

Testimony of  
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to the  
Maryland Senate  
Education, Energy & the Environment Committee  
SB0346, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling  
Refund and Litter Reduction Program  
February 14, 2025

Good afternoon, I am testifying on my behalf in support of SB0346 which seeks to introduce a bill that would incentivize the collection and recycling of aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage containers. This bill will ultimately reduce the amount of trash and waste that pollutes and deteriorates our terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems while promoting environmental justice, creating new jobs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

I live in East Capital Hill in Washington, DC, just a quarter-mile from the Anacostia River. I spend a lot of my time working and recreating within the Anacostia River watershed and have seen firsthand the negative effects plastic pollution has on our community and ecosystems. As you know, the Anacostia River watershed begins in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties and flows south into Washington, DC., connecting with the Potomac River, the Chesapeake Bay, and lastly, the Atlantic Ocean. Much of the plastic waste that ends up in the Anacostia River here in Washington, DC is the result of stormwater runoff that collects the trash and debris in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. SB0346 is a key piece of legislation that will significantly reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up here in Washington, DC, and further downstream in the Potomac, Chesapeake, and Atlantic waterways.

Here are several of the program benefits that are important to highlight:

- This program would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, reducing litter and plastic pollution and increasing the region's water quality.
- This program will quadruple Maryland's current estimated recycling rate of 25%.
- This program would generate an additional 13.3 tons of aluminum, 47.6 tons of PET plastic, 7.8 tons of HDPE plastic, and nearly 160 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers annually. This would ultimately eliminate 231.7 metric tons of CO2 generated by creating new aluminum, plastic, and glass containers from virgin materials.

The success of the beverage container deposit laws enacted in 10 U.S. states and across Europe shows the dramatic and positive impact this type of legislation can have on our communities and the environment. I urge you to pass this bill and demonstrate environmental leadership within the Mid-Atlantic region. The success of similar legislation in Washington, DC is dependent on the State of Maryland adopting this bill.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to voice my support for SB0346.