

HB232 - Bottle bill- Testimony.pdf

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Position: FAV

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Baltimore District

Written Testimony
House Bill 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter
Reduction Program
Environment and Transportation Committee – February 14, 2025
Support

Background: House Bill 232 would establish a program that would add a small refundable deposit (10-15 cents) to the price of beverages in glass, plastic, and metal beverage containers. The deposit is then refunded when the containers are returned to a convenient retailer or redemption facility for recycling.

The program would be implemented and financed by beverage producers, with strong oversight by MDE and enforceable targets (90% redemption rate). No implementation of enforcement responsibility by local government, so there is no burden on our local communities. Similar programs have been operating in 10 U.S. states for decades, expanding worldwide to fight plastic pollution and litter.

Written Comments: The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world.

Plastic pollution is harmful to our communities. Maryland's beverage container litter is contributing to pollution in the State's waters, including the Chesapeake Bay, and elsewhere in the environment, threatening marine and other wildlife, and human health. About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold each year in Maryland, but only a quarter of them (1.4 billion) are captured for recycling.

Baltimore has made efforts to try to assist in mitigating the problem by establishing infrastructure like the Mr. Trash Wheel fleet in the harbor to collect waste that makes it into our waterways, but this is not enough. Habits must be broken to prevent more harm.

By reducing litter, we are in turn reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. This brings us closer to achieving the climate goals set for Maryland, and in turn helps to repair our world.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on HB232.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore Favorable Test

Uploaded by: Adam Lindquist

Position: FAV

February 14, 2025

**HB 232- Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund
and Litter Reduction Program**

Position - Favorable

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for your time. My name is Adam Lindquist and I am here on behalf of the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore and I submit this testimony in favor of HB 232.

Representing major businesses and developers along the Baltimore Waterfront, Waterfront Partnership is a Business Improvement District responsible for maintaining, improving, and protecting Baltimore's Inner Harbor. In 2010 we set a goal, in partnership with the City, to have a swimmable and fishable Baltimore Harbor. To that end, we have supported many restoration efforts including the installation of four trash wheels in the Baltimore Harbor. We have used the data from trash collection to inform legislation and prove the efficacy of policy change to reduce plastic pollution including the statewide foam container ban and plastic bag bans in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. We do this because it is good for the environment and because it is good for business.

The businesses that make up the Waterfront Partnership Improvement District pay us to collect litter with a cleaning budget of one point five million dollars a year, but that money would be better spent on events, landscaping, and attractions that bring people to the Inner Harbor. The same is true for saving taxpayer money by reducing municipal costs for litter removal and waste disposal as only 23% of recyclable material actually gets recycled. The rest is burned, buried, or littered with taxpayers footing the bill for unnecessary clean-up costs.

Container deposit laws have been beneficial in other ways: saving taxpayer money by reducing waste disposal costs, reducing our reliance on foreign oil, and creating new jobs in the recycling sector.

This bill would simultaneously save businesses money and increase revenue around the Harbor because a Harbor that is clean and healthy is one that people will visit time and again.

The Inner Harbor sits at the end of the Jones Falls stream that drains 64 square miles of land in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. When it rains, a tremendous amount of litter comes down the Jones Falls and covers the Harbor. Over the past nine years, Mr. Trash Wheel and the Trash Wheel family have been the last line of defense to prevent our Harbor from being covered with litter collecting over two point five million plastic bottles. This is only six-hundredths of ONE percent of the beverage containers produced in Maryland every year that end up as trash or litter.

Capturing plastic bottles in our waterways is not a solution, it is an urgent problem and we need this Bottle Bill to create a real solution to reduce beverage container litter.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB 232. Thank you for your time.

Adam Lindquist, Vice President
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore
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650 S. Exeter St., Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21202

2.12.2025 LOS HB232.SB 346 MD Beverage Container R

Uploaded by: Alan K. Thompson

Position: FAV

TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support of House Bill 232 (Senate Bill 346) Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Riverdale Park support House Bill 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. HB 232 would establish the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and reduce the litter, pollution, and costs associated with beverage containers; prohibit a producer from selling, offering for sale, or distributing in or importing into the State a redeemable beverage container unless the producer is registered with the Department of the Environment, pays a certain fee, and is part of a certain stewardship organization.

The Town of Riverdale Park is committed to sustainability and understands that achieving sustainability requires private and public action. The Town supports the intent of the legislation to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and to reduce the litter, pollution, and costs associated with beverage containers.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important legislation. If you require any additional information, please contact me at akthompson@riverdaleparkmd.gov.

Sincerely,



Alan K. Thompson
Mayor

HB 232 - Bottle Deposit - BWB Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Alice Volpitta

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB232)

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

Blue Water Baltimore is a local nonprofit organization with a mission to protect and restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. **On behalf of Blue Water Baltimore, I write to express our strong support for HB232.**

Blue Water Baltimore, home of the Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, is part of the international Waterkeeper Alliance that is composed of over 300 watchdog organizations with a mission to protect and restore waterways all over the world. Our licensed Waterkeeper jurisdiction includes the entirety of the Patapsco and Back River watersheds, which means that Blue Water Baltimore is uniquely positioned among environmental NGOs in the region to focus on the health and prosperity of these waterways, and that of the people who live, work, and recreate around them.

