performance.
- It would create the conditions for future development and adoption of reusable/refillable beverage container systems. Ten percent of unclaimed deposits would fund a Recycling Refund Grant program, to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers.
- The program would pay for itself, including MDE oversight. It would be funded from registration and Stewardship Organization fees paid by beverage producers, the revenue from sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties paid by producers. Registration fees paid by beverage producers are set to completely cover the costs of MDE oversight and are kept in a special account in the State Recycling Trust Fund that can only be used for specific program purposes and will not revert to the General Fund.

⁴California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont.

⁵Reloop and CRI. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Reduce Litter.* <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/DRS-Litter-Fact-Sheet-Summary-14June2021.pdf>

⁶Schuyler, Qamar, et al. 2018. "Economic incentives reduce plastic inputs to the ocean," *Marine Policy* 96: 250-255. October.

⁷University of Maryland, Environmental Finance Center (EFC). 2011. "2011 Impact Analysis of a Beverage Container Deposit Program in Maryland." December 15, p. 4.

⁸CRI. "2022 Beverage Market Data Analysis (BMDA)" for Maryland, based on 2019 data. *Op.Cit.*

⁹Medical beverages and infant formula are the only excluded beverages.

A similar bill was introduced in the House in the 2023 General Assembly (HB 1089), and several features have been updated in response to feedback from stakeholders, including:

- Implementation by a single Beverage Container Stewardship Organization, rather than the potential for multiple organizations, to facilitate MDE oversight
- Extension of the preparation time for program launch by one year (from 18 to 30 months)
- Ensuring that MDE's expenditures leading up to the launch are fully covered, via reimbursements of any General Fund expenses. The program is completely self-financing.
- Clarifying the expectations for retailers and hospitality establishments (sellers of beverages consumed on premises, such as restaurants, hotels, bars, sports venues)
- Exempting small retailers with less than 3,000 square feet of sales area from having to accept most containers for redemption and refund.
- Adding a per container materials handling fee for hospitality establishments for collecting and pre-sorting empty redeemed containers to be picked up by the program for recycling.

The program's benefits

Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution: The program would capture more than 3 billion additional beverage containers annually for recycling, including 2 billion plastic bottles, diverting at least 200,000 tons of plastic, aluminum, and glass containers from litter, landfills, and incinerators.

Quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate: With a 10-cent deposit, the recycling rate for beverage containers, currently estimated at only about 23% of containers sold in the state, would nearly quadruple to more than 90%.

Increase in high quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers: When the targets are achieved, the program would generate an additional 11,305 tons of aluminum, 44,066 tons of PET plastic, 3,207 tons of HDPE plastic, and 140,923 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers. The program would contribute to creating a circular, bottle-to-bottle economy that maximizes the reduction in waste.

Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions: By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from the Maryland Bottle Bill would eliminate 195,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent, annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars from the road.

Savings for taxpayers and local governments: Beverage producers (not taxpayers) would finance the costs of collection and processing of the three-quarters of beverage containers currently being disposed or littered, as well as the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled. The program will divert materials from costly landfills and incinerators. These disposal costs are currently borne by taxpayers and local governments.¹⁰

Investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems: Deposits are critical for development of refillable and reusable containers. The program will launch that transition, with a target of 10% of beverage containers sold in Maryland to be reusable and refillable by 2034.

¹⁰ A review of more than 30 studies of the impact of beverage container deposit programs on costs to local governments worldwide found that in the context of the overall waste management system, local governments saved costs from adoption of the deposit program. ReLoop. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Generate Cost Savings for Municipalities*. <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Fact-Sheet-Economic-Savings-for-Munis-8FEB2021.pdf>

Job creation: Increased recycling generated by a deposit program would create five times as many jobs in collection, sorting, and transporting as created by garbage collection, hauling, landfilling, or incineration. The maintenance of reverse vending machines and investments in the reuse/refill systems will also create new opportunities.

Conclusion

We need to act now to pass the Maryland Bottle Bill. Maryland is facing a plastic pollution crisis that is impacting our health and the environment. Beverage container deposit programs are spreading worldwide, fueled by public concern about plastic pollution (Exhibit 3). Based on decades of experience from bottle bills in the U.S. and abroad, the SB 642 will substantially reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It will also increase the quality of recycled material for closed loop recycling and provide for a transition from single-use to reusable/refillable containers. These are the unique impacts of deposit programs. In states with beverage container deposit programs, deposits coexist with curbside collection to maximize recycling by capturing containers for beverages consumed at and away from home.

The Sierra Club also supports legislation to reduce packaging, redesign hard-to-recycle packaging for recyclability, increase recycling of packaging, and make producers responsible for those outcomes. Beverage container deposit programs and producer responsibility for packaging programs complement each other. Both need to be passed. A Recycling Needs Assessment is being launched to inform future legislation on Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging, but that study is not charged with reviewing policies to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. There's no need to wait to pass the Maryland Bottle Bill, because the elements for success are already well established. Every year we wait, another 4 billion containers are left in the environment. We respectfully request a favorable report on SB 642.

Martha Ainsworth, Chair
Chapter Zero Waste Team
Martha.Ainsworth@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Attachments:

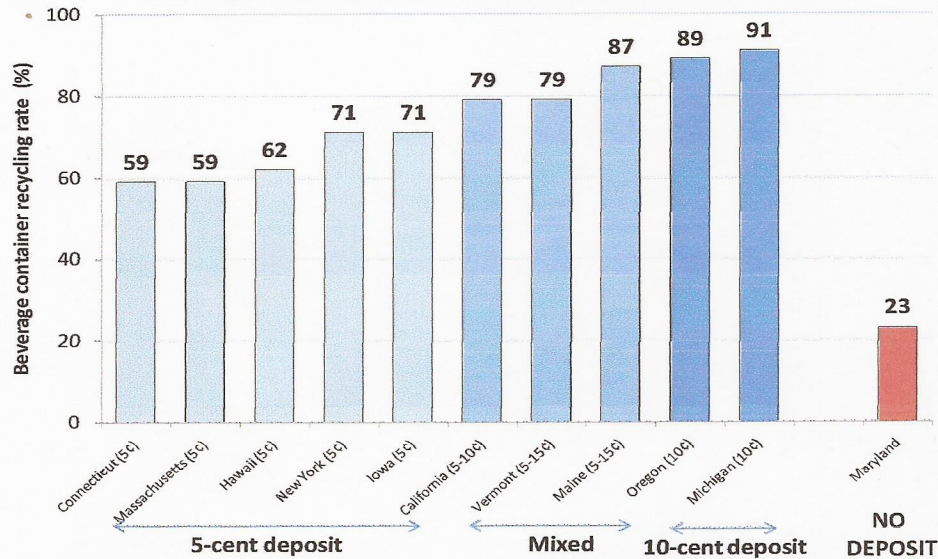
Exhibit 1 - Recycling rates in deposit states are several times higher than in Maryland and highest in states with at least a 10-cent deposit

Exhibit 2 - Recycling rates by material type in deposit and non-deposit states, 2019

Exhibit 3 - Global Growth in Container Deposit Laws, 2017-2027

Exhibit 1. Recycling rates in deposit states are several times higher than in Maryland and highest in states with at least a 10-cent deposit

Recycling rates (%) for covered beverage containers in deposit states vs. Maryland, 2019



Source: Container Recycling Institute, 2022 Beverage Market Data Analysis

Note: The statistic for Maryland is the estimated recycling rate for all beverage cans and bottles sold in the state in 2019.

Exhibit 2:

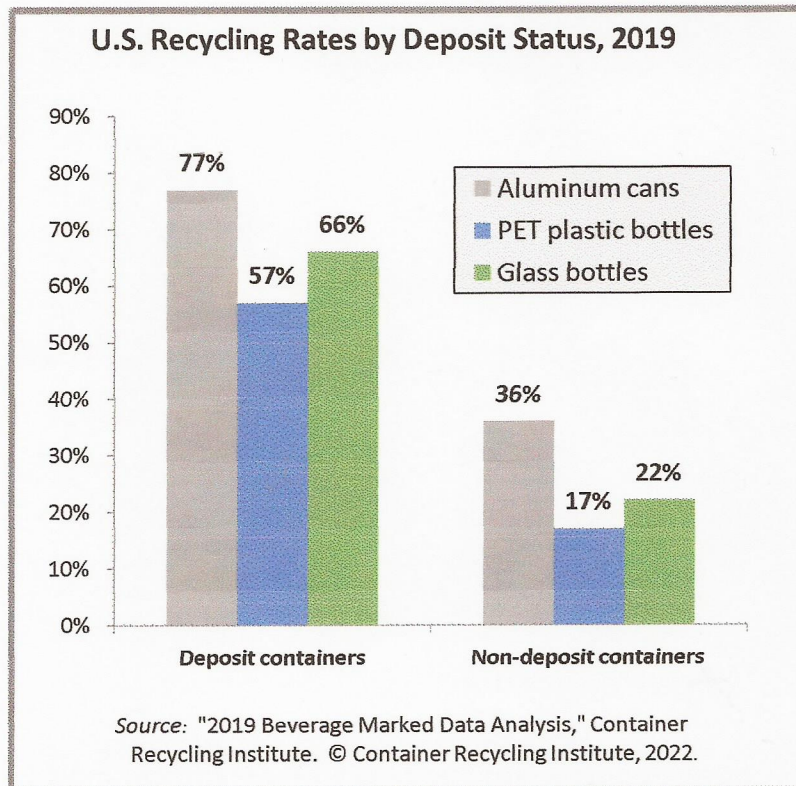


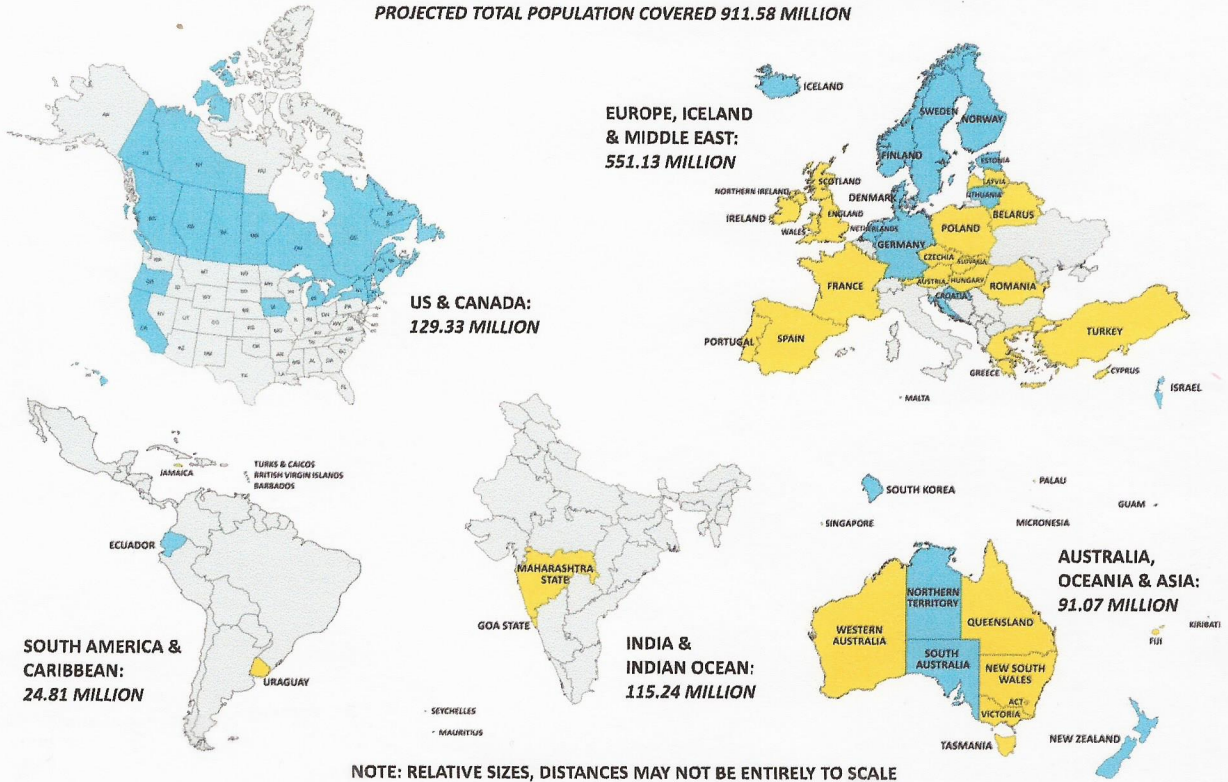
Exhibit 3:

GLOBAL GROWTH IN CONTAINER DEPOSIT LAWS 2017-2027

■ IMPLEMENTED BEFORE 2017:
 357.08 MILLION PEOPLE COVERED

■ IMPLEMENTED OR PENDING 2017-2027:
 554.5 MILLION PEOPLE COVERED

PROJECTED TOTAL POPULATION COVERED 911.58 MILLION



Source: Container Recycling Institute, 2024.

Surfrider Support Letter SB642.pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Gove

Position: FAV



March 4, 2024

RE: Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB735 and SB642)

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Surfrider Foundation's Ocean City and Annapolis Chapters, and our Annapolis High School Club support the *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program* ([HB735](#) and [SB642](#)), commonly known as the "bottle bill".

About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually, but only 23% of them are recycled. The rest are either incinerated, landfilled, or littered. No surprise that beverage containers are the second most collected item (behind only cigarette butts) at Surfrider's beach clean ups in the State.

Littered plastic bottles add to the plastic pollution crisis; plastic particles have been found in drinking water, food, human bodies, and in practically every inch of the globe. This pollution poses significant health risks to humans, especially those in underserved communities where the majority of plastic manufacturing and waste management infrastructure is located.

Bottle bills are a proven way to drastically increase the rate of recycling for beverage containers, while reducing the need to manufacture virgin bottles and lessening the

amount incinerated or landfilled. Two states – Michigan and Oregon – have achieved recycling rates of 90% with a 10-cent bottle deposit.

How it works: Customers pay a small deposit when they purchase beverage containers, which is then refunded to them when they return the container to a retailer or redemption facility. The program is self-financing, saving costs to taxpayers and local governments. A share of the unclaimed deposits will fund development of refill/reuse bottle systems.

Bottle bills are proven policies to reduce litter and pollution, increase recycling rates, and increase the use of recycled materials--please cosponsor and support the *Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program Program* (HB735 and SB642), commonly known as the “bottle bill”.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Marina Feeser, Chair

Ocean City Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation
chair@oceancity.surfrider.org

Amy Adamo, Chair

Annapolis Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation
chair@annapolis.surfrider.org

Gracyn Green, Chair

Annapolis High School Club of the Surfrider Foundation
ahs@clubs.surfrider.org

SB0642_Beverage_Container_Recycling_Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Loll

Position: FAV



SB0642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Testimony before the Maryland Senate Committee for Education, Energy and the Environment

March 5, 2024

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Ms. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Michael Loll, and I represent the Green Team of St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church in Columbia, MD. Our group's mission is to care for God's creation as instructed by Catholic social teaching. To that end, we advocate for legislation that protects Maryland's environment and its citizens, particularly those who live in underserved and vulnerable communities. We provide written testimony today in **strong support of SB0642**.

