

Hearing: Environment and Transportation

Bill: HB0232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Date: February 14, 2025

Position: Favorable

Dear Environment and Transportation Committee and Chair, Delegate Korman,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Maryland bottle bill.

Growing up in Michigan, bottle refunds were simply a fact of life, since 1978. My family collected our bottles and got refunds each week at the grocery store. We knew it was for a good purpose, and those 10 cents a bottle were incentive to be diligent in doing the right thing. As a college student in Ann Arbor, I saw that any bottles thrown into trash cans were quickly retrieved by students and residents for some quick cash.

Now as a Maryland resident of a home near a stream, Beaver Run Creek, I live with the plastic pollution resulting from the lack of a bottle law in our state. During every rain event, the stream and flood plain become littered with plastic bottles and other debris, which not only immediately harms wildlife, but also contributes to the increasing and alarming problem of microplastics in our drinking water.

Wind and water carry debris to the lowest point in the landscape, which is always the streams and rivers. After each storm, I put on my waders and climb down the steep banks into the stream to pull out all sorts of plastic trash: toys, garden tools, carpets – but most of all, Coke, Pepsi, and water bottles.

The introduction of a bottle deposit program in Maryland would provide a simple, effective way to reduce litter, promote recycling, and protect our local waterways. By incentivizing people to return bottles for a refund, we can significantly reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our streams, and our drinking water.

I urge you to support this simple and proven successful bottle bill to help create a cleaner, healthier environment for Maryland. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

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