



Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: HB1089 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 9, 2023

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB1089. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB1089.

HB1089 will create the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund Program, with a target of at least a 90% recovery rate and 85% recycling rate for plastic, glass, and aluminum beverage containers sold in Maryland. Customers will pay a small deposit when they purchase beverages in containers and will get a refund when they return the container to a retailer or redemption facility. Retailers and redemption facilities will be equipped with high-speed counting and sorting machines to help with container processing and will receive a handling fee. Local governments can set up their own redemption centers and receive the container handling fee.

About 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold annually in Maryland, i.e., 863 containers per person per year, and only 23% are recycled. Four billion containers end up in landfills, burned in incinerators, or as litter on roadsides and in streams and coastal waterways. Ten states have had successful beverage container deposit programs for many years, with much higher container recycling rates. In fact, Michigan and Oregon have recycling rates of 90% with a 10-cent deposit.

Beverage container deposit programs add only a small refundable deposit (5¢-10¢), and are proven to be highly effective for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. There are additional benefits of container deposit programs, including reduced costs to taxpayers for landfill fees, providing a source of high quality, food-grade recycled material that can be made into new food and beverage containers, stimulation of recycling markets in Maryland, and reduced costs for litter removal from roadsides, waterways, and storm drains.

For these reasons, we request a **FAVORABLE** report on HB1089.