According to the Maryland Sierra Club, 5 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year. Only 25% of these are recycled, with the rest ending up in roadside litter, landfills, and incinerators. Container deposit bills in other states have reduced the burden of unrecycled cans and bottles on the environment (<https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/Sierra-Club-Beverage-Container-Guidance.pdf>). SB0642 would:

- Reduce roadside littering and pollution in our waterways.
- Increase can and bottle recycling, which would provide container manufacturers with stock materials which now have to be imported or made from scratch. Besides reducing manufacturing costs, reuse of materials translates to less pollution and green house gas emissions.
- Create new jobs in recycling and local container collection.
- Decrease toxic emissions from incinerators burning plastic bottles. Incinerators are typically located in low income and minority communities, which must bear the health burdens of this pollution.
- Reduce the cost of recycling for local governments. Since the bill is self funding, taxpayer responsibility for container recycling would be cut back or eliminated.
- Lower recycling costs for restaurants.

This bill has the support of local governments, glass bottle and aluminum can manufacturers, environmental organizations, and various faith groups. Our church emphasizes creation care and looking out for the common good, and this bill meets both of those stipulations.

Thank you for your time and attention.

We encourage a favorable report.

Michael Loll

Columbia, MD

SB 0642.LetterofSupport.EEEEC.3.1.24.pdf

Uploaded by: Nancy Meyer

Position: FAV

**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
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission

SB0642-EEE-FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

SB642

March 9, 2023

TO: Members of the Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters Committees
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
POSITION: Support

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB)642.

SB 642 establishes the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase reuse and recycling of beverage containers. By providing the infrastructure for the stewardship of beverage containers, this bill supports local governments with meeting waste reduction goals and preventing post-consumer waste from entering the environment, especially our waterways. Beverage containers covered under the bill include glass, aluminum and plastic bottles. The bill specifies a goal to achieve a 90% redemption rate in the bill, which would be about 5 billion single-use beverage containers. Though the exact number that would benefit Baltimore City is not known, this target will have significant impacts on the city's waste management strategies that divert and prevent waste. SB 642 holds the prospect of reducing the cost of litter and beverage containers collection, recycling and disposal currently imposed on Baltimore City taxpayers.

Programming outlined in the bill also aligns with a goal in the 2019 Sustainability Plan to in our Waste and Recycling, Water in the Environment, and waste reduction goals in Mayor Scott's Term 1 Action Plan:

Waste and Recycling Chapter
Strategy 1: Pursue legislative and policy changes to reduce the waste stream. Action 1
Water in the Environment Chapter

Chapter "Investigate revising codes and/or creating ordinances to eliminate waste and maximize reuse of materials." (strategy 3, action 4) and to "Develop and promote legislation and policy at the City and State level to reduce pollution of our waterways, including restricting the use of pesticides and herbicides and reducing the use of single-use plastics (such as plastic bags and beverage bottles) (strategy 2, action 4, pp 112).

Non-recyclable materials like plastic bags, polystyrene containers, and beverage containers make up as much as half of the litter polluting local streets and waterways. In 2018, the City Council passed a ban on polystyrene containers for carryout food and drinks by a unanimous vote, the Baltimore City Public School Board voted to phase out Styrofoam trays from school cafeterias in favor of compostable trays and in October 2021 Baltimore City passed a plastic bag ban. These bill have proven themselves to be effective waste prevention, behavior change and zero waste planning tools for local governments. The proposed bottle bill will help regulate post-consumer waste across the state,

aid local governments with litter prevention/reduction allowing Maryland to shift from waste as a liability to waste as an asset; a way to create good paying, local jobs tied to a workforce development pipeline.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable** report on SB 642 as the bill aligns with citywide goals in the city's 2019 Sustainability Plan, city and statewide emission reduction goals and helps to better prioritize state subsidies for truly renewable energy.

Just Zero - Testimony in Support of SB 642 (Mar. 5

Uploaded by: Peter Blair

Position: FAV



March 5, 2024

Chair Feldman
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
Maryland State Senate
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 642 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagen, and Members of the Maryland Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 642. **Just Zero strongly supports this bill.**

Just Zero is a national environmental non-profit advocacy organization that works alongside communities, policy makers, scientists, educators, organizers, and others to implement just and equitable solutions to climate-damaging and toxic production, consumption, and waste disposal practices. We believe that all people deserve Zero Waste solutions with zero climate-damaging emissions and zero toxic exposures.

SB 642 would establish a beverage container recycling refund program – more commonly known as a “Bottle Bill – in Maryland. Just Zero is extremely supportive of Bottle Bills because they reduce litter, increase recycling rates, create jobs, and develop both the consumer culture and infrastructure necessary for reusable beverage systems. If enacted this bill will significantly benefit Maryland’s environment and economy.

While we understand Maryland is currently in the process of developing a Needs Assessment to evaluate packaging waste and to provide recommendations for the development of an Extended Producer Responsibility (“EPR”) for Packaging Program, we strongly urge the committee to prioritize SB 642 this session. Nothing in the needs assessment will impact whether Maryland should establish a Bottle Bill program. Moreover, including beverage containers in a EPR for Packaging program will result in a loss of significant benefits associated with bottle bills such as litter reduction, increased recycling of beverage containers, and the development of reusable beverage container systems.

I. Bottle Bill Programs Are Incredibly Popular and Prevalent Across the World.

Bottle Bill programs have been implemented in dozens of jurisdictions around the world, with new programs developing each year. The first Bottle Bill was established in 1970, in British Columbia, Canada.¹ Since then, over 50 additional jurisdictions have adopted programs, including ten U.S.

¹ Reloop, [Global Deposit Book – 2022: An Overview of Deposit Return Systems for Single-Use Beverage Containers](#), p. 10 (Nov. 2022)



states, almost all Canadian provinces, and a large portion of the European Union.² Right now, over 290 million people live in communities with a Bottle Bill.³ This number is expected to grow to 911 million people by 2027, because new programs are currently being finalized and implemented.⁴ Internationally, Austria, England, France, Ireland, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Poland, Spain, and Wales are all either considering or actively developing Bottle Bill programs.⁵ This legislative session, Illinois⁶, Minnesota⁷, New Hampshire⁸, Rhode Island⁹, and Washington¹⁰ are all considering proposals to implement new Bottle Bill programs. These states see these programs as necessary to meet waste reduction, recycling, and climate goals.

II. Bottle Bills Provide Significant Environmental and Economic Benefits

The reason Bottle Bill programs are so popular and prevalent throughout the world is because they're incredibly effective at reducing litter, increasing recycling, and creating jobs. Moreover, these programs also create the consumer culture and infrastructure that is necessary to shift away from single-use disposal beverage containers to reusable and refillable beverage systems. Importantly, as a form of producer responsibility, Bottle Bill programs provide these benefits while also helping save consumers and governments money.

A. Litter Reduction

Placing a refundable deposit on every single-use beverage container sold in Maryland will incentivize consumers to hold on to their empty containers and bring them back for recycling. Essentially, the refundable deposit creates an understanding that while you are buying the beverage, you're renting the container. This incentive is extremely important because most single-use beverages are consumed on-the-go and outside of the home. This is why you see plastic soda bottles littering, parks, streets, and streams, but not plastic peanut butter jars.

After Hawaii enacted a Bottle Bill program in 2005, the number of beverage containers collected during Hawaii's Coastal Cleanup fell from 23,471 in 2004, to 10,905 in 2007 – a 53% drop in just three years.¹¹ Litter reduction has occurred in all ten states with Bottle Bills. A 2020 study by Keep America Beautiful found that states without Bottle Bills have double the amount of beverage container litter than their Bottle Bill counterparts.¹² The report also found that states with Bottle Bills had less overall litter than the states that don't have Bottle Bills.¹³ Less litter doesn't just mean

² *Id.* at p. 166 -172.

³ *Id.* at p. 10

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.* at p. 158 -165.

⁶ See, [Senate Bill 85](#) and [House Bill 4205](#).

⁷ See, [HF 3200](#) and [SF 3260](#)

⁸ See, [House Bill 1636](#)

⁹ [Rhode Island Special Joint Legislative Commission to Study and Provide Recommendations to Protect Our Environment and Natural Resources from Plastic Bottle Waste.](#)

¹⁰ See, [House Bill 2144](#)

¹¹ Haw. Dep't of Health, Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature 9 (2009).

¹² Keep America Beautiful, [2020 National Litter Study](#). Page. 3. May 2021.

¹³ *Id.*



cleaner, more vibrant communities, it also means less spending on clean-up efforts. Estimates show that the United States spends more than \$11 billion on litter clean up every year.¹⁴

B. Increased Recycling of Beverage Containers

Litter reduction is not the only benefit these programs provide. States with Bottle Bill programs also have significantly higher recycling rates than their non-Bottle Bill counterparts. On average, states with Bottle Bills have double the recycling rates than those that rely solely on curbside recycling programs.¹⁵ In terms of plastic and glass bottles, Bottle Bill programs produce recycling rates that are often three times higher than single-stream recycling systems.¹⁶

The higher recycling rates are attributed to more containers being returned for recycling as a result of the refundable deposit. However, Bottle Bills don't simply increase the number of containers that are returned for recycling. They also create a higher quality of recycled material which significantly increases the likelihood that the containers will actually be recycled to manufacture new products.

The convenience of single stream recycling comes with a cost -- contamination. Single-stream recycling depends first and foremost on educated consumers making the right choice about what can and cannot go into the blue bin. From there, the burden is on Material Recovery Facilities ("MRFs") to remove any unrecyclable materials that made their way into the recycling stream while also processing and sorting the commingled recyclables into distinct separate streams. These sorting processes are imperfect. According to the National Waste and Recycling Association, roughly 25% of what is placed into the single-stream recycling system is too contaminated to go anywhere other than a landfill.¹⁷

Additionally, the materials that are properly sorted are unlikely to be recycled as effectively as possible. The overall quality of the recycled material is the leading factor that determines what that material is ultimately used for. This difference in quality is often the difference between recycling and downcycling. Downcycling refers to using recycled material for projects and purposes that fail to capture the full environmental and economic benefits associated with recycling a product. In the case of beverage containers, the highest and best uses is bottle-to-bottle recycling, where containers are recycled directly into new beverage containers. Common examples of downcycling with beverage containers includes turning plastic beverage containers into carpet and textiles, as well as using crushed glass for road improvement projects or landfill cover. While these uses are preferential to disposing of the material, it still means the materials can only be used once as opposed to being recycled repeatedly.

Creating a standalone program to collect and recycle beverage containers ensures that the materials are uncontaminated and able to be readily recycled. In fact, while the ten Bottle Bill states only represent 27% of the U.S. population, they account for over 50% of all beverage containers recycled

¹⁴ Andrew Lisa, [It Costs Over \\$11 Billion Per Year to Clean Up Litter – How the Pandemic's Effect on Trash Output May Make It Worse](#), Yahoo. (April 22, 2021).

¹⁵ Container Recycling Institute, [U.S. Nominal Recycling Rates by Deposit Status](#) (2019).

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Maggie Koerth, [The Era of Easy Recycling May be Coming to an End](#), FiveThirtyEight (Jan. 10, 2019)



annually.¹⁸ Moreover, the Bottle Bill states also have higher overall recycling rates as their municipal and curbside recycling systems can better focus their efforts on capturing and recycling other common recyclables.¹⁹

C. Job Creation

In addition to reducing litter and increasing recycling rates, Bottle Bills also create good, local jobs. In fact, reports show that Bottle Bills can create between 11 and 38 times more jobs than curbside recycling.²⁰ These jobs include technicians to service reverse vending machines, bag drop systems, and other forms of beverage container collection, storage, and sorting systems. The programs also create jobs associated with hauling beverage containers from redemption locations to centralized storage areas. There are also other indirect jobs associated with increased recycling and manufacturing of products from recycled materials. A recent analysis of New York's Bottle Bill found that the program supports 5,700 jobs statewide.²¹

D. Creating a Pathway to Reusable and Refillable Beverage Systems

An additional underrepresented benefit of Bottle Bills is the development of both the infrastructure and consumer culture necessary for the development of reusable and refillable beverage systems. In fact, before the introduction of one-way disposable containers, beverage companies relied on consumers to return bottles to be refilled. Glass bottles were expensive to manufacture and refilling them saved costs. To incentivize refilling, beverage companies utilized a deposit-return program to ensure glass containers were brought back and refilled.

Just Zero strongly supports the requirement in SB 642 that requires at least 10% of all beverage containers sold in Maryland to be returned and refilled by December 31, 2034. This is a necessary and achievable program goal. In Germany, 82% of all beer is sold in reusable bottles, and 99% are returned for reuse.²² Overall, 54% of beverages sold in Germany are in reusables.²³ In Ontario, Canada, 85% of beer is sold in reusable bottles, with 97% returned and reused an average of 15 times.²⁴ Both jurisdictions have high functioning Bottle Bill programs that have enabled this reuse.

Domestically, in 2018, Oregon begun utilizing its existing deposit return infrastructure to launch a statewide refillable bottle system.²⁵ This system utilized approximately 245,000 refillable beer bottles.²⁶ The bottles can be refilled up to 40 times and were made primarily from recycled glass.²⁷ The bottles are designed to be easily separated from the rest of glass collected through the deposit

¹⁸ Marissa Heffernan, [Report: Bottle Bills States Recycle More, Provide Models](#), Resource Recycling. (Jan 2, 2024).

¹⁹ Eunomia, [The 50 States of Recycling: a State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates](#). (Dec. 2023).

²⁰ Reloop, [Factsheet: Deposit Return Systems Create More Jobs](#) (2022).

²¹ Sarah Edwards, Eunomia Research and Consulting, Inc., [Employment and Economic Impact of Container Deposits](#), table E1 (Jan. 2019).

²² Upstream, [Beverage Refill and the New Reuse Economy](#). (July 1, 2023).

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ Jared Pablen, [Oregon Group to Launch Refillable Bottle Program](#), Resource Recycling. (Feb. 7, 2017).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Cassandra Profita, [Oregon Launches First Statewide Refillable Bottle System in U.S.](#), NPR, (Sept. 17, 2018).



return system.²⁸ Once separated, the bottles are not processed for recycling but sent to a cleaning facility and then eventually sent back to participating breweries where they are refilled. For consumers, nothing has changed. Since launching in 2018, 410,155 bottles have been diverted from recycling for reuse.²⁹

Unfortunately, Oregon’s program stalled because the program was entirely voluntary. SB 642 shows that Maryland has learned from Oregon’s mistake by including a mandate for reusables which will ensure that the program consistently grows to foster reuse, not just recycling.

