



February 12, 2025

Bill: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb0232F.pdf>

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Testimony on: HB0232—Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) strongly supports HB0232. We believe it will encourage proper recycling and reduce litter. As can be seen along any road, beverage containers make up a large part of roadside litter. According to the Container Recycling Institute, numerous studies in many states have shown that beverage containers make up a large proportion of litter, and states with bottle bills have less litter.<sup>1</sup>

We are particularly concerned about plastic beverage containers. Plastic pollution is a serious threat to birds. Bottles break down into smaller bits, which birds mistake for food, which can block their digestive system, while the chemicals from plastics can disrupt kidney and endocrine systems.

HB0232 will reduce litter, including plastic bottles, which will also benefit our declining bird populations. It will also markedly improve the recycling feedstock, increasing its value, and promoting proper recycling.

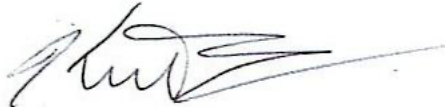
North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.<sup>2</sup> We must reduce threats to our declining bird populations, and this SB0232 will help reduce the threat to birds of plastic pollution.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report for HB0232, to reduce litter, improve recycling feedstock, and protect our declining birds.

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<sup>1</sup> Container Recycling Institute, Bottle Bill Resource Guide, <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/benefits-of-bottle-bills/bottle-bills-prevent-litter>

<sup>2</sup> Rosenberg, Kenneth V. et al, Decline of the North American avifauna, Science, VOL 366, NO. 6451, 19 September 2019, [https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe\\_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028](https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028)

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kurt R. Schwarz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kurt R. Schwarz  
Conservation Chair Emeritus  
Maryland Ornithological Society  
[www.mdbirds.org](http://www.mdbirds.org)