



RE: Testimony on HB1089, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

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Stephanie Compton
2936 Wyman Pkwy.
Baltimore, MD 21211

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I'm submitting my testimony on behalf of Energy Justice Network and Clean Air Baltimore Coalition in support of HB1089, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. For years, Maryland has advocated for the establishment of a beverage container deposit return system for Maryland. This year's bill features strong targets and incentives for reuse and refill.

Our organization is anti-incineration focused and supports policies that promote diverting waste from ending up at incinerators and landfills. I'm also a member of the National Reuse Network and the Reuse Coalition Leadership Network and participate in their monthly calls. The information I've learned from their organization expands on the fact that Deposit Return Systems are crucial for accelerating the new reuse economy which is needed to transition us away from single-use packaging and into a more sustainable management of materials through reuse.

Studies have proven that states with bottle bills have the highest recycling rates. Passing a Bottle Bill in Maryland would also prove the same thing, better participation in recycling. Forty years of data on Deposit Return Systems in the U.S. demonstrate that refundable deposits are effective at boosting collection and recycling rates, creating local economic development opportunities and jobs, generating clean streams of recyclable materials through source-separation, preventing roadside litter and plastic pollution, and catalyzing reuse. The time has come for every state to establish a Deposit Return System.

Reusable beverage containers are better for the environment. After a third use, reusable glass bottles are already less impactful than single-use glass, PET or aluminum cans. Used 25 times and then recycled, reusable glass bottles create 85% fewer climate emissions than single-use glass; 57% fewer than aluminum cans; and 70% fewer than single-use PET. Refillable PET bottles can save up to 40% of the raw materials and 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions compared to the production of single-use PET bottles. Refillables also benefit the ocean: Oceana estimates that a 10% increase in the share of beverages sold in refillables could result in a 22% decrease in marine plastic pollution. This would keep 4.5 to 7.6 billion plastic bottles out of the ocean each year.

I urge this committee to pass a favorable report on HB1089.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Compton