E. Bottles Bills Provide All These Benefits While Also Saving Residents and the State Money.

As a form of producer responsibility, Bottle Bill programs provide these benefits at no cost to consumers or government. At a time where recycling systems are struggling and plastic production and waste is increasing, the idea at the center of Bottle Bill programs remains that the companies that manufacture and distribute single-use beverage containers should ultimately be responsible for the end-of-life management of them. If a Bottle Bill program is developed in Maryland, cities, towns, and residents will no longer be stuck paying to collect, sort, and recycle all these containers. Instead, the large companies that manufacture them will.

Moreover, the reduction in litter will also save the state and local governments money. The Maryland Highway Administration has spent \$39 million over the past five years to clean up trash along state roads.³⁰ Unfortunately, this is only a fraction of the money spent addressing litter and doesn’t address the beverage containers littered across local roads, parks, rivers, or beaches.

III. Maryland Should Adopt a Bottle Bill Independent of Efforts to Establish an Extended Producer for Packaging Program.

In 2023, Maryland enacted the Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility for Packaging Materials Act.³¹ The law requires the completion of a comprehensive needs assessment and tasks the Advisory Council with developing recommendations for establishing an EPR for Packaging program to the Governor by December 1, 2024.³²

Just Zero is very supportive of this process. However, it should not be used as a reason to delay the development of a Bottle Bill. That needs to happen now. The information in the Needs Assessment – while important for the design and implementation of an EPR for Packaging Program – will not have any significant bearing on whether Maryland should develop a Bottle Bill program. Including beverage containers in an EPR for Packaging Program will also result in a loss of the important benefits associated with Bottle Bills such as litter reduction, increased recycling of beverage containers, and the development of reusable beverage container systems.

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ Oregon Redemption Center, [Bottle Drop](#).

³⁰ Bryna Zumer, [Stop Littering! Trash on State Roads Cost Maryland Taxpayers \\$39M in 5 Years](#), Fox News. (Dec. 3, 2021).

³¹ [Maryland Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility for Packaging Materials Act](#). (2022).

³² *Id.* at Section 2, Subsection c.



A. The Information in the Needs Assessment Will Not Have an Impact on the Decision of Whether Maryland Should Develop a Bottle Bill Program.

The Needs Assessment requires an independent consultant to evaluate numerous metrics and details about the amount and disposition of packaging waste in Maryland, as well as how Maryland’s waste and recycling systems currently operate. Understanding this information is important to provide a clear picture of Maryland’s waste management system in order to design a tailored EPR for Packaging program. However, this information is not necessary to understanding whether the state should pursue a Bottle Bill.

Beverage containers are highly recyclable. The issue is that Maryland’s existing recycling system is not capturing enough of the containers and the containers that are captured are not recycled because they are highly contaminated. As a result, a significant amount of beverage containers is littered across the state or disposed of in landfills and incinerators. The clear solution to this problem is to enact a Bottle Bill program. This will create an independent, producer-funded recycling program for these containers. All the jurisdictions which currently have Bottle Bill programs have done so without performing a needs assessment.

The time to act is now. Maryland cannot afford to continue to wait to take action to address the littering and under recycling of beverage containers. The deadline for completing the needs assessment has already been pushed back from the initial deadline of July 2024. It is likely the deadline will be extended further. Developing a needs assessment and an EPR for Packaging program is time intensive. Maine enacted the first EPR for Packaging law in the nation in 2021. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection is only finalizing the rules to implement the program now. The program is not expected to be operational until 2027, six years after the legislature enacted the law. The three other states with EPR for Packaging laws – California, Colorado, and Oregon – are operating under similar timeframes.

B. Including Beverage Containers in an EPR for Packaging Program Will Reduce the Benefits to the State.

A Bottle Bill should not be abandoned for the development of an EPR for Packaging program that covers beverage containers. Instead, Maryland must develop both systems. Doing so will maximize the benefits associated with both programs.

Including beverage containers in an EPR for Packaging program minimizes the effectiveness of the program while sacrificing the benefits associated with a Bottle Bill. Including beverage containers in an EPR for Packaging program keeps the beverage containers in the curbside recycling system, rather than having them separated and managed through their own dedicated program as is the case with a Bottle Bill. As a result, the beverage containers continue to be heavily contaminated which limits their marketability for the use in manufacturing new containers. Removing these containers will allow them to be recycled at significantly higher rates. Moreover, it will also enable a future EPR for Packaging Program to focus on setting up collection and recycling systems for harder to recycle



materials. In fact, every state with a Bottle Bill program has higher overall recycling rates because their curbside recycling systems can be tailored to maximize recycling of other commodities.³³

Additionally, without a standalone Bottle Bill Maryland won't see significant litter reductions. A central part of Bottle Bill programs is that every container sold has a refundable deposit placed on it to incentivize consumers to bring the empty container back for recycling. This incentive is what reduces litter because the containers now have an economic value. When beverage containers are included in an EPR for Packaging program they don't have a deposit and therefore continue to be littered.

IV. Conclusion

The time to act is now. SB 642 will improve recycling, create green jobs, and reduce litter which will protect Maryland's land, rivers, lakes, and oceans. With SB 642, Maryland can create a robust and effective Bottle Bill program that will protect the environment and the economy. For these reasons, Just Zero urges you to support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Blair, Esq.
Policy and Advocacy Director
Just Zero

³³ Supra, note 18.

Testimony in support of SB0642.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

2/28/2024

Richard Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#0642 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

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

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Maryland has an ambitious program to reduce waste and pollution. This bill is one component of that strategy dealing specifically with reduction in plastic waste from the use of plastic bottles. It implements a program to deal with recycling of those bottles and reduction of litter from discarding them into the environment.

According to a report from the World Economic Forum discussing a new report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) “We Can Cut Plastic Pollution by 80% by 2040 – here’s how” reduction of plastic bottle usage is a component of achieving that goal. ¹

NPR reported “The plastic problem isn't your fault, but you can be part of the solution.” ² This forward looking bill says that Maryland is listening and will become a model on adopting solutions to achieve our environmental goals.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0642.

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/06/reduce-plastic-pollution-unep/>

² <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/12/1015296355/zero-waste-single-use-plastic-trash-recycle>

SB 642_Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home_FAV.

Uploaded by: Robert Simon

Position: FAV



Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home

Responding to the cry of the Earth
and the cry of the poor.

Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
March 5, 2024

**Statement of Support (FAVORABLE)
of Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home on
SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**

Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home (MCCH) is a lay-led organization of Catholics from parishes in the three Catholic dioceses in Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. It engages in education about, and advocacy based upon, the teachings of the Catholic Church relating to care for creation. MCCH is a grassroots voice for the understanding of Catholic social teaching held by a wide array of Maryland Catholics—over 450 Maryland Catholics have already signed our statement of support for key environmental bills in this session of the General Assembly—but it should be distinguished as an organization from the Maryland Catholic Conference, which represents the public policy interests of the bishops who lead these three dioceses.

MCCH would like to express its strong support for the passage of Senate Bill 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

We see it on our highways, byways, city streets, county roads, pastures, fields, and woods. We see it in our waterways, streams, and creeks. Discarded aluminum cans, plastic, and glass bottles are everywhere. It contaminates our soil, wastes needed resources, and—if not dumped there already—the litter eventually flows to our treasured Chesapeake Bay and then into our ocean. It is a threat to our human health and to wildlife. The plastic beverage containers break up into small pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Scientists estimate that humans are ingesting up to a credit card's worth of plastic weekly. And then there is the intangible harm. The dumping of trash reinforces the philosophy that those who are able can engage in excessive consumerism and waste resources without any regard to the effect it has on others. Something must be done.

As Maryland Catholics, when advocating for the care of our common home, we are guided by the words of Pope Francis. In his 2015 encyclical, entitled *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*,¹ the Pope states "Political activity on the local level could also be directed to modifying consumption, developing an economy of waste disposal and recycling." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 180) Further, "Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money, but rather an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 191). In this connection, he specifically mentions "intelligent and profitable ways of reusing, revamping, and recycling." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 192)

In his 2023 apostolic exhortation, *Laudate Deum*,² Pope Francis observes "Efforts by households to reduce pollution and waste, and to consume with prudence, are creating a new culture. The mere fact that personal,

¹ The English text of the encyclical, to which the paragraph numbers in the following parentheses refer, can be found at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

² The English text of this apostolic exhortation, to which the paragraph numbers in the parentheses refer, can be found at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html.

family and community habits are changing is ... helping to bring about large processes of transformation rising from deep within society” (*Laudate Deum*, no. 71).

Senate Bill 642 heeds the Pope’s cry. When enacted, it will respond to wasting resources and will create a cultural change. Some of the benefits include capturing more than 3 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2 billion plastic bottles, thereby increasing the rate of recycling in the state from 23 percent of containers to more than 90 percent. Targeted goals for recycled products will generate an additional 11,305 tons of aluminum, 44,066 tons of PET plastic, 3,207 tons of HDPE plastic, and 140,923 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers. As a result of not having to produce new cans and bottles from virgin materials, 195,000 metric tons of CO₂-equivalent annually—the equivalent of removing the emissions of 42,000 cars—would be eliminated. Currently, the disposal costs in our landfills and incinerators are borne by taxpayers and local governments. These costs will be reduced because beverage producers would finance the costs of collection and processing of the three-quarters of beverage containers currently being disposed or littered, as well as the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled curbside. Lastly, the bottle bill will redirect investment in refillable and reusable beverage container systems and create jobs. Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times as many jobs as landfilling or incineration.³

Senate Bill 642 gives value to not littering and could create a cultural change. Currently 10 states covering 90 million people have successful recycling programs.⁴ When consumers receive cash for empty beverage containers, there is an incentive not to litter. This incentive over time can become part of the tapestry of our culture. Like wearing seatbelts, once consumers are accustomed again to refunding empty bottle containers, personal changes will lead to cultural changes which will lead to saving natural resources and reducing litter. At one time Maryland had a bottle refund program. Now is the time to bring back the bottle bill and begin the cultural change.

For these reasons we strongly urge your support for this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our views and our respectful request for a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 642.

³ Maryland Sierra Club, “Maryland Needs a Bottle Bill! HB735/SB642” [Fact Sheet], 2024.

⁴ California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Vermont. Redemption rates in 2019 ranged from 59 percent to 91 percent. There are currently 72 container deposit programs worldwide in 61 countries. Increased interest in the past decade has been fueled by public concern about plastic pollution. Susan Collins, “International Embrace,” *Plastics Recycling Update*, Winter 2020, pp. 38-43.

MD Senate Bottle Bill Testimony_CLYNK .pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Nichols

Position: FAV



Sarah Nichols, Director of Government Affairs

**Testimony in Support of the
Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (SB 642)
Maryland Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment,
March 5th, 2024**

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment, my name is Sarah Nichols, I live in Maine, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at CLYNK. We are testifying in support of SB 642 which would allow Maryland to join ten other “bottle bill” states and experience the environmental and economic benefits of a beverage container recycling refund program.

CLYNK is best known for our innovative “bag-drop” recycling system, and at our core we are a mission driven technology company devoted to ensuring that deposit-return, or “recycling refund”, programs are successful and convenient for brands, retailers, municipalities, and consumers of beverages. We are operating or have licensed our technology platform in five states and counting, with over 484,000 user accounts and about 100 added daily.

The effectiveness of recycling refunds for beverage containers

So-called “bottle bills” are the proven gold standard for beverage container litter reduction and recycling programs worldwide and have been for over 40 years. Voluntary municipal curbside recycling programs can also be effective at collecting beverage containers and other packaging consumed at home, especially when paired with an extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging laws. However, even with EPR for packaging they will never achieve the litter reduction goals, the high rates of participation, or the material quality associated with beverage container recycling refund programs like the one before you today. We believe that the best policy outcome for Maryland would be to pair a recycling refund program for beverage containers with an EPR program for other types packaging: You don’t have to pick one or the other.

Bottle bills are so successful at reducing litter, increasing recycling, and saving money for towns and taxpayers because there is an incentive to participate, and a strong demand for the quality recycled material they produce. When someone pays a deposit on the container, it sends a signal to return it for recycling so they can get their money back. And when the highly recyclable containers made of aluminum, plastic, and glass are collected and processed through this system, they are kept clean and sorted, making it valuable on the recycled commodities market and able to be turned back into food-grade packaging. Mixed-stream curbside recycling programs coexist with recycling return systems in bottle bill states, but just can’t compare with the litter reduction, participation, or quality of a beverage container recycling refund system.

Deposits on beverage containers essentially turn littered bottles and cans into nickels and dimes, which provides an incentive for them to get picked up and run through these clean processing systems. Beverage container litter in Maryland is a serious environmental issue and should be reason enough to institute this program, but it’s also critical for the US manufacturing supply chain. Manufacturers of beverage containers need the quality material collected through the bottle bill

programs but there just isn't enough supply. Many US beverage container manufacturers are instead forced to import recycled materials from other countries as a result. Passing this bill in Maryland could help meet the demand of US-based manufacturers for US-based supply and support the US economy. Recycling refunds are a win-win proposition for the environment and the economy.

How CLYNK and bag drops contribute to successful recycling refund programs

For recycling refund programs to be successful, it's critical to make it easy and convenient for people to participate and get their deposit money back. That is where CLYNK comes in. In Maine, New York, soon to be Connecticut, and beyond, we partner with local retailers to provide quick and convenient locations for people to drop-off used beverage containers in bags stamped with their own unique account bar codes and get their refunds back in a variety of ways.

Using our unique patented technology platform, we collect and scan the bags, count the containers, and put money into a person's CLYNK account. From our app or a kiosk located inside the store, people can get their money back, or easily donate to their favorite charity. Meanwhile, we sort the containers in our processing facilities, bale them, and send them off to where they need to go.

Retailers like how we drive foot traffic to their business and keep the used containers outside of the clean store and in the parking lot. Beverage companies like how we can help them process their materials and provide them with data, and consumers like how easy we make CLYNK-ing for them.

Our team has decades of hands-on experience with similar programs and policies to the one before you today, and we are happy to offer any insights or assistance to the Committee as you iron out the details of what a successful program looks like for Maryland. We would also be happy to host you at one of our facilities in the Northeast so that you can see the CLYNK bag-drop program in action.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments, please email me at snichols@clynk.com with any questions.

240304_SB642_Maryland Beverage Container Recycling

Uploaded by: Sarah Roth

Position: FAV

DAVID TRONE
6TH DISTRICT, MARYLAND
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
BUDGET
COMMITTEE
JOINT ECONOMIC
COMMITTEE



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March 4, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Room, Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Vice Chair, Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Room, Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan
Dear Chair Feldman and Vice Chair Kagan,

I would like to express my full support for *Senate Bill 642- Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*.