The Patapsco and Back Rivers are two of the most polluted tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay as evidenced from our routine water quality monitoring and assessments from the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.¹² Many of the longstanding challenges with water quality and failing water infrastructure in the Baltimore region are rooted in decades of inequitable infrastructure investments and environmental racism. **Polluted streams and rivers are the manifestation of these systemic problems, and the people of Baltimore are being robbed of their inherent right to clean water every day.**

A portion of the tidal Patapsco River, the Baltimore Harbor, is one of the only waterways in the United States listed as "impaired" under the federal Clean Water Act for trash. As such, regulators have established an accompanying Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or "pollution diet" for trash in the Harbor. **This means that trash is so prevalent in the streets and streams around Baltimore that the Harbor itself is not meeting water quality standards and that significant efforts are necessary to stop the damage and heal the Patapsco River.**

Bottle trash, particularly plastic, is a pervasive blight in our waterways, posing a serious threat to the environment and aquatic life. As plastic breaks down into microplastics and nanoplastics, it further contaminates the environment, creating long-term ecological damage. This pollution doesn't just affect wildlife - it enters the human food chain through the consumption of contaminated seafood, and bioaccumulates in our brains at an alarming rate.³ **Enacting a bottle deposit bill is crucial to reducing plastic waste and protecting both our environment and public health.**

¹ Baltimore Water Watch. 2025. Blue Water Baltimore. <http://www.BaltimoreWaterWatch.org>.

² 2023 Chesapeake Bay Report Card. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. <https://ecoreportcard.org/report-cards/chesapeake-bay/watershed-health/>

³ Bioaccumulation of microplastics in decedent human brains. Nature Medicine. Nihart et al. February 3, 2025. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-024-03453-1>

In my role as your Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, my team and I routinely patrol the local streams that flow into the Patapsco and Back Rivers to monitor water quality and seek out chronic sources of pollution. **I have seen first-hand the huge rafts of plastic bottles that get trapped and restrict flow in our storm drains and urban streams, which contribute to flooding during heavy rain events.** Swaths of trash, especially plastic bottles, act as high-water marks along the Gwynns Falls trail where the stream has crested the banks. The visible trash is only a fraction of what makes its way downstream into the Baltimore Harbor, the Patapsco River, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Plastic, glass, and metal bottle trash is a nuisance in our streets and our streams, but **even when beverage containers are properly discarded instead of being littered, their disposal can contribute to the compounding harms that disproportionately impact historically disenfranchised and overburdened communities.** Baltimore County's CY2021 recycling rate was 28.88%, and Baltimore City's CY2021 recycling rate was 22.28%.⁴ The remainder of the waste generated in these two counties is buried in landfills or burned in incinerators, which exacerbates the environmental injustices shouldered by lower-income residents living in close proximity to them.

A beverage container deposit program is a common-sense and proven strategy to reduce litter, increase recycling rates, and incentivize environmental stewardship by turning trash into treasure with a fully-refundable deposit on plastic, glass, and metal bottles. Ten states in the US have already paved the way for this type of program in Maryland, and the results are clear; states with bottle deposit programs are achieving recycling rates of up to 65%, which is significantly higher than both Maryland's rate and the national average of 32%.⁵⁶

From July 2024 through February 2025, **Blue Water Baltimore collected 524 signatures from Maryland residents who support this legislation** and the creation of a state-wide bottle deposit program. That sign-on letter, and the names of individuals who support the measure, are included as an attachment to this testimony (*Attachment #6*).

The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program will result in:

- **Less trash** in our streets, streams, rivers, and Chesapeake Bay.
- Fewer plastic, glass, and metal bottles going to the BRESKO incinerator, which means **cleaner air and less pollution** in our environment.
- **More space** in our landfills.
- **Reduced strain on public waste management** with a system that removes beverage containers from the municipal waste stream.

Baltimore City led the charge to ban the use of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Foam in 2018 and that effort helped persuade State lawmakers to do the same shortly thereafter. Baltimore City and Baltimore County have joined other Maryland jurisdictions to ban single-use plastic bags from most restaurants and retail

⁴ County Recyclables by Commodity in Tons for CY21. Compiled by the Maryland Department of the Environment from Reports Submitted for CY21.
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Documents/County%20Commodity%20CY21.pdf>

⁵ The 50 States of Recycling. A State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates, pp. 15-17. December 2023. Eunomia Research & Consulting Inc.

⁶ National Overview: Facts and Figures on Materials, Wastes and Recycling. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Last updated on November 8, 2024.
<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

outlets, and we hope to see that change replicated on a state-wide basis soon. The next step needed to tackle Baltimore's waterway trash problem is to establish a beverage container deposit program to reduce the number of plastic bottles that plague our neighborhoods and shorelines; but we know that this effort cannot operate in a vacuum, and it will only be successful if it is implemented as a state-wide solution.

