



**CHESAPEAKE BAY
FOUNDATION**

Saving a National Treasure



Bill: SB 292

Date: February 17, 2022

Position: Support

**SB 292 - Environment - Packaging Materials - Producer Responsibility
Support**

Dear Chairperson Kelly and Members of the Finance Committee:

We enthusiastically support SB 292. This bill sets up an incentivized system to reduce packaging, increase recycled content in packaging and increase the recyclability of packaging, all of which will ultimately reduce litter across the state.

Packaging comprises approximately 28% of the nation's waste stream. Setting up producer responsibility for packaging will reduce the amount of packaging littering our communities and waterways. It will also create incentives to increase the recycled content and recyclability of that packaging – another step toward reducing litter.

This bill gives us the opportunity to reduce the volume of packaging, involve the expertise of manufacturers of packaging as to how best to do that, and financially support the counties for some of their costs related to recycling packaging. Currently, counties bear the full financial cost of collection, sorting and resale of packaging. This bill begins to transfer some of that responsibility to producers, who control the content and design of their products.

Maryland has producer responsibility programs in place for a handful of products now – batteries and electronics for example. Producer responsibility programs for packaging have long been in place in Canada and Europe. Maine and Oregon adopted packaging programs last year and a number of states are, like you, considering it this year. Industry trade editorials now often refer to producer responsibility as an idea whose time has come.

Marylanders take great pride in our recycling efforts. Reducing packaging and increasing its recyclability will improve the system for managing packaging in a way that is market driven. We respectfully urge your favorable consideration.

Anacostia Riverkeeper

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Surfrider Foundation

Trash Free Maryland

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