Litter from beverage containers is an urgent and growing problem that threatens the health of humans and wildlife. The sanctity of our waterways is under grave threat from plastic pollution. An example of how troubling this threat poses to the ecology of our state is that more than half of the trash recovered from the Anacostia River watershed can be attributed to beverage containers. The problem has reached such severe levels that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has declared the Anacostia Watershed and Baltimore Harbor as impaired by trash; two of just three bodies of water throughout the nation with such a classification.

Ten U.S. states have effective policy in the area of beverage container deposit programs. SB642 is modeled after these proven beverage container deposit laws that have demonstrated a highly effective means to reduce beverage container litter. The law provides an incentive for Marylanders to not leave beverage containers in the environment, as well as recycle them when they're found. The benefits of this law include the capture of 90% of beverage containers for recycling, reduced costs for local governments, the creation of jobs, and it supports the development of reusable beverage containers.

I strongly urge this committee to give *Senate Bill 642- Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program* the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trone".

David Trone
Member of Congress

Glass Packaging Institute (GPI) Testimony - Maryla

Uploaded by: Scott DeFife

Position: FAV



March 4, 2024

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chairman
Maryland Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony for SB 642 (HB 735) – The MD Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Support

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

The Glass Packaging Institute (GPI) offers the following comments in support of Senate Bill 642, which would create a deposit return/recycling refund program for beverage containers in the State, and to answer any questions the committee may have regarding the manufacturing or recycling of glass containers.

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass food and beverage manufacturing companies, glass recycling processors, raw material providers and other supply chain partners within the industry. GPI and its members work closely with local and state governments throughout the country on issues surrounding sustainability, recycling, packaging manufacturing and energy use. We are working nationally and, in most states, to improve the glass recycling infrastructure and system to help achieve a 50 percent consumer glass recycling rate, and advance policies that further that goal.

Glass Container Recycling Background

Glass is a core circular packaging material which is reusable, refillable, and endlessly recyclable. Glass containers are largely used for food or beverage products, and glass is the only packaging material generally recognized as safe by FDA for all food and beverage products. Over 70 percent of glass containers are used for some sort of beverage product. Public sentiment strongly rates glass as one of the most supported materials in the recycling stream, and glass has the strongest profile to aid in refillable beverage systems.

The glass container manufacturing industry has a significant stake in the effectiveness of glass recycling programs. Recycled glass is a key component of the manufacturing

process. The industry purchases about 2.3 million tons of recycled glass each year and the average bottle or jar produced in the U.S. contains from 25 to 33 percent recycled glass. Glass made in regions with high glass recovery rates, such as deposit return systems, have much greater opportunity for more recycled content. For every 10% of recycled glass added to the batch mix, energy usage can be reduced 2-3 percent, with additional corresponding reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. When you add the benefit of what is a better than 1 to 1 offset of raw materials saved by using recycled glass to make new containers, it is clear that using recycled glass has significant benefits to the environment of the region and should be prioritized.

Quality and contamination are key differentiators to the value and potential end-markets for recycled glass. We estimate that nearly 60 percent of the glass cullet that makes it back to a container plant for reuse originates from the ten bottle bills states, which provide the highest volume of clean, source-separated glass. This separation drastically reduces contamination, increases the value, and provides the best opportunity to return the glass to a manufactured product.

Critically, containers recovered in a deposit return system avoid the most common fate and costs associated with glass in the commingled single-stream system, which is purposeful or passive landfill disposal. Curbside material that flows through many material recovery facilities *can* be recycled into new containers, and several MRFs do so quite well, but it is completely dependent on the capabilities of the facility receiving the material and the yield is far lower. While less expensive for collection costs, the value of most materials in these single-stream systems, and especially glass, is harmed from the moment the typical recycling truck hydraulic press crushes the mixed load of materials. Glass suffers to a larger degree due to how most MRFs then process the broken glass as a “negative sort”, screening the smaller fragment material into a pile of residuals, while the larger media is sorted whole or in larger segments and baled. The glass commodity is laden with residual contamination, usually shredded paper, small plastics, and other small non-recyclables that do not belong in the bin in the first place.

Often, this leads local government officials and their contract service partners to suggest that the “glass commodity” value is negative. Without context, the glass commodity at most MRFs is going to be 30-50 percent non-glass residue (NGR), and then the glass processor must haul that contamination and pay the landfill tip fee, which is what results in the negative value for the ton of material. The benefit of a deposit return system is that it preserves positive market value of the glass, dramatically increases yield from the bottle, and ensures the potential of highest best use, while also allowing for a broader variety of end-market uses that include the same ones as single-stream.

As I have testified in prior years before this committee, there are end-markets for glass containers made in three neighboring states: Pennsylvania, Virginia and New Jersey. There is glass processing in Pennsylvania and a movement to add capacity in New Jersey and Virginia. In addition, one of our member companies has added a pre-cleaning

location in Baltimore that can accept more glass than it is currently getting. Glass from Maryland consumers should not be going to landfill. A bottle deposit program would triple or potentially quadruple the glass recovery and recycling rate for the state of Maryland and could work on its own or within an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program.

With regard to EPR, while the EPR needs assessment is beginning soon based on the passage of SB 222 into law last year, we know much more today about the potential outcomes of that assessment than we did a year ago. In Washington state, a preliminary study that worked on a part of the state needs assessment determined that the policy combination that produced that highest recovery and recycling rates was an EPR that was combined with a beverage container deposit program. In fact, the combined policy was the only option that was found to meet the state's recycling goals. In Colorado, a state without a DRS, and where I serve on the State EPR Advisory Board, the draft proposed needs assessment for the most involved EPR system – but without an DRS modeled – could only suggest an increase of recycling rates from around 25% to near 50% in the first five years and topped out closer to 60 percent recovery and recycling by 2035. A deposit return system should be contemplated as a part of the EPR system being considered if Maryland wants to maximize its recycling.

This is even more important for glass. We currently estimate that roughly one-third of the glass in Maryland is recovered. Montgomery County dual-stream collection aides that number. Our research indicates that a well-constructed EPR program might double that recovery, but the yield loss from the curbside material lost to residual and landfill would mean less than half that would make it back into feedstock for new bottles. A DRS system like that envisioned in SB 642 on top of the EPR would nearly triple the recovery of glass and dramatically increase the quality of the material so that the vast majority would be able to be made into new bottles in the region.

As to the specific provisions on SB 642, we would like to highlight several key points that show that this policy concept has advanced considerably in the past several years and need not be compared to systems or debates of the past.

- The majority of the responsibility for operating the program is given over to a stewardship organization. There is oversight from the Department of the Environment. This is consistent with best practice principles on modern management of the container deposit program. While there could be some more responsibility given to the private sector, the construct strikes a balance compared to government run programs.
- The bill includes an Advisory Council that pulls in additional stakeholders who can assist in keeping the program balanced and modern, plus add transparency and accountability.
- Most all beverages are included, and traditionally recyclable materials are all included. This is far better than having an exhaustive list and definitions of varieties

of beverages in statute that will constantly need to be tweaked and modified to accommodate innovation in the beverage industry.

- Accommodation has been made for a differential redemption value based on size, which is reasonable, and a wide variety of reasonable consumer sized containers are included, as well as a variety of convenient redemption alternatives – drop off centers, bag drop programs and in-person return centers. We believe that convenience is key, but that not all returns should be forced back into a specific retail establishment. A series of well-placed redemption centers and drop-off locations can alleviate the need to force returns into smaller retail stores.
- We generally do not support provisions that compensate private MRF operators for the “loss” of revenue that may come with the creation of a deposit refund program; however, the provision in SB 642 meets our criteria for a transition system that takes into account the loss of revenue from specific commodity streams being moved away from the curbside system, while also accounting for the savings to the governments attributable to less landfill costs, lower processing expense and higher value to other remaining commodity streams from less contamination.
- I would like to note a concept in the bill that I recall discussing with the committee a couple of years ago. Deposit return programs are aided by the active involvement of local governments, so we support the concept that a city or county could create their own redemption center(s) and participate in the benefits of the program as long as they meet all the same requirements of the other program contractors.
- We support the encouragement of refill/reuse programs. While the provisions in SB 642 are aggressive, a deposit return and recovery system is an essential element for beverage refill/reuse. Glass containers are an ideal material for meeting that need, and we support the inclusion of explicit infrastructure funds dedicated to building out the washing and sterilization facilities.

I have referenced quality and yield issues throughout my testimony, so I would like to call attention to pictures and graphics that I have included with my testimony.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on the central role a container deposit program can provide the State of Maryland in creating a higher quality and effective glass recycling system. We look forward to answering your questions about glass and glass recycling and are committed to working with the Committee constructively to enhance glass recovery and recycling in Maryland. Please do not hesitate to call on us should you have any additional glass or glass recycling questions.

Sincerely,



Scott DeFife
President

Addendum:

Infographic on Efficiency and Yield-Loss from different glass collection streams



Picture of a Commingled Single Stream Recycled "Glass" - as delivered from a Materials Recovery Facility. Requires intensive sorting and cleaning prior to meeting furnace-ready specifications.



Picture of green bottle bill glass delivered from redemption centers to transfer facility.



SB642BevDepRefTFM Support 030524.pdf

Uploaded by: shari wilson

Position: FAV



SB 642 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Date: March 5, 2024

Position: Support

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

We enthusiastically support SB 642. This bill would set up a recycling refund program for beverage containers. We all know the most effective recycling programs in the United States are in the 10 states where consumers can get a refund in exchange for returning their beverage container for recycling. SB 642 will bring this program to Maryland.

The ten states with recycling refund programs supply 50% of our nation's recyclable glass

supply.¹

In states with recycling refunds, the recycling rate for plastic bottles is 67%. States without a recycling refund program recycle 17% of their plastic bottles on average.²

States with recycling refund programs have 50% less litter than other states.³

That's how effective these programs are. This is a tried and true policy that will significantly reduce trash and litter in our streets, neighborhoods and waterways.

By contrast, where we stand now has taxpayers funding significant costs associated with litter. Here are just a few small examples. According to MDOT, the SHA alone spends nearly \$8M annually to remove approximately 5,300 truckloads of litter. According to the agency "that's more than 27,000 truckloads and nearly \$40 million" every 5 years. Maryland local governments each fund litter cleanup programs. Trash Free Maryland knows of 708 cleanups across Maryland conducted by thousands of volunteers annually and this is limited only to those clean-ups publicly recruiting volunteers. There are thousands more conducted by residents in their communities. Perhaps the largest cost is that to our society. Health professionals tell us children who grow up in communities with litter are less likely to have successful outcomes. Litter affects us all.

All of these costs are avoidable! There are better ways and this bill brings one of the most effective ways to reduce litter to Maryland.

We also note recycling refund programs for beverage containers go hand in hand with legislation passed last year initiating the process to adopt producer responsibility for packaging. It is estimated that 40 to 60 percent of packaging is beverage containers.⁴ Producer responsibility programs help us *reduce* our volume of waste. Recycling refund programs help us *reuse* and *recycle* a major portion of the packaging waste stream.

Marylanders take great pride in our recycling efforts and are fed up with trash. A recycling refund program is a proven winner. We look forward to working with you on this exciting and highly effective policy. We respectfully urge your favorable consideration.

Contact: Shari Wilson, Trash Free Maryland (shari@trashfreemaryland.org)

Anacostia Waterkeeper

Arundel Rivers Federation

Audubon Mid-Atlantic

¹ Glass Packaging Institute 2023

² The 50 States of Recycling: A State-by-State Assessment of Containers and Packaging Recycling Rates 2021

³ Keep America Beautiful 2020 National Litter Study <https://kab.org/litter-study>

⁴ National Stewardship Action Council

Blue Water Baltimore

Environment Maryland

Maryland Catholics for our Common Home

Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Maryland Ornithological Society

Maryland PIRG

National Aquarium

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Rock Creek Conservancy

Shore Rivers

Trash Free Maryland

Zero Waste Future

SB642_Compton_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Stephanie Compton

Position: FAV

RE: Testimony in Favor of SB 642.

3/4/2024

Stephanie Compton
814 Washington Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21230

Dear Chair and members of the EEE Committee,

I'm writing in strong support of Maryland's Bottle Bill, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program HB 735/SB 642.

I'm a community organizer in Baltimore and regularly clean up litter on my own and organize community clean up efforts and track the items that we pick up. Every clean up finds many valuable items that are not currently valued in Maryland, Beverage containers: aluminum, glass, and plastic.

Bottle Bills have proven to improve recycling rates, which our state could use a boost. More importantly, States with Bottle Bills have reduced rates in litter because people collect them to claim the value of them.

Adding incentives to the recovering of used beverage containers will further motivate the collection of these items. Reuse and recycling create more jobs. Therefore, this is a smart economic decision; Creating jobs that clean-up, conserve, and transition us into the future where less waste is generated which leads to cleaner, safer communities.

Please pass SB 642.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Compton

Upstream_SUPPORT_MD SB 642.pdf

Uploaded by: Sydney Harris

Position: FAV



March 4, 2024

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for SB 642, An act creating the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Upstream **in support of SB 642**, which will establish a beverage container deposit return system for Maryland with strong targets and incentives for reuse and refill.

Upstream is a US-based non-profit and leading change agency for the reuse movement in the US and Canada. We spark innovative solutions to help people, communities and businesses shift from single-use to reuse. We believe deposit return systems (DRSs), also known as recycling refunds, are crucial to accelerating the new reuse economy.

SB 642 will establish a DRS with strong reuse and refill targets for beverage containers in Maryland. Specifically, the bill requires at least 10% of beverage containers to be returned and refilled by the end of 2034. The bill also requires a beverage container stewardship organization to establish a fee structure for participating producers that incentivizes investments into reusable and refillable container systems, and for the organization's stewardship plan to describe anticipated investments made to improve reuse. These requirements and financial incentives are crucial to scaling reuse among beverage companies.

The beverage sector is ready for reuse. Today, beverage reuse systems operate at scale around the world, and virtually all of them use DRSs to get their containers back:

- In Germany, 82% of beer is sold in reusable bottles, and 99% are returned for reuse. Overall, 54% of beverages sold in Germany are in reusables.
- In Ontario, Canada, 85% of beer is sold in reusable bottles, with 97% returned and an average reuse rate of 15 cycles.
- Reusables account for significant portions of beverage sales in Mexico (27%), Columbia (54%), Brazil (24%), China (22%), Vietnam (31%), Thailand (20%), India (34%), Nigeria (43%), and the Philippines (59%).

Reusable beverage containers are better for the environment. After a third use, reusable glass bottles are already less impactful than single-use glass, PET or aluminum cans. Used 25 times and then recycled, reusable glass bottles create 85% fewer climate emissions than single-use glass; 57% fewer than aluminum cans; and 70% fewer than single-use PET. Refillable PET bottles can save up to 40% of the raw materials and 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions compared to the production of single-use PET bottles. Refillables also benefit the ocean: **Oceana estimates that a 10% increase in the share of beverages sold in refillables could result in a 22% decrease in marine plastic pollution.** This would keep 4.5 to 7.6 billion plastic bottles out of the ocean each year.

