



Bill: HB 824

Date: February 26, 2020

Position: Support

HB 824 - Beverage Container Deposit Program - Establishment and Advisory Commission

Dear Chairman Barve, Chairman Davis, and members of the Committees:

Trash Free Maryland is a nonprofit organization focused on lasting change to prevent trash pollution. We bring together organizations, businesses, government agencies and decision makers, and individuals committed to reducing trash in Maryland's environment.

Trash Free Maryland enthusiastically supports HB 824 which requires MDE to establish a beverage container deposit program under the advisement of a commission. This is a system that has worked to increase recycling and reduce litter in many states, and can work in Maryland as well.

The problem: Beverage containers comprise 40-60% of litter in Maryland, and our state is way behind other states in beverage container recycling rates. States with bottle deposits in place average a 76% recycle rate. Non bottle deposit states average 30%, and Maryland is at 25%. That means that of the approximately four billion beverage containers that are used in Maryland each year, only one billion are recycled, and the remaining three billion are either littered, or end up in landfills or trash incinerators. We need to do more if we are going to reach our recycling goals while reducing litter in our state.

The solution: Many states have successful beverage container deposit programs, and there's no good reason that Maryland can't do the same. You may be concerned that a beverage container deposit program will be too expensive, but in most states that have these programs a portion of unredeemed deposits go to the state thereby increasing revenue and paying for the program.

We urge a favorable report on HB 824. Thank you.

Contact:

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