I am including a handful of pictures from our local waterways to show the prevalence of bottle trash in our streams and rivers (*Attachments #1-5*). While my focus is on streams and rivers around Baltimore, bottle trash negatively impacts waterways throughout the state of Maryland. **For all of the reasons outlined above, Blue Water Baltimore urges this committee to issue a favorable report on HB232.**

Sincerely,

Alice Volpitta
Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper
Blue Water Baltimore
avolpitta@bluewaterbaltimore.org

Attachment #1: Picture of bottles and trash accumulated in the Powder Mill Run. (p. 4)

Attachment #2: Picture of bottles and trash accumulated at Masonville Cove. (p. 5)

Attachment #3: Picture of bottles and trash accumulated in East Branch Herbert Run. (p. 6)

Attachment #4: Picture of bottles that have accumulated as a high-water mark at Ferry Bar Park. (p. 7)

Attachment #5: Picture of bottles that have accumulated in the Gwynns Falls stream. (p. 8)

Attachment #6: Sign-on letter and signatures from 524 Maryland constituents. (pp. 9-21)

Attachment #1: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated in the Powder Mill Run. Baltimore County, MD. 3/16/2014.



**Attachment #2: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated at Masonville Cove. Baltimore City, MD.
3/24/2011.**



Attachment #3: Bottles and assorted trash accumulated along the banks of East Branch Herbert Run. Baltimore County, MD. 4/14/2017.



Attachment #4: Bottle trash that has accumulated as a high-water mark at Ferry Bar Park. Baltimore City, MD. 8/28/2015.



Attachment #5: Plastic and metal bottles that have accumulated along the banks of the Gwynns Falls stream. Baltimore, MD. 2/11/2024.



Attachment #6: Sign-on letter and signatures from 524 Maryland constituents who support a Maryland Bottle Bill. Signatures collected at Blue Water Baltimore community engagement events from July 2024 - February 2025.



Dear Maryland Legislators,

We, the undersigned community members of Maryland, hereby petition for the implementation of a statewide bottle deposit program. This initiative is crucial for the following reasons:

- Plastic pollution and waste management are pressing issues globally and locally. By implementing a bottle deposit program, we can significantly **reduce the amount of plastic and glass waste** ending up in landfills, incinerators and natural environments.
- The recycling industry plays a vital role in the state's economy, providing jobs and economic growth opportunities. A bottle deposit program would **create new employment** in recycling facilities, collection centers, and related sectors.
- A bottle deposit program encourages consumers to adopt recycling habits by providing a financial incentive. It promotes **environmental stewardship** from a young age and fosters a culture of sustainability.
- A bottle deposit program incentivizes proper disposal and reduces littering. **Cleaner streets, parks, and water bodies** contribute to **strong communities**, enhancing community pride and reducing public health risks.
- There is strong public support for bottle deposit programs. Residents recognize the benefits of recycling incentives and are willing to participate. Many neighboring states and jurisdictions have already successfully implemented bottle deposit programs, providing valuable models and frameworks for adaptation and implementation at the state level.

A Beverage container deposit program, or a “bottle bill,” would be a highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter in our waterways, incinerators, and community spaces.

Sincerely,

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Maryland Residents Support HB 0232.pdf

Uploaded by: Allison Blood

Position: FAV

Maryland Residents Support the Maryland Bottle Bill!

The undersigned Maryland Residents are writing to express my strong support of the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program ([HB232/SB346](#)), also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

I strongly believe that adopting this legislation will reduce the amount of litter ending up in our rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay. Since 2014, Mr. Trash Wheel has collected 2.1 million plastic bottles from the Baltimore Harbor. It's time to put him on a diet!

The Maryland Bottle Bill will introduce a deposit-return system for beverage containers, including plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and glass bottles. This system has been proven effective in other states at reducing litter, promoting recycling, and conserving resources. By placing a monetary deposit on beverage containers, consumers are incentivized to return them for recycling, thereby reducing waste in our streets, parks, and waterways.

Not only does the Maryland Bottle Bill have environmental benefits, but it also has economic advantages. Implementing a deposit-return system would create jobs in recycling and waste management industries, stimulate local economies, and reduce costs associated with litter cleanup and landfill disposal.

Furthermore, this legislation aligns with Maryland's commitment to environmental stewardship and Chesapeake Bay restoration. By supporting the Maryland Bottle Bill, the State would demonstrate its dedication to preserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and combating climate change.

I urge you to carefully consider the benefits of the Maryland Bottle Bill and to take decisive action to support its implementation. Let us work together to create a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future for our State and for generations to come. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to seeing Maryland continue to lead the nation in environmental innovation and waste reduction.

Signed,

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Richard	Street	7434 Berkshire Rd	Baltimore MD 21224-3310 US
Ellen	Pliska	207 Shady Nook Court	Catonsville MD 21228 US
Patricia	Jonas	2809 Boston St Apt 237	Baltimore MD 21224-4846 US
Erin	Koch	10 N Bond St	Baltimore MD 21231 US
Benjamin	Olding	42 Nichols St Apt 3	Chelsea MA 02150 US
Rachel	Bukoski	4228 Falls Road	Baltimore Maryland 21211 US
Corinne	Mona	8492 Frederick Rd	Ellicott City MD 21043 US
Louis	Fantinato	634 severn rd	Severna park Md 21146 US
Martha	Hartlaub	1649 Thurston Rd.	Dickerson MD 20842 US
Laura	Taylor	23 Mount Vernon Avenue	Alexandria VA 22301 US
Damel	Goddard	102 Belmore Rd	Lutherville-Timonium MD 21093 US
Ana	Topasna	824 south bond street	Baltimore Maryland 21231 US
Adam	Lindquist		
Satchel	Kornfeld	9009 Charred Oak Drive	Bethesda MD 20817 US