Fifty years of data on DRS laws in the U.S. demonstrate that refundable deposits are effective at boosting collection and recycling rates, creating local economic development opportunities and jobs, generating clean streams of recyclable materials through source-separation, preventing roadside litter and plastic pollution, and catalyzing reuse. **The time has come for every state to establish a DRS.**

Upstream's vision is for 30% of consumer goods to be sold in reusables by 2030. To realize this vision, we need consumer brands to have real skin in the game when it comes to designing, packaging, and selling their products. **SB 642 will put the responsibility for redesigning, reusing, and recycling beverage containers where it belongs - on beverage producers. We thank you for considering this bill and strongly encourage you to favorably report it from your Committee.**

For any questions, please contact me at sydney@upstreamolutions.org.

Thank you for all you do,

Sydney Harris
Policy Director

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter

Uploaded by: Theresa Cullen

Position: FAV



Environmental Education on the Potomac

March 1, 2024

RE: *Support The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction bill (HB 735/SB 642)*

Dear Maryland State Senator Brooks,

On behalf of the Alice Ferguson Foundation, I am writing to thank you for your leadership in Maryland and your focus on the Environment, a critical part of Maryland's Chesapeake Watershed.

We strongly support the establishment of this Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

The Alice Ferguson Foundation is a highly regarded environmental education facility that has been serving students and environmental enthusiasts of all ages for 70 years. Thousands of Pre K-12 students are hosted each year for interactive day and overnight programs that bring to life the science, plants and animals they are studying in their classrooms. More than 8,000 students participate in our Bridging the Watershed program which takes students to national and state parks in the Potomac Watershed where they learn, hands-on, about how a watershed works and how to keep it clean. Another 10,000 volunteers participate in trash cleanups in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington DC.

We educate, promote and support best practices in Environmental Education. By establishing this refund law in Maryland, we can reduce litter and plastic pollution and increase water quality, a basic human right and need. With our waterways and our protection of the Bay, we must evoke measures to keep our waterways clean.

Please evoke this bill so we can reduce contaminants in our waterways and improve water quality for all Maryland residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Theresa Cullen".

Theresa Cullen
Executive Director

Written Testimony in Support of SB642 – Beverage C

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FAV

Written Testimony in Support of SB642 – Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

March 5, 2024

To: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB642, the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

As a community volunteer actively engaged in efforts to reduce waste, I am greatly saddened by the amount of litter -- so much of being beverage containers -- that I see constantly on my walks in public areas and near waterways. I am aware of the many negative environmental impacts that all this waste causes.

This bill would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers, depending on container size. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. The program would rely on reverse vending machines and other new technologies for convenient container redemption. Similar programs in other states have a proven record of success.

Therefore, I strongly support this legislation because of the following significant benefits it will offer for Maryland:

- Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution, and an increase in water quality, due to the dramatic increase in Maryland's beverage container recycling rate it will provide. The recycling rate currently is only 23% of containers sold in the state. States with a 10-cent deposit have achieved container recycling rates of 90%.
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would reduce CO² emissions by a substantial amount.
- Savings for taxpayers and local governments. Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection and processing of the beverage containers currently being disposed or littered, as well as the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled curbside. The program will divert materials from costly landfills and incinerators. These disposal costs are currently borne by taxpayers and local governments.
- Job creation. Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times as many jobs as landfilling or incineration.

This legislation offers an excellent pathway to reduce waste in Maryland and support worthy environmental goals.

Please give a favorable report on SB642. Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor
11-G Laurel Hill Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-9524

2024-3-6 ARK Testimony SB 642 on Container Recycli

Uploaded by: Trey Sherard

Position: FAV



ANACOSTIA RIVERKEEPER®

March 6th, 2024

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Testimony to the Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee on SB 642,

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Favorable

Anacostia Riverkeeper wholeheartedly supports SB 642.

Over half a million Marylanders live in the Anacostia River's watershed in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, nearly 10% of the state's population. Combined with the Marylanders living in the Baltimore Harbor watershed, nearly a quarter of the state's population lives in a jurisdiction with an EPA required pollution diet for trash. In fact, Maryland has the dubious distinction of being home to two of only three bodies of water in the entire United States with a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Trash.

Of all the trash Anacostia Riverkeeper captures and documents from trash traps in the watershed, including Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, roughly 60% by weight is solely plastic bottles. For reference, we and our partners in both counties empty the contents of almost all the bottles captured, so this is a rigorous and conservative accounting of trash by weight. In land-based cleanups where glass bottles are more easily captured but can dominate the weight data vs plastic bottles, beverage containers including aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and glass bottles make up over 50% of the weight of all litter picked up by thousands of volunteers annually in our watershed.

This problem is unnecessary – ten states already have some version of a beverage container return and refund law on the books. These states see much higher actual waste diversion and recycling rates than we currently enjoy in Maryland, and much less harmful plastic and other beverage container pollution ruining the recreational value of their wild areas, choking and poisoning their wildlife, and filling their residents with an ever increasing number of microplastics. Please support SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

Trey Sherard, Anacostia Riverkeeper

Support Letter.pdf

Uploaded by: Wala Blegay

Position: FAV



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

WALA BLEGAY
Council Vice-Chair, District 6

March 5, 2024

Hon. Brian Feldman, Chair
Hon. Cheryl Kagan, Vice-Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland Senate

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Committee members,

I'm writing to express my strong support for SB 642, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, a.k.a. the Maryland Bottle Bill. About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold annually in Maryland, but only about a quarter of them are returned for recycling. Four billion containers per year are left in the environment in landfills or as litter or are incinerated. SB 642 will reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution by diverting empty beverage containers from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing the volume of solid waste generated, relieving taxpayers of a significant financial burden, and improving the quality of life.

The program would add a small deposit to the price of beverage containers, refunded when the container is returned by customers for recycling. By putting a value on empty containers, the public has an incentive not to litter and to retrieve containers that are littered for the refund. The program will provide relief for the County's budget, divert containers from the landfill, reduce roadside litter, and spur recycling statewide. It will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create new jobs in the recycling industry, and provide high-quality materials that can be recycled into new beverage containers.

Similar programs have been operating for decades in ten states and around the world. A minimum 10-cent deposit like the one proposed in SB 642 would achieve a 90% redemption rate of beverage containers and beverage container litter would be reduced by at least 70-84%. This is especially important for Prince George's County, where litter is one of the main concerns in our community as many of the communities in my District have high amounts of litter and trash across the main roads. The Anacostia and Baltimore Harbor are two of only three water bodies in the country that are impaired for trash and regulated by the EPA under the Clean Water Act.

This program places no responsibility for implementation or enforcement on local government, will reduce waste and recycling costs, and conserve space in the County's landfill, which is in my district. My County would have the option to run its own beverage container redemption center, in return for a per container handling fee. For the first two years of the program, if the County were to realize an increase in net costs of waste management that can be attributable to the Bottle Bill, it would be compensated by the

County Administration Building – Largo, Maryland 20774
Phone (301) 952-3426 Fax (301) 952-4351
E-mail: CouncilDistrict6@co.pg.md.us
www.princegeorgescountymd.gov



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

WALA BLEGAY
Council Vice-Chair, District 6

program. However, a review of experience in dozens of jurisdictions across the world strongly suggests that local governments will experience cost savings.

I urge you to support SB 642, to reduce plastic pollution and beverage container litter, provide cleaner roads, parks, and waterways, and create savings for county budgets and local taxpayers, and to act with urgency. Every year we wait, another 4 billion beverage containers enter the environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wala Blegay", is written in a cursive style.

Wala Blegay, Esq.
Prince George's County Council, District 6

County Administration Building – Largo, Maryland 20774
Phone (301) 952-3426 Fax (301) 952-4351
E-mail: CouncilDistrict6@co.pg.md.us
www.princegeorgescountymd.gov

Aluminum Association in support of SB 642 with ame

Uploaded by: Curt Wells

Position: FWA

**Testimony to the Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment and
Committee**

The Aluminum Association

March 5, 2024

**Support for SB0642 with Amendments – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling
Refund and Litter Reduction Program**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support with amendments on Maryland Senate Bill 0642. My name is Curt Wells and I am the Senior Director of Regulatory Affairs for the Aluminum Association. The Aluminum Association is the trade association representing U.S. aluminum manufacturers and their suppliers, and Aluminum Association member companies supply 100% of the aluminum sheet that is produced in the US and used to make aluminum cans. In addition, Association member Constellium, a leading recycler of used beverage cans into can sheet that is used to make new aluminum cans, has its U.S. headquarters in Baltimore.

Demand for used aluminum cans to incorporate into new beverage can sheet far exceeds the supply due to a lack of consumer aluminum recycling. Our members that make aluminum sheet for beverage cans are ready, willing, and able today to incorporate substantially more used cans into their production of new aluminum sheet as it is their preferred raw material. However, aluminum is not produced in the US in sufficient quantities today to meet the demand and the country is heavily

reliant on imports of primary aluminum while there is a huge untapped supply of domestically sourced, stable, and low carbon secondary (or recycled) aluminum that can be made available through increased recycling.

The US aluminum industry is currently investing billions of dollars to expand the production of aluminum can sheet and would like to produce that aluminum can sheet with a higher amount of recycled content than the current industry leading 73%. Recycling refund programs such as that contained in SB0642 are the proven method of increasing that recycled content as research has demonstrated that in the US today, aluminum beverage cans sold in a recycling refund program have a 77% recycling rate as compared to 36% for those that are not.

Specific to Maryland, according to The Recycling Partnership's *2024 State of Recycling Report*, Maryland's residential recycling rate is only 21 percent. This equates to 678,000 tons of recyclable material lost to landfills or the environment annually. This Maryland recycling rate aligns with the Container Recycling Institute's determination that only 23 percent of the 5.6 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland in 2019 were recycled.

The proven policy solution for Maryland that incentivizes consumers to increase their recycling of beverage containers is through recycling refund programs, which place a recycling refund, or deposit, on beverage containers paid at the point of sale. Consumers see a value on the container and have the choice to return it for the refund or forfeit the refund and put it in a curbside recycling bin. As noted above, this solution is proven to substantially increase recycling rates for beverage containers in a short timeframe and also deliver by far the cleanest raw material for remanufacture into new containers.

Although the Association believes SB0642 as drafted is a good initial framework for increasing beverage container recycling rates in Maryland, it would be strengthened with the following amendments:

- Start the variable deposit at 5 cents for beverage containers 24 ounces or less and 10 cents for beverage containers greater than 24 ounces for several years with an automatic increase to 10 cents and 15 cents, respectively, to transition consumers into paying the refundable deposit.
- Make the beverage container stewardship organization responsible for installing, servicing, and maintaining the beverage container redemption mechanisms rather than issuing handling fees to redemption facilities, retailers, or other persons that accept empty redeemable beverage containers for redemption.
- Keep financial responsibility exclusively on distributors and importers and do not include a provision wherein container manufacturers are financially responsible when producers sell under their own brand or where there is a lack of identification of a brand.
- Add as a factor in determining producer fees the relative market value of the beverage container.
- Consider if mandating a state-specific UPC barcode is legal and is feasible given the realities with manufacturing, inventorying, and delivering of beverage containers.
- Remove the legally mandated increase in market share of reusable beverage containers that comes with the performance target and the lower producer fees for reusable beverage containers. Reusables should be eligible for participation in a recycling refund program but the program itself should remain container neutral as to material type and number of uses.

Maryland has before it an opportunity to demonstrate its environmental and policy leadership by creating an industry-led program in the form of SB0642 that incentivizes residents to recycle their aluminum beverage cans and significantly reduce litter in the state. Therefore, the **Aluminum Association urges committee members to amend SB0642 as per the suggestions above and then vote yes on the amended SB0642** in order to advance it for further legislative consideration.

3-4-24 CMI Support with Amends SB 642.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott Breen

Position: FWA



March 4, 2024

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

RE: Support with suggested amendments for SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) supports with amendments SB 642, the proposal from Sen. Brooks to create a Maryland beverage container recycling refund program. CMI urges the committee to consider CMI's suggested amendments and advance this important legislation.

CMI is the U.S. trade association representing metal can makers and their suppliers. The industry employs more than 28,000 people, and CMI members have facilities in 33 states, including Maryland. CMI member Constellium, a leading recycler of used beverage cans into can sheet that is used to make new aluminum cans, has its U.S. headquarters in Baltimore. CMI members are proud to make the most sustainable beverage package.

CMI aluminum beverage can industry members are committed to achieving ambitious national recycling rate [targets](#) for aluminum beverage cans starting with a 70 percent rate by 2030. While the U.S. aluminum beverage can recycling rate in 2020 was an industry-leading 45 percent, reaching this target will require effective policy solutions, the foremost tool being a beverage container recycling refund program. CMI supports recycling refund programs because they are proven to consistently deliver high recycling rates and are a vital source of used beverage cans, which are used to make can sheet for new aluminum beverage cans. The Container Recycling Institute (CRI) determined that [40 percent](#) of recycled aluminum beverage cans come from the 10 deposit states even though they account for only 25 percent of aluminum beverage cans sold. This is because aluminum beverage cans sold today in the United States with a deposit average a [77 percent](#) recycling rate while aluminum beverage cans sold without a deposit average just 36 percent.

In Maryland, there is a lot of room for improvement in recycling. The Recycling Partnership's *2024 State of Recycling Report* [states](#) that Maryland's residential recycling rate is only 21 percent. This equates to 678,000 tons of recyclable material lost to landfills or the environment annually. This low Maryland recycling rate aligns with CRI [determining](#) that only 23 percent of the 5.6 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland in 2019 were recycled.

The aluminum beverage cans in Maryland going to landfill is particularly wasteful given the significant environmental and economic impact of aluminum beverage can recycling. On the environment side, recycled aluminum is [94 percent](#) less carbon intensive than making primary aluminum. Further,

recycling just one aluminum beverage can [provides](#) enough energy savings to power a 45-inch LED TV for six hours. Beyond the lower environmental impact, recycling aluminum generates money and creates jobs. Aluminum beverage cans are consistently one of the most valuable recyclable commodities. This is why aluminum cans [make up](#) only three percent by weight but nearly one third of the total revenue of all recyclables at single-family households. Recycling beverage cans also provides feedstock for domestic manufacturers. Americans working in these U.S. facilities recycle [more than 90,000](#) aluminum beverage cans each minute, which is part of how aluminum beverage cans manufactured in the United States average [73 percent](#) recycled content.

