



**HoCoClimateAction.org**  
Howard County, Maryland

**Testimony in SUPPORT HB 99 - Beverage Container Deposit Program - Establishment and Advisory Commission**

**Hearing Date: February 9, 2021**

**Bill Sponsor: Delegate Love**

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Submitting: Howard County Climate Action**

**Position: Favorable**

[HoCo Climate Action](#) -- a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing more than 1,450 subscribers, and a member of the Howard County Climate Collaboration -- supports HB 99.

Our massive packaging and waste problem calls for policy mechanisms to help advance a zero waste future and a circular economy. One proven and sustainable method is beverage container deposit laws, also known as bottle bills, which capture beverage bottles and cans for recycling. The beverage industry has used deposits on containers for many decades to ensure the return of refillable bottles. Deposits work because they provide a financial incentive to recycle and a *disincentive* to litter *and waste*.

Members of HoCo Climate Action have been so alarmed by the increase in plastic and packaging production and waste that we held a [film screening and discussion panel of The Story of Plastic](#) in June of 2020 to highlight the plastic crisis and its link to the climate crisis. While planning for this event and meeting with staff of the Howard County Bureau of Environmental Services, we were distressed to learn that glass bottles are not recycled for reuse, but are instead, crushed and sent to a landfill in Virginia to be used as a cover topping for a landfill. Recycling glass bottles, the easiest means for reuse, is not economical at this time. A beverage container deposit program would provide a simple and economical path to recycle these containers and reduce waste and waste disposal costs.

In the U.S., many successful recycling policies target products, including electronics, paint, mattresses, carpet, fluorescent lighting and pharmaceuticals, that reduce landfill waste and costs. A beverage container deposit law in Maryland would reduce the societal and environmental costs associated with the manufacturing, disposal, and recycling of beverage containers. Bottle bills shift the costs from the municipalities and taxpayers, who must pay to manage this waste, to the beverage manufacturers and those who consume beverages.

Beverage container deposit programs help the environment, produce high-quality recyclable materials and save municipalities and taxpayers from the costs of managing beverage container waste. For these reasons, we urge you to support HB 99 - Beverage Container Deposit Program.

HoCo Climate Action

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