

SB0346_LindaPardoe_ Favorable

Feb 14, 2025

Position: Favorable

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

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

Hearing date: 2/18/2025

My name is Linda Pardoe and I reside in District 13. I retired after a 30-year career in Information Technology. Since retiring, I have become more active in supporting the environment and became a Master Gardener in 2024.

I volunteer with the Master Gardeners to build and maintain a Pollinator Garden at Community Ecology Institute in Columbia. Pollinator gardens are not only decorative elements, but essential tools for environmental conservation and human well-being. Through the Master Gardeners Bay-Wise program, I also participate in small teams that visit homeowner's properties to educate them on how to control stormwater runoff, plant wisely, encourage wildlife and recycle yard waste.

I am particularly concerned about plastic containers. According to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, most of the plastic pollution that makes its way into the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay stays in and along local waters. 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. Microplastics threaten the health of the biodiversity that lives within the Bay watershed, as well as the health of the residents that consume seafood.

This is why I support SB0346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. They are simple, straightforward, and understandable in design and structure. They improve the health of the environment and the plants, animals and humans who live here.

I am a Quaker, a member of Patapsco Friends Meeting in Ellicott City. Quakers believe in the testimony of stewardship. How we treat the Earth and its creatures is a basic part of our relationship with God. I learned about this bill from Quaker Voice of Maryland, a small but growing advocacy group that is engaging Quakers and other people with similar interests across the state. Quaker Voice has designated this bill as one of four pieces of environmental legislation to advocate for this year. We are committed to both pragmatic and spiritual approaches to "seeking a world renewed" and value community and dialogue as pathways to bringing people together to care for the earth.

Sincerely,

Linda Pardoe
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