The recycling refunds program that SB 642 would create would mean more aluminum beverage cans recycled into new cans at U.S. facilities, thereby helping the economy and the environment. CMI believes SB 642 would be strengthened with the following amendments:

- Start the variable deposit at 5 cents for beverage containers 24 ounces or less and 10 cents for beverage containers greater than 24 ounces for a couple years with an automatic increase to 10 cents and 15 cents, respectively, to ease consumers into paying the refundable deposit.
- Make the beverage container stewardship organization responsible for installing, servicing, and maintaining the beverage container redemption mechanisms rather than issuing handling fees to redemption facilities, retailers, or other persons that accept empty redeemable beverage containers for redemption.
- Keep financial responsibility on distributors and importers and do not include a provision where container manufacturers are financially responsible when producers sell under their own brand or where there is a lack of identification of a brand.
- Add as a factor in determining producer fees the relative market value of the beverage container.
- Consider if mandating a state-specific UPC barcode is legal and is feasible given the realities with manufacturing, inventorying, and delivering of beverage containers.
- Remove the legally mandated increase in market share of reusable beverage containers that comes with the performance target and the lower producer fees for reusable beverage containers; the decree to increase the use of reusable beverage containers by a certain amount is based on the assumption that reusables always have a lower environmental impact, but aluminum beverage cans at the high recycling rates that recycling refunds will deliver have a comparable environmental impact as reusable beverage containers.

SB 642 is an important step in creating a more circular economy in Maryland so more aluminum beverage cans are collected and not lost to landfill. Maryland has an opportunity to lead the country by implementing a modern recycling refund program. It would then become a more important source for used beverage cans that are highly valued and sought after by aluminum suppliers. CMI urges you and your colleagues to consider its suggested amendments to SB 642, amend the bill, and advance it out of committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Scott Breen
Senior Vice President, Sustainability
Can Manufacturers Institute

SB 642 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Bob Douglas

Position: UNF

OPPOSE SB 642

Licensed Beverage Distributors of Maryland

Re: SB 642- Md. Beverage Containers Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

The licensed beverage distributors of Maryland appreciate and support efforts to reduce litter and improve recycling in Maryland. This bill, however, is a good intention gone awry. Others have pointed out various shortcomings with this proposal. They include (1) hampering profitable municipal recycling plans, (2) impacting revenues for many small businesses, including distributors and retailers (3) forcing the creation of a new and expensive labor-intensive endeavor to establish, manage and operate the redemption system. It also forces the creation of a state office to regulate, oversee and administer the system.

The bill engenders all these costly and harmful effects when improvement to existing recycling systems would also achieve its goals. In many ways, this bill suffers from throwing the baby out with the bath.

As for wholesalers, they support recycling efforts, improving the environment, and reducing litter. We rarely oppose the efforts when they make sense. This plan does not. For example, it requires wholesalers to charge and collect each year what amounts to a tax on a billion bottles create a non-profit to handle the collected bottle fee and

then equip this non-profit to distribute the funds for refunds or reimbursement for recycling operating expenses. At the same time,

wholesalers must provide records of all the transactions and generate annual reports for State oversight.

All this effort is predicated on the assumption people would prefer to take their bottles to a recycling refund location than put the bottles on the curb for recycling pick-up. When picked up by the local government truck, the recycling generates income and reduces the demand for higher taxes to fund government operations. The bottom line: the squeeze is not worth the juice for anyone.

Licensed Beverage Distributors of Maryland support efforts to increase recycling of beverage containers. We would like to work with others on solutions to these issues in Maryland. SWB 642 is not the way to do this.

We request an unfavorable report on SB 642.

Bob Douglas, Licensed Beverage Distributors of Maryland. 410-456-9319. Bobdouglasoffice@gmail.com

SB642 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Kirk McCauley

Position: UNF



WMDA/CAR Service Station
and Automotive Repair Association

Chair: Senator Brian Feldman, Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan, Members of Education, Energy, and the Environment

RE: SB642

Position: Oppose

My name is Kirk McCauley, my employer is WMDA/CAR, we represent service stations convenience stores and repair facilities across the state as a non- profit trade group.

Currently Maryland MDE has issued an RFP to access Maryland's recycling infrastructure needs. This assessment/study of recycling needs is due back this year.

During a time of plain crazy prices and consumers paying a much higher percentage of earnings for food and drink, it would not make sense to allot funding by retail or the State of Maryland before this assessment and study is completed.

For these reasons we oppose SB642

Any questions can be addressed to Kirk McCauley, 301-775-0221 or kmccauley@wmda.net

SB642_RestaurantAssoc_Thompson_UNFAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Melvin Thompson

Position: UNF



SENATE BILL 642

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

March 5, 2024

Position: Unfavorable

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Education, Energy & Environment Committee:

On behalf of members of the *Restaurant Association of Maryland*, we oppose SB 642. This legislation would require beverage distributors (wholesalers) to include a redeemable beverage container refund value as part of the wholesale price of beverage containers sold to restaurants, bars, and other retailers. The legislation prohibits restaurants, bars and other “on-premises sellers” from including the refund value of redeemable beverage containers in the retail price when sold to customers.

Despite language in the bill that allows on-premises sellers to arrange for pickup of empty redeemable beverage containers (with deposits refunded and materials handling fee paid) by a beverage container stewardship organization, many questions remain about the related logistics and prevalence of such stewardship organizations, particularly in less-populated areas of the state. Moreover, restaurants and bars in locations with limited storage space or in properties with shared disposal facilities (e.g., shopping centers, malls, etc.) would face challenges separately storing their beverage containers for pickup/redemption.

In 2023, the General Assembly passed legislation (SB 222) that requires the Maryland Department of Environment to hire a consultant to conduct a statewide recycling needs assessment and report the results by July 30, 2024. This new law also establishes an advisory council to provide advice and make recommendations for implementing a producer responsibility program for packaging materials (report due by December 1, 2024). We believe it would be prudent for the General Assembly to wait until after the recycling needs assessment report becomes available and producer responsibility program advisory council recommendations before giving serious consideration to any other recycling-related policy.

For these reasons, we oppose SB 642 and request an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melvin R. Thompson" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melvin R. Thompson
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs and Public Policy

SB642_MAPDA_unf (2024).pdf

Uploaded by: Mike O'Halloran

Position: UNF



Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association
P.O. Box 711 ★ Annapolis, MD 21404
410-693-2226 ★ www.mapda.com

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association

DATE: March 5, 2024

RE: **SENATE BILL 642** – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

On behalf of Maryland's convenience stores and energy distributors, MAPDA urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB642.

This legislation would require retailers, such as convenience stores, to accept redeemable beverage containers at their place of business and pay out the return fee. Additionally, the retailers would be at the forefront of having to charge customers a significant product increase at the cash register.

Border issues drive up costs and hurt local economies. A container deposit represents a significant price increase, especially for less expensive products. That value creates unintended consequences that include fraudulent redemption of containers and loss of business.

Our locations are not made for a deposit scheme. Although there is an exemption for smaller locations it is not reflective of the layout and size of the emerging convenience store market, as the neighborhood convenience store has evolved into the local grocery store providing a host of products from fresh fruits, eggs, and a variety of beverage offerings. The requirement for dedicated space of dirty and used beverage containers, the evaluation of valid container returns, and the responsibility to payout money on products likely not purchased in the store makes this legislation unworkable and unsustainable in a small business environment.

There is an easier way to recycle. Recycling systems should focus on all recyclables – be easy, convenient, and equitable for all. The deposit system does not meet any of those important components.

For these reasons, MAPDA respectfully requests an unfavorable committee report on SB642.

Feeding and fueling the economy through gas, coffee, food, heating oil and propane.

MAPDA is an association of convenience stores and energy distributors in Maryland, Delaware & the District of Columbia.

2024 MBWA SB 642_Beverge Container Recycling Refun

Uploaded by: NICK MANIS

Position: UNF



March 5, 2024

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

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Re: **OPPOSE** – **SB 642** – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Beer Wholesalers Association (MBWA) we are writing in opposition to **SB 642** which requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish a beverage container deposit program.

The MBWA consists of 22 Maryland businesses employing over 1,400 Maryland citizens that are majority owned and operated generational family businesses. Our members are committed to recycling and reducing litter in Maryland. The policy discussions around recycling and solid waste disposal are important ones and are taking place here and around the country. We recognize the importance of the issue and are proud of the steps we have taken to recycle all the material in our warehouse and business and encourage our customers to do the same.

In the 2023 legislative session, SB 222 Environment – Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility of Packaging Materials was passed. MDE just released the RFP for the recycling assessment, and we are interested in reviewing that report prior to determining the next steps for recycling policies.

We are looking forward to further discussions with all stakeholders to enhance and improve programs that would be effective, convenient, efficient, and financially stable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Manis", is written over a white background.

Nicholas G. Manis
Executive Director

CC: John Favazza

SB0642_UNF_NWRA_MD Bev. Container Recycling Refund

Uploaded by: Pam Kasemeyer

Position: UNF

Maryland-Delaware Solid Waste Association

a chapter of the

**National
Waste & Recycling
AssociationSM**

Collect. Recycle. Innovate.

TO: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
The Honorable Benjamin Brooks

FROM: Andrew G. Vetter
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
410-244-7000

DATE: March 5, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 642 – *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*

The Maryland Delaware Solid Waste Association (MDSWA), a chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association, is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in the State of Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. MDSWA and its members **oppose** Senate Bill 642.

Senate Bill 642 proposes to establish a statewide beverage container recycling refund and litter reduction program. While it is clearly the objective of the sponsor to increase the percentage of beverage containers recycled in the State as well as reduce litter, the unintended negative impacts of such a program on Maryland's existing recycling infrastructure, far outweigh any potential benefit.

A container recycling refund program as proposed in Senate Bill 642 only addresses certain beverage containers, while curbside recycling programs target a broad array of materials recovery. The containers to which the bill applies reflect a small percentage of the waste stream. In contrast, the traditional recyclables collected in curbside programs (including beverage containers) make up approximately 50% of the overall waste stream. Taking any action that disrupts the existing curbside programs in the State will have a negative effect on the State's overall recycling rate. While states with similar programs often have relatively higher recycling rates for containers, many have poor overall recycling rates. It is critically important to put container recycling rates into context with overall state recycling rates. High container recycling rates do not translate into high overall recycling rates.

Maryland's local jurisdictions have continued to improve and enhance their curbside and other recycling programs. Concurrent with these efforts, has been the development of significant processing capability to manage an increasing percentage of Maryland's waste stream that is being collected to be

recycled. As a result of the investment in recycling infrastructure by both the public and private sector, Maryland has some of the country's highest overall recycling rates.

Instituting a container recycling program will be harmful to local curbside recycling programs. Putting a specific refundable deposit on a beverage container means the establishment of a separate, duplicate recycling system for a small subset of the waste stream. The funds generated in such a system will support the high cost of operating a redemption system for a small portion of the waste stream at the expense of existing programs. There are better ways to spend scarce resources to promote recycling. Rather than negatively affecting the entire recycling infrastructure in order to recycle more beverage containers, it would be better to make the investment in current recycling infrastructure in order to update programs and increase participation.

Single stream recycling has become the standard for both residential and commercial collection for all recyclable materials. Imposing a container redemption program on top of existing programs will divert revenue from some of the highest value materials, such as aluminum, that support local jurisdiction curbside programs. Consequently, existing recycling programs will lose valuable commodities that they use today to offset the cost of providing recycling services. The result will be a weakened local recycling program and increased costs for curbside collection triggered by the need to cover the costs that are no longer offset by the value of beverage container materials.

Furthermore, because Maryland is a relatively small state geographically, it will be nearly impossible to prohibit the influx of containers from surrounding states for redemption, even though those containers will not have been assessed on the front end. Again, the expenditure of scarce resources that could be better used to enhance current recycling infrastructure and/or for market development for the end use of products.

Finally, in 2023, the General Assembly passed ***Senate Bill 222: Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility in Packaging***, which requires a Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment, and it is the industries' opinion that no legislative action should be taken until the Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment is completed. This Needs Assessment will provide a complete picture of Maryland's recycling and waste infrastructure and what actions Maryland needs to take to enhance Maryland's recycling framework and effectiveness. The Maryland Department of the Environment recently issued a request for proposal for the needs assessment and a final report is expected later this year.

The objective of Senate Bill 642 may be noteworthy, but the method for achieving it will dramatically undermine overall recycling in Maryland and is preemptive, given the State's commitment to comprehensively consider extended producer responsibility. MDSWA urges an unfavorable report.

SB642_MRA_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Price

Position: UNF

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



SB642 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program **Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee** **March 5th, 2024**

Position: Unfavorable

Background: SB642 would establish a beverage container deposit program in Maryland.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance (MRA) strongly opposes the passage of a beverage container deposit program in Maryland. While we appreciate efforts made by proponents to address concerns expressed by our organization on previous iterations of the bill, we must continue to oppose the proposal due to the overall expected impact that it could have on businesses in Maryland.

We would first request that the Committee wait to pass recycling policies until you have received the information mandated by SB222 Environment - Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility for Packaging Materials in 2023. MRA has repeatedly testified in support of studies and has urged the State to take an informed, wholistic approach to addressing concerns with the waste and recycling streams in Maryland. Knowing that you will be better informed on the needs of our state before the 2025 legislative Session, we would respectfully urge you to avoid passage of policies that could run contrary to the State's needs.

Regarding SB642, our members, particularly those that operate in jurisdictions with bottle deposit laws in place, continue to have concerns about the effect that this proposal would have on their ability to meet the demands of the bill and provide a clean shopping environment for customers. Reverse vending machines (RVMs) may allow retailers to operate as collection sites without devoting an abundance of space inside the store to bottle collections, but stores often need multiple RVMs to meet demands and store designs are not universal; many retailers may not have excess space in an entry vestibule to devote to an entire row of RVMs. SB642 includes language regarding the minimum number of RVMs that would be required at businesses in certain communities, and this could be overly burdensome for businesses that do not have the space to meet those requirements. Additionally, we are unaware of methods to restrict customers from placing uncleaned bottles into an RVM. The crushing method employed by RVMs to ensure that bottles cannot be deposited more than once results in contamination of the machine due to materials that may be left inside of the bottles. Regular cleaning of these machines can be costly and labor-intensive, and dirty machines cause odors and attract pests to the retail space.

MRA has historically expressed concerns about the passage of recycling, packaging, and stewardship policies that hinge on the continued operations of only a few existing operators. This approach results in an industry environment that lacks competition and oversight, forcing businesses to work with an extremely limited list of operators in order to comply with the law. We cannot support policies that would set up programs and industries that depend on the success of “if we build it, they will come”, and we believe it would be unwise for the State to pass legislation based on the repeated testimony of only a few industry companies that promise to change the landscape of recycling in our region.

For these reasons, we would urge an unfavorable report on SB642. Thank you for your consideration.

SB0642_UNF_MSLBA_MD Bev. Container Recycling Refun

Uploaded by: Steve Wise

Position: UNF



**MARYLAND STATE
LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION**

150 E Main Street, Suite 104, Westminster, MD 21157

TO: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
The Honorable Benjamin Brooks

FROM: J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
Andrew G. Vetter
410-244-7000

DATE: March 5, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 642 – *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*

The Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA), which consists of approximately 800 Maryland businesses holding alcoholic beverage licenses (restaurants, bars, taverns, and package stores), **opposes** Senate Bill 642.