Beth	Matys	951 Stormont Circle	Halethorpe MD 21227 US
Erin	Sloan	1228 Maple Ave	Halethorpe Maryland 21227 US
Carter	Norton	328 S Duncan St	Baltimore MD 21231 US
Cymantha	Governs	705 Gittings Ave.	Baltimore MD 21212 US
BETTY	MARKS	4 WAGNERS LA	BALTIMORE MD 21221 US
Jessie	Delaplaine	2508 Barclay St	Baltimore MD 21218 US
Gideon	Singer	410 S Collington Ave	Baltimore MD 21231-2734 US
Russell	Bowie	1699 Leadenhall St.	Baltimore Md 21230 US
Tawni	Stetson	26 N Streeper St	Baltimore MD 21224 US
Beth	Russo	204 s Durham st	Baltimore MD 21231 US
Ryan	Langley	6101 York Rd	Baltimore MD 21212 US
Abigail	Pierson	6779 Dorsey rd Apt 240	Elkridge Md 21075 US
Robyn	Stegman	3305 Abell Ave.	Baltimore MD 21218 US
Linda	Obradovic	1311 Covington St	Baltimore MD 21230 US
Marco	Montero	125 n Milton ave	Baltimore Md 22304 US

HB0232WrayTestimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Brendan Wray

Position: FAV

HB 232: Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Brendan Wray - FAVORABLE

February 12, 2025

Chair Korman and Committee Members,

I am in support of HB0232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. I frequently encounter single-use beverage containers littering Maryland roads, trails, and parks, and I am deeply disappointed that this is the case. A 10-cent deposit on beverage containers would offer a small incentive to take them out of the waste stream and move towards a circular material economy. This incentive to recycle rather than throw away plastic water bottles, soda cans, and glass beverage bottles will have a dramatic effect on trash and plastic pollution in the state, but in particular in the Anacostia River and its watershed, including the Chesapeake Bay.

So far, ten states currently have bottle bills in place. Studies in these states show radically increased recycling rates and corresponding steep reductions in trash pollution. Maryland should join these states. It is estimated that successful bottle bill programs in DC and Maryland would cut the amount of trash in the Anacostia River in half, not to mention doing the same in our parks, streets, and neighborhoods.

I urge a Favorable HB 232 committee report and House of Delegates floor vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

Brendan Wray
College Park, MD

Wick - Testimony in Favor of HB0232.pdf

Uploaded by: Caroline Wick

Position: FAV

Testimony in Favor of HB0232 "Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program"

Caroline Wick
Resident of College Park, MD

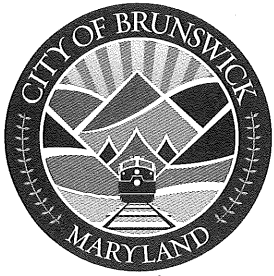
I support this bill and urge that it be passed. We are in a plastic litter crisis. I live close to a branch of the Anacostia River and frequently go to pick up waste along its banks. The riverbanks are frequently strewn with bottles and cans, and it's heartbreaking. See photo below. This bill will create an economic incentive for Marylanders to clean up their waste.



Beverage Container Bill Letter 2025-02-12.pdf

Uploaded by: Carrie Myers

Position: FAV



THE CITY OF BRUNSWICK MARYLAND

1 WEST POTOMAC STREET · BRUNSWICK, MARYLAND 21716 · (301) 834-7500

February 12, 2025

Environmental and Transportation Committee
Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Delegate Regina Boyce, Vice Chair

The City of Brunswick urges you to support HB 232/SB 346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

The objective of this program is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a small refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The program would be financed and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, not by the City or its residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide strong oversight.

Programs like this have been operating in 10 U.S. states for decades and are the most effective policy for reducing beverage container litter. With a 10-cent deposit on most containers, it would capture 90% of beverage containers sold in the state annually, diverting an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing pollution from littered plastic bottles that break down in the environment and get washed into the Chesapeake Bay. Recent polling has found that more than 90% of Maryland's voting public would support the Bottle Bill.

This program would benefit our residents by reducing unsightly litter, increasing recycling, and reducing the amount of municipal solid waste that the City must collect and process. The City would not be required to implement or enforce the program but has the option to set up its own redemption center and receive a handling fee per container to finance it, paid for by the Stewardship Organization.

On behalf of the Council of Brunswick, I urge you to support HB 232/SB 346, to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution, provide cleaner parks and waterways, and create savings for municipalities and local taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Nathan Brown, Mayor

LWVMD - HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recyc

Uploaded by: Casey Hunter

Position: FAV



Testimony to the House Environment and Transportation Committee

HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

POSITION: Support

By: Linda T. Kohn, President

Date: February 14, 2025

Since the emergence of the environment movement in the 1970's, the League of Women Voters has advocated for policies that protect our planet and promote public health. The League believes in expanding reuse and recycling efforts, and is an active proponent of national beverage container deposit programs.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **supports HB 232**, which would establish the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, a beverage container deposit program to increase recycling and reduce litter pollution. Under this program, Marylanders would receive a 10-15 cent refund for each beverage container they return for recycling.

