



To: House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Economic Matters Committee

From: Tiffany Harvey
On behalf of the MD-DE-DC Beverage Association

Date: February 14, 2025

Re: HB 232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Challenges with this Legislation

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments on HB 232.

Our companies believe that to be effective, a collection system for recyclables needs to be convenient to consumers, efficient, financially stable, and help companies gain increased access to recycled material so it can be remade into new products. This legislation does not meet these pillars of a good recycling policy.

The policy conversation around recycling, plastic reduction and solid waste disposal is an important one and one taking place around the country. Our industry recognizes the seriousness of this issue, and we welcome the opportunity to work with communities on ideas that get back more of our plastic bottles so they can be remade into new bottles.

In 2023 the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 222, which set the stage for the establishment of an Extended Producer Responsibility system in Maryland. A system that will include our beverage bottles and other recyclables and packaging materials. We are committed to the passage of a strong EPR system in Maryland, one that we hope this Committee will consider in the coming weeks.

Maryland is home to four manufacturing facilities and twenty distribution facilities. The development of both systems simultaneously will have untested cost implications for our companies, the distribution system, retailers and consumers. We do not support the parallel establishment of a deposit system and an EPR system. A strong and sustainable EPR system must include our beverage packaging. Pulling out beverage bottles into a separate and distinct system does not make sense.

Additionally, Maryland has not had a statewide anti-litter campaign in over 35 years. Litter campaigns can be very effective with the development of a committed public-private partnership. Our Association would welcome participation in an anti-litter campaign. We encourage the Maryland Department of Transportation and/or MDE to establish a stakeholder group to develop and execute such a program.

In closing, you have our commitment to be at the table and to participate in best practice discussions or a new direction conversation – particularly when talking about our packaging.