

March 6, 2023

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee
Re: Testimony in support of HB1089

Position: SUPPORT

From: Dr. Sara Via, Professor and Climate Extension Specialist,
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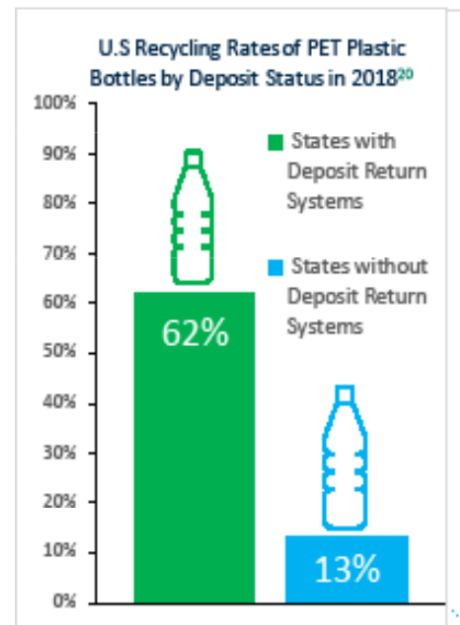


I strongly support HB1089 as a mechanism to reduce the overall magnitude of municipal solid waste while simultaneously boosting the involvement of Marylanders in recycling.

We know that “bottle bills” are effective in reducing the number of plastic and glass bottles that are thrown away¹. This is an important tool to add to Maryland’s arsenal of waste reduction strategies.

Yes, people are likely to complain about the effort it takes to bag up and return their bottles. I participated in a similar plan in Ithaca, NY in the early 1990s and I can certainly sympathize with the time it takes. However, I also noticed a dramatic decrease in bottles left along roadsides because people pick them up for the deposits.

I continue to hope that the residents of Maryland are increasingly realizing that the simple “buy and toss” strategy is no longer a real option. We are at a turning point.



It is absolutely essential that Maryland remove as much trash as possible from the ever-increasing magnitude of municipal solid waste. We must

- Improve recycling methods and markets so that more plastic can be reliably recycled rather than incinerated or landfilled.
- Develop and implement programs to increase recycling rates among Maryland residents. This includes boosting outreach as well as making curbside recycling and composting of food and yard waste available in every county.

HB 1089 is an important step toward moving Maryland toward a viable circular economy. Let’s make Maryland a national leader in both resident participation and recycling effectiveness!

¹ Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan. 2022. “Plastic Waste Factsheet.” Pub. No. CSS22-11. Accessed at: <https://css.umich.edu/sites/default/files/2022-07/CSS22-11.pdf>