

Dear Maryland Delegates:

Please strongly support the Maryland bottle bill Additional testimony for SB 346 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. I am the owner-operator of Mother's Cantina, and I am in my seventeenth season of successful business in Ocean City, Maryland. Our position on the bill is not only favorable but Highly Favorable. Please accept this letter as our written testimony.

Mother's Cantina is an Ocean Friendly Restaurant with Surfrider Foundation and 2019 winner of the League of Conservation Voters Theodore Roosevelt Award. That said, conservation is not new to me or my business. As part of my commitment to Surfrider Foundation, I recycle (out of my pocket) nine cubic yards of glass every two weeks. Many restaurants use plastic instead of glass, and would produce the same or more plastic bottle waste.

The amount of plastic bottle waste in trash cans and found on the beach, dunes roadways, and waterways is evident to locals and tourists. The most littered items are disposable beverage containers. Without recycling available in Ocean City, our waste stream is overloaded by items that are potentially reusable and recycled. A bottle bill is a major step in the right direction to give the people who are most likely to litter an incentive not to litter and to return the containers for a rebate. Watershed groups like Surfrider Foundation, Assateague Coastal Trust, and more hold cleanups often, but these efforts can only raise awareness and quantify the amount of trash and magnitude of the problem rather than solving it. Of course, statewide education and preventive measures and enforcement should accompany this effort.

When passed, this bottle bill can be expected to accomplish the following:

- Reduce litter of beverage containers by as much as 69-84%, as has been shown in states with a bottle bill
- Create jobs with the proposed redemption centers
- Reduce the costs to taxpayers, as we will pay less for disposal, litter cleanups, and curbside recycling
- Increase the beverage container recovery rates at least two and a half times, thereby also reducing landfill waste
- Help keep toxins out of our waterways and water supply.
- Keep Ocean City clean and inviting to locals and tourists, increasing small business revenue.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I'm counting on you to do the right thing for Maryland.

Please add the attached testimony to the witness list for SB 346, heard by the EEE Committee on February 18, 2025.

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