Recycling refund programs are proven to boost recycling rates and reduce litter. These programs also work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as they reduce the demand for virgin plastic production. Plastic products are made using fossil fuels - which have been established as a leading driver of the climate crisis. Maryland has established goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2031 and reach net-zero by 2045. **HB 232** would help the state achieve these goals by reducing our reliance on virgin plastic production.

HB 232 would benefit the environment, and benefit all Marylanders. Expanding Maryland's recycling efforts is critical in order to protect the health of our communities, maintain the quality of our environment, and mitigate the climate crisis.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **strongly urges a favorable report on HB 232.**

HB0232_Beverage_Container_and_Litter_Reduction_Pro

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0232

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Terrasa

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0232 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

This bill, if enacted, creates the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund Program, beginning operation in January 2028. It will require -

- A small deposit added to the price of glass, plastic, and metal beverage containers (10¢-15¢)
- A refund of the deposit when the containers are returned to a convenient retailer or redemption facility for recycling

The program is implemented and financed by beverage producers and will have enforceable targets and strong oversight from Maryland Department of the Environment. It is expected that Maryland can recover $\geq 90\%$ of beverage containers with 3.5 billion fewer wasted containers/year as well as an overall reduction in litter and reduced costs to local governments. Additionally, it incentivizes investment in refillable beverage containers and increases availability of high-quality, food-grade materials.

This is clearly a direction that we should be going in. Our members support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

bottle bill.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Blaha

Position: FAV

Dear Environment and Transportation Committee Members:

We write to express our strong support for HB 0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

We are two longtime Montgomery County residents who, working with the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Neighbors of the Northwest Branch, the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, and the Oakview Community Association, regularly volunteer our time organizing and participating in cleanups of trash and other waste, especially along County waterways.

Beverage containers are far and away the most frequent items we pick up. Over the course of the past year, we have picked thousands of them. We anticipate that passage of this bill would be a major step toward ameliorating that.

We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure passage of this bill. It would certainly make our work a lot easier.

And please let us know if there is anything else we can do to help.

Regards,

Nicholas Clements
226 Whitmoor Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Charles O. "Cob" Blaha
9808 Cottrell Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20903

bottle bill.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Blaha

Position: FAV

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We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure passage of this bill. It would certainly make our work a lot easier.

And please let us know if there is anything else we can do to help.

Regards,

Nicholas Clements
226 Whitmoor Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Charles O. "Cob" Blaha
9808 Cottrell Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20903

HB232_Williams_FAV

Uploaded by: Chris Williams

Position: FAV



Testimony of
Christopher E. Williams, President and CEO
Anacostia Watershed Society
to the
Maryland House of Delegates
Environment and Transportation Committee
in favor of HB 0232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling
Refund and Litter Reduction Program
February 14, 2025

Good afternoon. I am testifying today on behalf of the over 10,000 members, supporters and volunteers of the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS). The Anacostia watershed is a 176 square mile area drained by the Anacostia River, two-thirds of which is in Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland. Founded in 1989, AWS is a small organization of activists, advocates, experts, and educators working to conserve and restore the Anacostia watershed for all who live here and for future generations. And it is so much more. AWS is hundreds of volunteers from Maryland and DC in the field almost every day, picking up trash, monitoring pollution, planting trees and wetland plants, propagating wildlife, and removing invasive species. We are thousands of young students, learning about the natural history and ecology of the watershed. We are scores of naturalists-in-training, preparing to be conservation leaders in Maryland and DC communities. We are neighbors and friends in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, brought together by a shared love for our local watershed and a common determination to see it restored to health.

AWS has long experience battling trash pollution in the Anacostia watershed. In addition to regular volunteer trash clean-ups across the region, AWS advocacy efforts have been instrumental in the establishment of local limitations or bans of Styrofoam containers, single use plastic bags, plastic straws, and plastic utensils, all of which were tremendous sources of trash pollution that have since been visibly reduced, in some cases dramatically.¹

Of all the threats to river health that plague the Anacostia watershed – sewage overflows, toxic pollutants, urban run-off, sedimentation, wetlands and forest loss – the most starkly visible is trash. After a heavy rain, thousands of pounds of trash flows from streets, parking lots, and

¹ For example, a recent study by AWS determined that occurrence of Styrofoam in Anacostia watershed trash traps has plummeted by over 75 percent since the prohibition of Styrofoam containers in DC, Prince George's County, and Montgomery County.

storm drains into streams across the watershed and ultimately into the river's mainstem. Visitors to the river see the result: every eddy and small inlet cluttered with food wrappers, chip bags, single use plastic cups and lids, straws, and aluminum, glass, and plastic single-use beverage containers. Of all the trash collected by AWS trash traps, which are designed to intercept garbage flowing into the river, by far the most ubiquitous piece is the plastic beverage bottle. This trash fouls wildlife habitat, interfering with foraging, feeding, and other behaviors, and is sometimes ingested by wildlife. Moreover, the data suggest that over 70% of the pieces of trash flushed into the river will ultimately sink beneath the surface, raising troubling questions about just how much plastic waste is accumulating on the riverbed and in the water column, and how much that unseen trash is affecting the fish, wildlife and plants of the Anacostia River ecosystem.



