

Hello representatives,

You know where I stand on this. And I think I know where you stand too. I've been cleaning up an exponentially increasing amount of plastics and garbage all over Central Maryland (and more recently, all over the country) ... for 15 years now. And I've been calling for the deposit/refund system here in Maryland for at least the last eight years. And what I've learned, experienced, and accomplished – having cleaned up garbage in over 10% of the 3143 counties in the United States (and in several other countries), now approaching one million pounds of garbage total, should provide you with insights most people cannot offer.

It's time. It's past time. I'm including a few photos I hope you'll share with any of your colleagues you think might be undecided at this point. For the most part, these bottles enter our waterways via the storm drains and quickly make their way to our creeks, rivers, and the bay. And for the most part, they remain hidden from view, unless you look for them, like I do.

In 2021, I did a 24-hour dash across Maryland to fill a garbage bag in each Maryland county (plus Baltimore City - 24 total) in under 24 hours. It was too easy. It only took 19 hours and 48 minutes to accomplish the task with over 500 miles of driving. Bottles and cans make for quick filling of a large garbage bag.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3ISYOIJiF4>

I attempted the same feat in Vermont and New Hampshire in 2022 - also 24 counties. You may be aware that Vermont has a deposit / refund system in place, whereas New Hampshire does not. It was like night and day. I spent so much time bagging wispy little napkins, wrappers, and the like in Vermont - I couldn't find more than a few bottles or cans anywhere, and it took me over 28 hours to complete that two-state, 24-county challenge. So I know firsthand the difference that this legislation can make. I've seen it. I've lived and breathed and sweated through its results. It flat out works.

The photos below are from the Baltimore area, but it's the same story throughout the state. I'm still finding bottles and cans from my childhood years! Let's finally make it to the finish line on this bill and start reversing course on all the damage that's already been done.

Thank you.

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Retention pond near Glen Burnie, near Sawmill Creek:



Dundalk (Fort Holabird Park, along the shore of Colgate Creek):



Masonville Creek (near Masonville Cove and Captain Trash Wheel), South Baltimore:

