



February 26, 2024

To: Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee

Re: HB 735, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

The Maryland Recycling Network promotes sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's"), to ensure that the use of virgin materials is minimized, materials otherwise destined for disposal are reused or recycled and strong demand exists for buying products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through education programs, advocacy activities to affect public policy, technical assistance efforts, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

Our members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We believe no legislative action should be taken on a Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program until the Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment required by SB 222, "Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility in Packaging", is completed. This Needs Assessment will provide a complete picture of Maryland's recycling and waste infrastructure. Its results will tell us what problems we need to resolve to have recycling legislation that meets Maryland's needs. The RFP for that assessment has been issued. A final report is required later this year. In addition, Maryland recently announced the membership of the EPR Advisory Council, which was also authorized by SB 222.

The Maryland Recycling Network stands ready to serve as a sounding board and resource for legislators and others interested in pursuing our mission. Please do not hesitate to contact me via email phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the above.

We thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Houstle".

Peter Houstle
Executive Director