A great blue heron finds itself on an island of trash. Wildlife struggling amidst trash is an all too common sight on rivers and streams in Maryland. Note the preponderance of plastic bottles.

In addition, plastic bottles and other trash foul natural areas important to people. The Anacostia watershed is entirely urban and suburban, and many of the parks and green spaces in Prince George's and Montgomery County are along streams and creeks in the watershed. These spaces foster social interaction, exercise, play, and provide places to get away from the noise and bustle of the city.

There is a growing body of evidence that access to urban green spaces is vitally important to our mental, physical, social, and emotional health.² Specific benefits include a higher reported quality of life, lower stress, better mood, and a reduction in mental distress. However, the benefits of urban green space are diminished if the green space itself is stressful or unpleasant to be in. Visible litter makes the environment less inviting, and reduces these benefits.

As the plastic trash decomposes, microscopic pieces are chipped off. These microplastics and nano-plastics persist in the environment for many years, and we are only beginning to learn about their potential negative impacts. For example, a study on the impact of microplastics on fish found damaged digestive and reproductive systems, and an increased chance of mortality.³ Freshwater mussels, organisms essential to the health of the Anacostia watershed, can also be highly impacted by microplastics. Several studies from other watersheds have found that mussels exposed to microplastics suffer from reduced reproductive success, which reduces the resilience of mussel populations facing the many other challenges of living in an urban river.⁴ In other words, microplastics can have cascading health effects for the organisms and populations exposed to them including, potentially, humans. In fact, studies show that humans are ingesting more and more plastic, with recent evidence suggesting that we are constantly taking in significant amounts of micro- and nano-plastics as we breathe, as we drink, and as we eat.⁵

Five point five billion single use beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year.⁶ That is an average of over 15 million plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles purchased, used, and disposed of every day. However, despite curbside pick-up, **less than a quarter of all that trash is actually captured for recycling**. The rest, over 4 billion otherwise recyclable containers, never get into the recycling stream. That is roughly 2 bottles and cans per each of Maryland's 6.2 million residents **per day, every day**, going to rapidly filling, often leaking landfills, to incinerators to be burned into toxic air pollution, or into our neighborhood streets, parks, and rivers.

In AWS's corner of Maryland, our dedicated volunteers have since 1989 removed on average about 42 tons of trash per year from the streams and wetlands of the Anacostia. Today, almost 60% of that trash by weight is plastic bottles. We're proud of our clean-up efforts, but we can only round up a small fraction of the millions of beverage containers that foul the watershed so thoroughly that it is one of only three bodies of water in the U.S. that must be regulated for trash under the federal Clean Water Act (TMDL).

² Numerous studies support this conclusion. See <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10708-021-10474-7/tables/2>

³ Buyun. Md Simul, *Effects of Microplastics on Fish and Human Health*, Frontiers in Environmental Science, vol. 10, March 2022

⁴ Scherer, Christian et al, *Interactions of Microplastics with Freshwater Biota*, The Handbook of Environmental Chemistry vol. 58

⁵ Kieran D. Cox, Garth A. Covernton, Hailey L. Davies, John F. Dower, Francis Juanes, Sarah E. Dudas, *Human Consumption of Microplastics*, Environ. Sci. Technol. 2019, 53, 12, 7068–7074, June 5, 2019; *Dietary and inhalation exposure to nano- and microplastic particles and potential implications for human health*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2022

⁶ Container Recycling Institute, Beverage Marketing Data, 2019



The result of a volunteer clean-up on a stream in the Anacostia watershed on April 22, 2023. The transparent bags are recyclable bottles and cans. The black bags contain all other trash collected. This ratio (about 60-70% recyclables) is typical.

AWS believes that HB 0232 will significantly reduce litter and plastic pollution in the Anacostia and in all of Maryland's rivers and streams. Data from other jurisdictions that have implemented such programs are encouraging. In 6 of the 10 states with deposit/refund laws in place, researchers have examined the impact of the program on litter found on highways. These states— Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, Vermont, and New York— have seen a 40-80% decrease in container litter, which contributed to a 10-39% reduction in total litter.⁷

Data specifically from river cleanups in Massachusetts, another deposit/refund state, suggest that their program has a substantial impact on the amount of litter in rivers, streams, and wetlands as well. In Massachusetts, only containers holding carbonated drinks (beer, malt, carbonated soft drinks) and mineral water are eligible to be returned. Beverage market share data showed that deposit eligible containers made up 76% of sales, and non-deposit eligible containers were 24% of sales. Yet, data collected from river clean-ups revealed that deposit eligible containers made up only 19% of the containers collected and non-deposit containers

⁷ Schuyler, Qamar et al, *Economic incentives reduce plastic inputs to the ocean*, Marine Policy, vol. 96, pp 250-255

made up 81%. This evidence strongly suggests that the incentive provided by the deposit/refund program in Massachusetts routed the bulk of eligible beverage containers to reuse and recycling, while containers with no such incentive littered the riverbanks.⁸

We are facing not just a “litter” problem in Maryland. This is an environmental and impending public health crisis that needs to be forcefully addressed without delay. The type of deposit/return/recycle system laid out in HB 0232 has dramatically increased recycling rates in 10 U.S. states and across Europe. In fact, it has been demonstrated that return/recycle incentive systems work hand in hand and indeed are a necessary part of Extended Producer Responsibility programs. As stated above, in Maryland less than 25% of recyclable beverage containers are captured for recycling; in deposit/return states, that figure is 70% and higher, sometimes much higher. And we have decades of data to demonstrate these systems reduce pollution and are remarkably cost effective.

