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Second Ward

Council meets second and fourth
Mondays of each month.



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL

8103 Sandy Spring Road
Laurel, Maryland 20707-2502

KEITH R. SYDNOR
Mayor

CHRISTIAN L. PULLEY, CPM
City Administrator

JOANNE HALL BARR
Deputy City Administrator

STEPHANIE P. ANDERSON
City Solicitor

SARA A. GREEN, CPM, CMC
City Clerk

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February 10, 2025

Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re. HB232/SB346- Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for your continued partnership with and support of the City of Laurel. Your dedication to helping our community thrive is deeply appreciated. We especially want to thank Senator James Rosapepe and Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk for their leadership as sponsors of this important legislation.

Today, we write to express our strong support for SB 346/HB 232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (Maryland Bottle Bill) with the amendments proposed by the Maryland Municipal League (MML) that read as follows:

Amendment – Section 9-1757.4 - Redemption Facility Location and Municipal Exemption

(a) The Department of the Environment shall determine the locations for redemption facilities based on objective criteria, including but not limited to geographic accessibility, service efficiency, economic viability, and environmental impact, with the purpose of optimizing statewide operation of the beverage container redemption program.

(b) No municipality shall be required, as a condition of the beverage container redemption program, to host, operate, or provide land, facilities, or any other resources for the establishment or operation of any redemption facility.

(c) Prior to finalizing the locations of redemption facilities, the Department shall consult with affected municipalities to consider any potential impacts on municipal services and existing recycling programs, and to ensure that the selected sites do not impose undue burdens on local jurisdictions.

(d) The Department is authorized to enter into agreements with private or other state-operated entities for the establishment and operation of redemption facilities, thereby preserving municipal autonomy over local waste management and recycling operations.

As representatives of a City situated along the Patuxent River and within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, we have a direct stake in addressing the critical issue of beverage container pollution in our waterways and communities.

The current statistics are sobering: only 25% of the 5.5 billion beverage containers sold annually in Maryland are recycled, leaving over 4 billion containers—including 2.6 billion plastic containers—to end up in our landfills, along our roadsides, in our waterways, or incinerated. This is not just an environmental crisis; it's a financial burden on our municipalities and a threat to public health.

The Maryland Bottle Bill offers a proven, cost-effective solution. By implementing a 10-cent refundable deposit system, the program would:

- Quadruple our state's beverage container recycling rate to over 90%
- Capture an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually
- Generate significant recyclable materials (13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass)
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 231,707 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually

Importantly, from our understanding this program would be fully funded and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, requiring no financial investment from our municipalities or residents.

The Mayor and City Council are currently in review of a resolution supporting this legislation, recognizing its potential to reduce municipal waste management costs, decrease litter in our neighborhoods and waterways, and advance our environmental sustainability goals. The program's proven success in ten (10) other states gives us confidence in its ability to deliver meaningful results for Maryland.

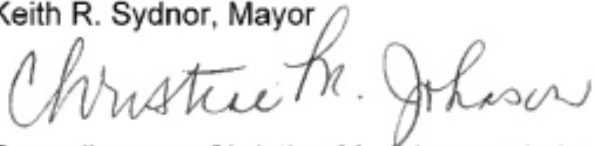
We would appreciate your support in collaboratively working with Senators Brooks, Gile, M. Washington, Kagan, Ellis, Muse, Rosapepe, Smith, Lewis Young, Hettelman, and Benson to move HB 232/SB 346 forward. This legislation represents a crucial step forward in addressing beverage container pollution while creating economic opportunities for our communities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need any additional information. We look forward to continuing our work together serving the residents of the City of Laurel and the great State of Maryland.

Sincerely,



Keith R. Sydnor, Mayor



Councilwoman Christine M. Johnson, At-Large



Councilman Adrian S. Simmons, Ward 1



Kyla M. Clark, Council President



James Kole
Councilmember , Ward 1



Councilman Jeffrey W. Mills, Ward 2

cc: Councilman James Kole, Chair, City of Laurel Environmental Affairs Committee
Christian L. Pulley, CPM, City Administrator
Joanne Hall Barr, Deputy City Administrator
Sara A. Green, CPM, CMC, City Clerk