This legislation would require retailers, such as package stores, to accept redeemable beverage containers at their place of business, either by establishing a “dedicated area” to store the returned containers or acquiring a reverse vending machine. In addition, they must pay the person redeeming the container in cash in some cases.

The package stores owned by our members are typically 3,000 to 5,000 square feet in size. The majority of this square footage is dedicated to shelving, sales and consumer transactions, coolers, walk-in boxes, and storage area for product that has yet to be put on the shelf. Senate Bill 642 would require each retailer to set aside either dedicated storage space or an area for a reverse vending machine. These stores are simply not equipped to accommodate storage of redeemable containers, and the space needed to do so would be substantial, considering that a retailer must accept any containers that are brought in, unless they are rejected due to their condition.

Furthermore, Chapter 465 of 2023 requires that the Maryland Department of the Environment conduct a recycling needs assessment before July of 2024. It would seem prudent to allow that study to be completed before the General Assembly enacts legislation implementing a beverage container recycling plan.

For these reasons, MSLBA respectfully requests that the Committee give this legislation an unfavorable report.

MRN24SB642Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Chaz Miller

Position: INFO



March 1, 2024

To: Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: SB 642, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

The Maryland Recycling Network promotes sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's"), to ensure that the use of virgin materials is minimized, materials otherwise destined for disposal are reused or recycled and strong demand exists for buying products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through education programs, advocacy activities to affect public policy, technical assistance efforts, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

Our members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We believe no legislative action should be taken on a Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program until the Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment required by SB 222, "Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility in Packaging", is completed. This Needs Assessment will provide a complete picture of Maryland's recycling and waste infrastructure. Its results will tell us what problems we need to resolve to have recycling legislation that meets Maryland's needs. The RFP for that assessment has been issued. A final report is required later this year. In addition, Maryland recently announced the membership of the EPR Advisory Council, which was also authorized by SB 222.

The Maryland Recycling Network stands ready to serve as a sounding board and resource for legislators and others interested in pursuing our mission. Please do not hesitate to contact me via email phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the above.

We thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Houstle".

Peter Houstle
Executive Director

Beverage Assn. SB 642 Comments.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna Sublett

Position: INFO



To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

From: Tiffany Harvey
Jenna Sublett

Date: March 5, 2024

Re: SB 642 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Challenges with this Legislation

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments on SB 642. We do not support this legislation.

Our companies believe that to be effective, a collection system for recyclables needs to be convenient to consumers, efficient, financially stable, and help companies gain increased access to recycled material so it can be remade into new products. This legislation does not meet these pillars of a good recycling policy.

The policy conversation around recycling, plastic reduction and solid waste disposal is an important one and one taking place around the country. Our industry recognizes the seriousness of this issue and we welcome the opportunity to work with communities on ideas that get back more of our plastic bottles so they can be remade into new bottles.

In 2019 our industry made local and national news when announcing our 'Every Bottle Back' Initiative, which is investing in recycling infrastructure and community education nationally to improve the collection and remaking of recyclables.

Last year the MD Assembly passed [SB 222](#) *Environment – Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility for Packaging Materials*. Two weeks ago, MDE released the RFP for the recycling needs assessment. We look forward to the needs assessment report. This report will be key in determining the next best step for recycling policies that have measurable outcomes and are equitable for all.

In closing, you have our commitment to be at the table and to participate in best practice discussions or a new direction conversation – particularly when talking about our packaging.

MARYLAND • DELAWARE • DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 711 • Annapolis, MD 21404
410-990-9502



Printed on Recycled Paper



TOMRA Testimony on SB 642 MD - Mar 2024 Final.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike Noel

Position: INFO

March 5, 2024

Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony regarding information on SB 642 “An Act Concerning Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program”

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Noel, and I am a Director of Public Affairs at TOMRA. TOMRA provides a range of technology and services for recycling and reuse systems, maximizing resource productivity and minimizing virgin resource extraction. We are known for pioneering advanced technology for the collection and sorting stages of recycling and reusing materials. We have over 50 years’ experience operating in more than 40 jurisdictions with container Recycling Refunds (RR or “bottle bills”) around the globe, including all ten U.S. states with deposit laws.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 642, *An Act Concerning Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*. TOMRA is commenting on an informational basis to share the principles that high-performing Recycling Refund programs share in common. Also, at the end of this document, I include answers to DRS FAQs including how Reverse Vending Machines work.

Technology and Services Provided by TOMRA

TOMRA Collection (Deposit Return Systems for refillable/reusable and one-way beverage containers)

TOMRA provides multiple services that empower Recycling Refunds. Those services include providing collection technology like bulk or single-feed Reverse Vending Machines, container validation, clearing deposits and handling fees, aggregating data from across the redemption network and providing container pick-up and processing services.



TOMRA Sorting

In addition, TOMRA provides advanced optical sorting technology to the facilities that handle curbside and drop-off recyclables (Material Recycling Facilities or “MRFs”). This technology enable curbside recycling operations to produce material of a higher quality and market value, increasing their recyclability. Many state-of-the-art recycling facilities coming online today include TOMRA technology. We offer technology and services in over 80 markets around the world.

Our goal is for 40% of all plastic packaging globally to be collected for recycling by 2030, up from 14% today.

Introduction

Recycling Refunds for beverage containers were invented by the beverage industry itself. Back when most beverages came in refillable containers, the beverage industry wanted their bottles back due to the cost of the bottle itself. So they charged consumers a deposit and managed a reverse logistics operation to collect, wash and refill bottles.

As the industry shifted to one-way containers after WWII, beverage container litter became an increasing concern for the public. This sparked the advent of legislated deposit refunds and today ten U.S. states and about 40 more jurisdictions around the world use such systems to manage beverage container litter and recycling.

Deposit return systems provide two main functions:

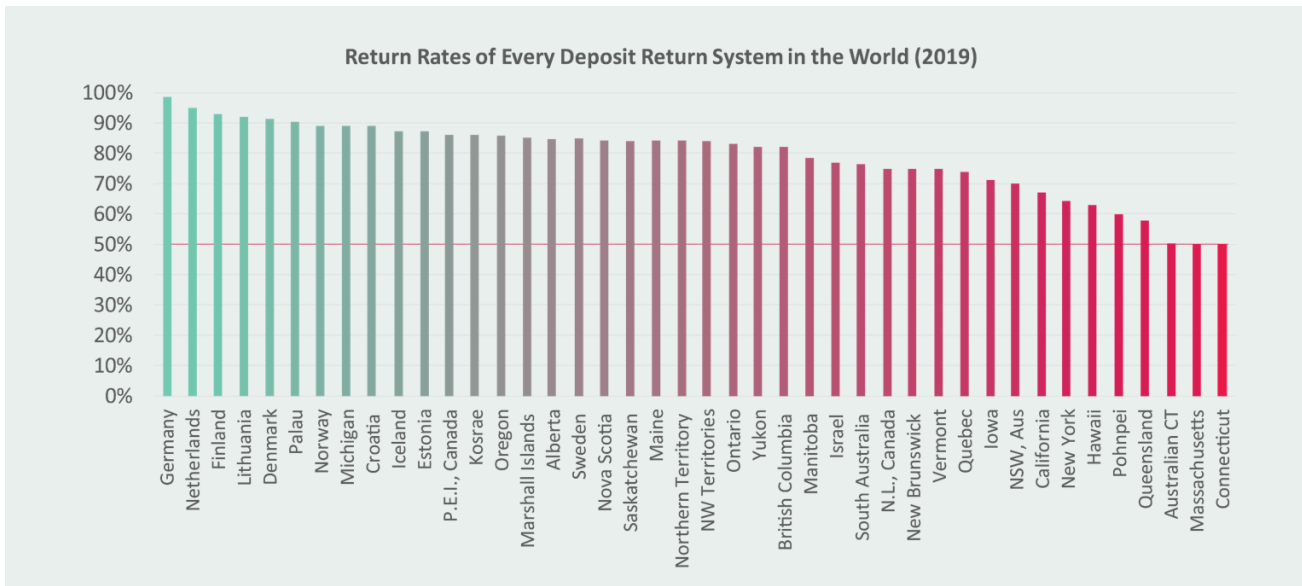
1. **Achieving superior collection rates** – Giving waste a value by making container eligible for a cash refund, has a direct impact on the collection rates of beverage containers (and as a result litter reduction). The latest available data shows that containers in the U.S. without a deposit have an average recycling rate of 22% whereas containers with a deposit have a 66% recycling rate.¹ And in states with a flat ten-cent deposit, prior to COVID-induced disruptions, the average deposit container recycling rate was 88%.²
2. **Preserving the high quality of recyclable material, ensuring it is effectively recycled** – Curbside and Recycling Refund collection systems complement each other to achieve a circular economy. Since Recycling Refunds are often compared to curbside collection systems it is important to note RRs separate beverage containers by material type. This essentially eliminates contamination meaning virtually all containers collected in RRs can be recycled. Many curbside systems today have embraced “single-stream” collection where all recyclable material is mixed together in one bin. The combination of material and inevitable consumer confusion over recyclability leads to contamination. In a Recycling Refund program, since the material has retained its high quality, containers are most often recycled back into beverage containers or other food-grade quality packaging instead of “down-cycled” to another product that cannot be recycled again.

¹ Testimony to Connecticut Environment Committee. Container Recycling Institute, 2021. Accessible via: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/ENVdata/Tmy/2021SB-01037-R000319-Collins,%20Susan,%20President-Container%20Recycling%20Institute-TMY.PDF>

² Bottlebill.org. Refers to Michigan and Oregon pre-COVID (2019), due to significant disruptions to redemption access during the pandemic which have affected redemption behavior.

The Shared Principles of High-Performing Recycling Refund Programs

While Recycling Refunds are known for achieving 90% recycling rates or more for beverage containers, not all RRs are achieving their potential.



"Global Deposit Book 2020," Reeloo. 2020. : If 2019 data was not available, latest year is shown. 5

Since multiple states, the entire EU and about eleven more jurisdictions around the world are actively evaluating modernizing or creating their own Recycling Refund programs, TOMRA took a step back to evaluate the best practices that the high-performing refund programs in existence today share in common. By “high performing” we mean systems that achieve around 90% recycling rates for deposit containers or higher. The following can be helpful as you evaluate various proposals when designing your program.

Principles shared among high-performing Recycling Refund programs include:

- **Circularity** - Financial incentives and penalties exist to ensure containers are effectively recycled not ‘downcycled’.
- **Performance Targets** - Frame conditions set in statute ensure performance such as targets for collection, recycled content and a minimum number of redemption points, plus a meaningful deposit and broad scope.
- **Convenient Refund** - The redemption system is easy, accessible and fair for everyone.
- **System Management** - Producers finance and manage infrastructure and operations within the frame conditions set by government; with use of unredeemed deposits and commodity revenues.
- **System Integrity** - Trust and transparency are built into the system’s processes and enabled by product registration, data-management, a clearinghouse, and redemption specifications.

Conclusion

Now that there has been over 50 years of working experience with Recycling Refund programs and performance data is available, it is quite clear what works and what does not work. There is a blueprint for success when designing these types of collection programs. While any good policy will adapt to the local context, if the committee keeps the principles of Circularity, Performance, Convenience, System Management and System Integrity in mind when designing the system, the state will adopt an effective program.

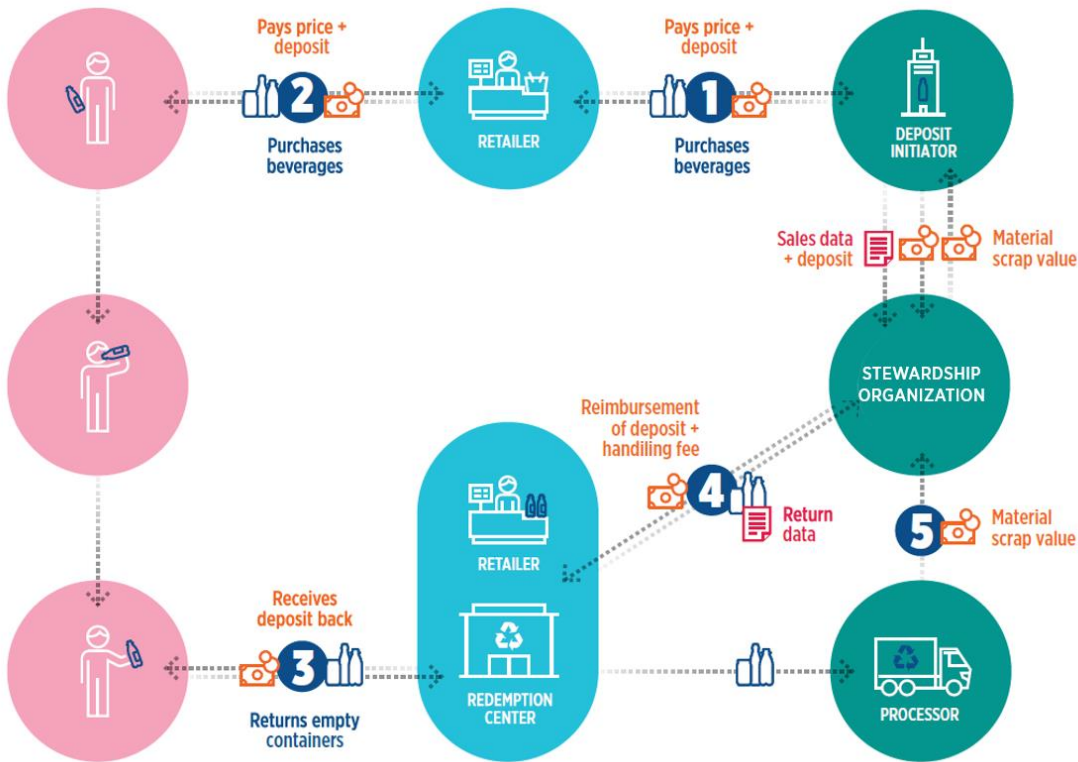
Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective. We welcome any follow-up inquiry.

Mike Noel
 Director, Public Affairs
 TOMRA
 +1 475-225-3846
Michael.Noel@TOMRA.com

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Recycling Refunds

How does a typical Recycling Refund program managed by a central Stewardship Organization work?

Below is a diagram of how a centralized RR works at a high level. Keep in mind, “deposit initiator” is the legal term for the business that first sells the container in the state. Typically, this is a beverage distributor or importer.