The proven benefits of deposit/return systems like HB 0232 include:

- A dramatically increased beverage container recycling rate in Maryland. The estimated recycling rate, currently only 25% of containers sold in the state, would increase to more than 90% with HB 0232.⁹
- Reduced beverage container litter and plastic pollution and an increase in water quality. The system would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles, keeping that trash out of our neighborhoods, streets, parks, and rivers.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 231,707 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,371 cars.
- Savings money for taxpayers and local governments. HB 0232 would require beverage producers to finance the costs of collection, processing, and recycling of beverage containers, diverting those materials from landfills and incinerators and saving costs for taxpayers and local governments.
- New job opportunities in collection, redemption, hauling, and processing recyclable material. In fact, recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times more jobs as landfilling or incineration.

There is no reason to delay and every reason to get a deposit/return system in place in Maryland as soon as possible. AWS strongly supports HB 0232, and we urge the Environment and Transportation Committee to favorably report out the bill.

⁸ Cohen, Russ, Worcester Earth Day Cleanup, April 2003; Cohen, Russ, Blackstone Valley Riverways Clean Up Day, October 2007, Massachusetts Riverways Program. See bottlebill.org

⁹ This is the target expressed in HB 0232, and it is achievable. Among the ten U.S states with bottle bills, recycling rates today range as high as 87%. See <https://www.tomra.com/reverse-vending/media-center/feature-articles/bottle-bill-states-and-how-they-work>



A marsh in the Anacostia watershed choked with plastic bottles.

2025.02.11 HB232 LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Christiana Rigby

Position: FAV



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Christiana Rigby
Councilmember

District 3

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB232

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

February 14, 2025

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my **support for HB232**, legislation to establish the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of plastic beverage containers. As the Councilwoman for District 3 on the Howard County Council and environmental advocate, I firmly believe that this legislation will continue local efforts to reduce plastic waste in our community and increase environmental stewardship.

Waste reduction is a central piece of Howard County's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP). Included in this is the goal to reduce the use of single-use items, particularly plastics, and promote waste reduction and reuse throughout Howard County. Our current plastic reduction efforts lead to 3,000 pounds of plastic bags being reduced in fiscal year 2024. These programs to reduce single-use plastic have proven to be both a successful way to decrease waste and increase environmental stewardship.

To further waste reduction goals, local jurisdictions need programmatic support from the State. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation, and I respectfully encourage a favorable report.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christiana Rigby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Christiana Rigby

HB232_IndivisibleHoCoMD_FAV_Konny.pdf

Uploaded by: Crystal Konny

Position: FAV



HB232– Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

**Testimony before House Environment & Transportation Committee
February 14, 2024**

Position: Favorable

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the committee, my name is Crystal Konny, and I represent the 900+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB232**, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Terrasa and her colleagues for sponsoring this important legislation.

The bill establishes a program that will collect a small deposit for each bottle purchased. The deposits will be refunded when the container is returned to the retailer or a redemption facility. Retailers and redemption facilities receive a handling fee for processing the returned bottles. The program will be self-financing, creating no new costs for the taxpayers.

Approximately 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually, and fewer than a quarter are recycled. Three-quarters of the beverage containers end up as litter, or are incinerated or dumped in landfills. Containers that are left in the wild are very problematic. Such containers, especially plastic ones, are harmful to both the environment and to wildlife, particularly in marine environments like the Chesapeake Bay.

This legislation will increase the source of recycled materials for use in new bottles, and will work hand in hand with HB0069, Maryland's Postconsumer Recycled Content Program bill, which will stimulate the demand for materials to be recycled.

Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs. The states with a 10-cent deposit, such as Michigan and Oregon, have a 90% recycling rate. It would be fantastic if Maryland could say the same.

I live in a neighborhood of houses, townhomes, and garden apartments. The view from my home includes a short creek that leads to the Middle Patuxent River and, eventually, to the Chesapeake Bay. Litter washes down this creek, including many beverage containers. This bill would give the neighbors an incentive to keep the bottles out of the creek, keeping Maryland's waterways and neighborhoods cleaner.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to pass the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. It is long-overdue. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. **We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.**

Crystal Konny
Columbia, MD 21044

HB232_City of Greenbelt_Carrington_FAV

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

Emmett V. Jordan, *Mayor*

Kristen L.K. Weaver, *Mayor Pro Tem*

Amy Knesel

Danielle McKinney

Jenni Pompei

Silke I. Pope

Rodney M. Roberts

Position Statement in Support of HB232/SB346 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

The City of Greenbelt strongly supports HB232/SB346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. This legislation represents a critical step toward reducing litter, increasing recycling rates, and fostering a cleaner, more sustainable environment for our residents and future generations.

