



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

Date: February 16, 2024

Position: Support

Dear Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

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

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

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

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

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

Contact: Shari Wilson (shari@trashfreemaryland.org)

Assategaue Coastkeeper

Blue Water Baltimore

Cedar Lane UU Environmental Justice Ministry Team

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Kent Island Beach Cleanups

National Aquarium

Safe Skies Maryland

Trash Free Maryland