1 Retailer buys container	Retailer buys the bottle from the ‘Deposit Initiator’ for the price of the beverage plus a deposit per container.
2. Consumer buys container	Consumer pays for the bottle and deposit per container from the Retailer
3. Consumer returns container for full deposit refund	Consumer returns bottle to a Retailer or Redemption Center and receives their deposit money back in full.
4. Repayment to retailer or redemption center	Deposit Initiator repays the Retailer or Redemption Center the full deposit and a “handling fee” for any eligible containers redeemed. Redemption data ensures accurate accounting.
5. Container pick-up	Deposit Initiators pick-up and recycle their bottles either directly, through a 3 rd party contractor, or collectively through services provided by the Stewardship Organization.
6. Sale of recyclable commodity to initiate final recycling	Containers are sorted and prepared for market at a Processing Facility before being sold to recyclers where they are most commonly made into new beverage containers. Deposit initiators or the Stewardship Organization (depending on the law) retain the revenue from the sale of their own container material.
7. Distribution of unredeemed deposits	Deposits from containers that consumers chose not to redeem are distributed to the state, individual deposit initiators, the Stewardship Organization or shared among these entities. Each state handles this differently depending on their context, however high-performing deposit systems use the unredeemed deposits to reinvest in the refund program.

How does the container, deposit and handling fee exchange work at the individual retailer level?

Below is an example of how it would work at a specific retailer.

1. Joe’s Supermarket bought **10** deposit containers from the deposit initiator (beverage distributor). Joe’s Supermarket paid for the price of the containers plus a dime deposit for each container (or \$1.00 in total deposits). At this point, the store is ‘out’ \$1.
2. Then the store sells 10 deposit containers to a consumer. The consumer pays the store the price of the containers, plus \$1 in deposits. (The store is now ‘whole’).
3. Then a consumer comes and redeems **20** deposit containers. Joe’s Supermarket pays the consumer \$2 in deposits (10¢ per container). Now the store is out \$2 in deposits.
4. Joe’s Supermarket gives a report to the deposit initiator showing they accepted for redemption 20 of their containers. (This step is done automatically by Reverse Vending Machines). The deposit initiator picks up the containers and repays Joe’s Supermarket the \$2 in deposits and a handling fee for the 20 containers. In terms

of deposits paid and repaid, the store is now 'whole'. In addition, the store has earned revenue for providing container takeback services by way of the handling fee.

What services does a Reverse Vending Machine (RVM) provide?

Modern deposit systems have embraced RVMs because they provide benefits to multiple stakeholders in the deposit system such as:

- **Reducing the cost of redemption services, particularly labor costs** – Manually accepting containers for redemption requires staff to accept containers from consumers and sort containers by size and material type, and typically by distributor and brand to ensure the appropriate deposit initiator is charged for the containers redeemed. RVMs automate this entire process, dramatically reducing the labor required. For a redemption center handling a significant level of volume this can reduce labor costs by 75%. For a retailer it can mean freeing up team members to stock shelves or better serve customers, while only occasionally maintaining RVMs.
- **Reducing the cost of container transportation** – Container compaction provides an important value within refund programs. By compacting (or crushing) containers, bottles and cans are substantially reduced in size. This saves storage space for retailers and truck space for deposit initiators. Now more containers can fit on the same number of trucks. Compaction can reduce the number of truck trips, fuel use and GHG emissions of container pickup by approximately 60%.
- **Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of container transportation** – Given compaction reduces the number of trucks necessary to pick-up the same number of containers, RVMs also help to reduce the greenhouse gas footprint of a refund program by two-thirds compared to fully manual refund program.
- **Mitigating cross-border unauthorized redemption** – RVMs reject containers that are not registered in the system, helping to mitigate against unauthorized cross-border redemption. Compaction again serves an important service by 'cancelling' out the container from any repeat redemption. RVMs transmit data in near real-time which triggers 'spike reports' of any unusual redemption activity. System operators, distributors and regulators use this data to investigate any potentially fraudulent behavior.
- **More accurate container counts leading to more revenue for redemption providers and less 'shrink' for deposit initiators** – RVMs verify and count every container redeemed, designating the container as belonging to the deposit initiator who registered it in the system. If containers are not registered, they are rejected. Automated counting is more accurate than manual counting which is prone to error, so redemption providers appreciate how RVMs ensure they are paid for every container they accept. Over the course of a year, this can lead to significant revenue opportunities. In the same way, deposit initiators appreciate how RVMs accurately designate containers to each deposit initiator, ensuring one company is not paying the handling fees of another.

For these reasons, modern deposit systems have found ways to incentivize or scale the use of RVMs throughout their deposit systems. Norway and Sweden both pay a higher handling fee to redemption providers that utilize RVMs, whereas California, Maine and Quebec have made available millions in grant funding for RVMs. Connecticut took a different approach by mandating all beverage stores above 7,000 square feet to provide at least two RVMs for public use.

What container sizes and material types do RVMs accept?

RVMs accept aluminum, glass and plastic beverage containers. Due to their shape and weight, cartons and pouches are not handled well by commercially available RVMs and TOMRA does not recommend their inclusion in a refund program.

RVMs accept containers that are 150ml up to and including 3 liters. Due to the odd shape of some non-carbonated beverages larger than 2.5 liters, we recommend accepting non-carbonated containers equal to 150ml and up to and including 2.5 liters. We recommend accepting carbonated beverage containers equal to 4 oz. and up to and including 3 liters. If policymakers are concerned about litter from a specific beverage category that falls outside these size specifications such as liquor miniature containers (commonly known as “nips”), we recommend excluding the other beverage categories to minimize manual redemption. For example in 2019, Maine specifically added liquor nips to the state’s deposit system. While there is not a commercially available RVM that can automatically accept these containers due to their small size, Maine redemption providers accept them manually and store them in small boxes or bags.

How do RVMs help mitigate against cross-border redemption?

Cross-border redemption is not a significant issue in the deposit systems that have prioritized addressing it. RVMs reject containers that do not match the Universal Product Code (UPC) provided by the deposit initiator when registering their product. To be effective this means that a deposit initiator applies a UPC to containers that are only sold in the designated deposit state. Therefore containers bought in another state that do not bear such a barcode cannot be redeemed via RVMs in the deposit state. For manual redemption, deposit initiators might put a visible marking to identify deposit or non-deposit containers so redemption providers can recognize non-deposit items.

In practice, most RRs leave it up to deposit initiators to decide whether they will use a state-specific/unique UPC or a “universal” barcode that is utilized in multiple jurisdictions. Deposit initiators then decide whether it is worth investing in a label change and adjustments to inventory management processes. In some instances where the deposit value is very meaningful, the government has passed enabling legislation to facilitate deposit initiators to align on an industry-wide solution. For example, in Germany where the deposit value is 27 cents and therefore the unauthorized redemption risk is relatively high, Deutsche Pfandsystem GmbH (DPG) was established in 2005 by the retail, beverage producer and beverage container production industries to define and establish the organizational and judicial basis of implementing a nationwide Recycling Refund program. Part of DPG’s role includes managing system integrity such as aligning on a container security marking and related protocols. Producers ended up recommending a special security ink be applied to each deposit container.

Examples of state-specific markings and barcodes utilized in New York and Connecticut



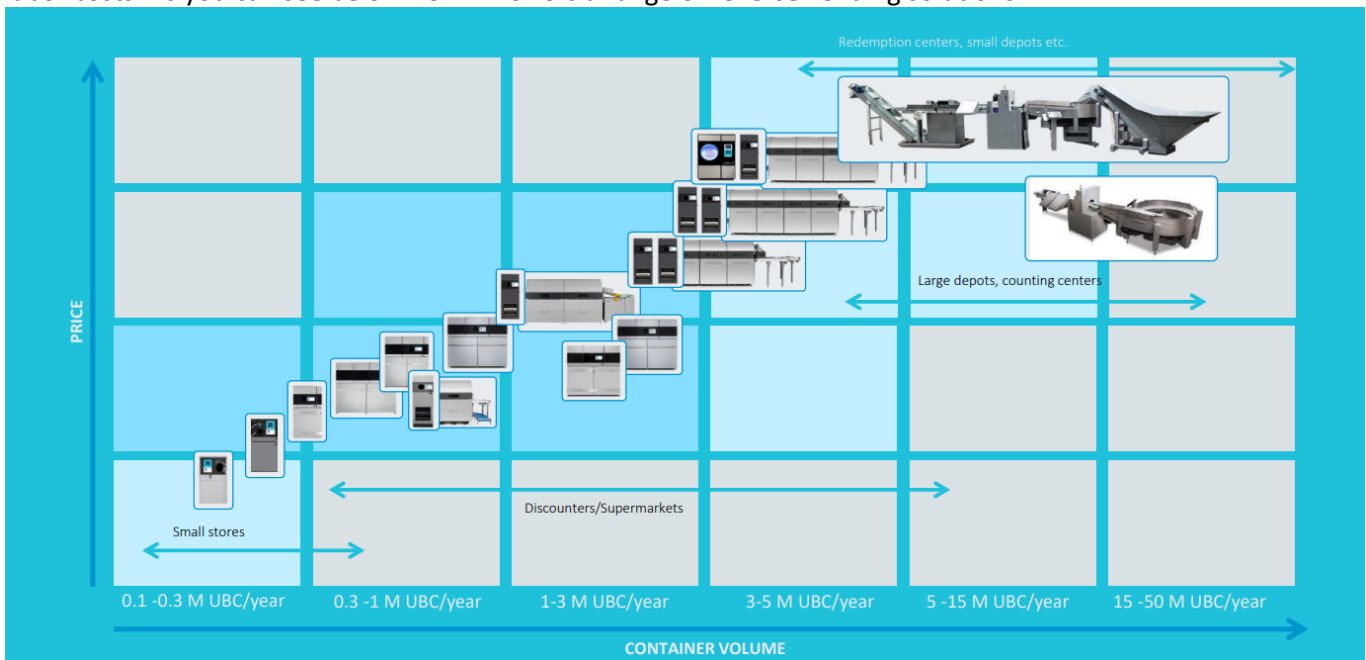
State law cannot mandate the use of state-specific barcodes due to Interstate Commerce laws, however legislation can incentivize the use of such methods through, for example, providing participating deposit initiators with a greater share of the unredeemed deposits.

What type of data does an RVM record?

RVMs record data to identify containers redeemed and match them with the deposit initiator that registered the product in the machine's cloud database. This includes the container's material type, shape, weight, and Universal Product Code. The machine also records when the container was redeemed, how many containers were redeemed before cashing out. Online machines also track whether the machine is operational and if not, what type of error has occurred. This enables maximum uptime where the RVM operator and retailer or redemption center partner to get the machine up and running again.

How large are Reverse Vending Machines?

There are many RVM types and styles on the market today. The appropriate solution depends on a retailer or redemption center's needs – in particular the level of redemption volume, size of location, and priority placed on labor costs. As you can see below TOMRA offers a range of reverse vending solutions.



TOMRA's portfolio of Reverse Vending solutions extends from small to large depending on redemption volume and vendor preferences.

For small retailers, they may want one small machine that accepts all three material types. The M1 accepts aluminum, glass and plastic containers and has the following dimensions:

- H: 5.5'
- W: 3.2'
- D: 2.1'



TOMRA M1

On the other end of the spectrum, a thriving redemption center or a retailer that has embraced redemption as a service to consumers and is redeeming about 3 million units a year may opt for an R1 and T9. Together, these machines accept aluminum, glass and plastic containers (with an option to accept refillable/reusable bottles through an opening for crates) and has the dimensions below. Note that the consumer only see the portal and consumer interface of the machines below. The rest of the machine is located in a back room.

- H: 5.9' – 6.4'
- W: 6.3' (R1 = 4.3', T9 = 2')
- D: 11' (or more if additional storage requested)



TOMRA R1



Can RVMs accept multiple materials or only one material?

Individual RVMs can accept a single material or all three materials (aluminum, glass and plastic) depending on the machine model selected.

What happens to the container once a consumer places it in an RVM?

Dozens of cameras immediately analyze the item placed in the RVM's opening. The machine's recognition system evaluates the container's UPC, weight and shape against the information in the system's database in order to accept or reject the container for redemption. If it is recognized, the machine moves the container on a conveyor system to a storage bin where it is separated from other material types. Typically, the material is compacted within the machine to ensure it cannot be redeemed again and to reduce the cost and carbon emissions of container transportation. Then the RVM automatically transmits the container's redemption data to RVM system operators who initiate billing of the appropriate deposit initiator for the retailer or redemption center accepting their containers.

How are refillable/reusable containers handled in a Recycling Refund Program?

Multiple refund programs in operation today take back both one-way and refillable beverage containers, particularly in Canada and across Europe. RVMs are capable of accepting refillable containers. Typically, a consumer will return refillable containers to the store in a uniform crate and place the crate in an opening in the RVM. The RVM analyzes the bottles and accepts or rejects them for redemption. The refillable containers are then transported to central washing and cleaning facilities before being distributed to refilling facilities, all by the deposit initiator or on the deposit initiator's behalf.

Who pays for Reverse Vending Machines?

Typically the redemption provider, meaning the beverage retailer or redemption center, finances Reverse Vending Machines with help from handling fee revenue. RVMs are financed based on three methods: a) purchase (which is rare), b) monthly lease, or c) what is known as a "through-put lease". A through-put lease allows a retailer or redemption center to utilize RVMs at no or minimal upfront cost, where the RVM provider takes on the financial risk of providing the machine, as long as the retailer meets a minimal redemption volume. The retailer or redemption center pays for the machine by paying a small amount per container redeemed (e.g. 1 penny or a half penny). The handling fee helps to compensate the retailer or redemption center for the cost of such technology.

ABOUT TOMRA: TOMRA provides a range of advanced vision systems that utilize sensor-based technology to sort everything from bottles to blueberries allowing companies and consumers to reduce their waste footprint and providing a stream of clean valuable material to the 'circular economy'.

TOMRA COLLECTION: With an installed base of approximately 83,000 systems in over 60 markets including all 10 U.S. states with deposit laws, TOMRA Reverse Vending is the world's leading provider of reverse vending and clearinghouse solutions. Every year TOMRA facilitates the collection of more than 41 billion empty cans and bottles and provides retailers and other customers with an effective and efficient way of collecting, sorting, and processing these containers. TOMRA's material recovery business includes the pick-up, transportation, and processing of used beverage containers in North America, as well as the subsequent brokerage of the processed material to recyclers. The revenue stream in this business area is derived from fees received from bottlers based on the volume of containers processed. Currently, TOMRA Material Recovery processes over 340,000 metric tons of containers annually. TOMRA has over five decades of experience in markets with deposit return laws in place.

TOMRA SORTING: TOMRA Sorting creates sensor-based technologies for sorting and process analysis within the recycling, mining, food, and other industries. TOMRA Recycling is a global leader in its field and has pioneered the automation of waste sorting. Its flexible sorting systems perform an extensive range of sorting tasks and can both prepare and sort various types of metals and waste for either material recycling or energy recovery. Currently TOMRA Sorting Recycling has an installed base of close to 5,960 units across more than 40 markets.