A well-structured beverage container deposit program has proven effective in numerous states by significantly increasing the recycling of glass, plastic, and aluminum containers while reducing the volume of litter in public spaces, waterways, and green areas. By creating a financial incentive for consumers to return containers, HB232/SB346 will help mitigate waste, promote a circular economy, and decrease the burden of waste management costs on local governments.

Furthermore, this bill aligns with Greenbelt's long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability. By encouraging responsible recycling practices and reducing pollution, HB232/SB346 supports our efforts to maintain a clean, healthy, and vibrant community. We urge the General Assembly to pass this important legislation to advance Maryland's environmental and economic sustainability goals.

For questions or more information, please contact Josué Salmerón, City Manager, at jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov.

Mosher_Favorable_HB232.pdf

Uploaded by: David Mosher

Position: FAV

February 11, 2025

Chair Korman, Environment and Transportation Committee

Maryland House of Delegates Room 251

House Office Building Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 232 – Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Maryland Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB0232. I am strongly in favor of this legislation. It would reduce litter from beverage containers, reduce plastic pollution in our environment, and reduce the burden on local municipalities from additional waste that must be collected, processed, and disposed of by incineration or landfill.

When I take walks in communities anywhere in Maryland I see a lot of litter, in the streets, in parks, in our waterways. This litter represents a tremendous source of pollution when the plastic breaks down into microplastics and gets absorbed into our soil and water. And we are ingesting those microplastics through our food and water.

I've visited my County recycling center and I've seen the tremendous mounds of glass, aluminum, and plastic containers. The workload on our County is huge and they do an amazing job, collecting, sorting, and dealing with all of our waste. The volumes of waste grow each year. We could reduce one source of waste from the stream by recycling beverage containers and take some of the load from our municipalities.

The Problem

About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually. Despite widespread availability of curbside collection of recyclables and public recycling receptacles, only a quarter of the containers (25%) are captured for recycling. More than 4 billion containers a year, 2.6 billion of which are plastic, are left in the environment each year. The number littered is significant: Beverage containers are more than half of the trash by volume in the Anacostia watershed's trash traps.

The Solution

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. They add a small deposit to the purchase price of beverage containers that is refunded to customers when the containers are returned for recycling.

When empty beverage containers can be redeemed for cash, fewer are littered or likely to remain littered. The refundable deposit is an incentive to return. The recycling rate for deposit beverage containers is 2-3 times higher than for containers not subject to a deposit, and the impact is greater with higher deposits. States with a 10-cent deposit have achieved container recycling rates of 90%.

The Benefits

Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution, and an increase in water quality. It would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles.

- Quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate. The estimated recycling rate, currently only 25% of containers sold in the state, would increase to more than 90% with the Bottle Bill.
- Increase in high quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers. The program would generate an additional 13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers, annually.
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 231,707 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,371 cars.
- Savings for taxpayers and local governments. Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection, processing, and recycling of beverage containers currently disposed, littered, and recycled, diverting materials from landfills and incinerators, saving costs for taxpayers and local governments.
- Investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems. Deposits are critical for development of refillable and reusable containers. The program would launch that transition.
- Job creation. Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times more jobs as landfilling or incineration.

Support the Maryland Bottle Bill to reduce litter, prevent plastic pollution, increase recycling, and conserve resources!

I urge you to issue a Favorable review of HB 232 – Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

Thank you,

David Mosher

15 Mirrasou Lane

Gaithersburg, MD 20878

HB232_Deb Jung_Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Deb Jung

Position: FAV



Howard County Council

Deb Jung
Councilmember

District 4

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

February 14, 2025

HB 232
Deb Jung, Howard County Council
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Environment and Transportation Committee Members:

I strongly support HB 232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. I am grateful to the sponsoring Delegates, three of whom are from Howard County, Delegates Terrasa, Feldmark, and Ziegler, for introducing this much needed bill for reducing litter and pollution in Maryland.

Far too many of the more than 5 billion single-use beverage containers sold annually in Maryland are not disposed of properly. This program establishes a convenient reimbursement process for customers to redeem their beverage containers. The incentive program targets at least a 90 percent redemption rate of beverage containers within a few years of implementation. Moreover, we know these programs are effective. Ten states have already adopted their own bottle deposit container program. In states with these programs, their beverage container recycling rates far exceed Maryland's.

As a Councilmember in Howard County, I am only too aware of the negative impact of littering in our community. Complaints about littered roadways and streams frequently fill my Council inbox. Although our County and State crews do their best to address this ongoing problem, if this bill passes, we can begin taking action to change behavior and implement effective waste prevention.

This is a commonsense solution for reducing our waste and creating a sustainable environment for all. I respectfully request a favorable report on HB232.

Thank your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deb Jung". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "D" and "J".

Deb Jung
Councilmember District 4

Testimony HB232 E&T (DAC).pdf

Uploaded by: Debbie Cohn

Position: FAV

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB232 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 14, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing my testimony today in strong support of HB232. I have resided in Maryland since 1986, and most of my descendants reside in Maryland. Although I recall bottle deposits in supermarkets from childhood, I first experienced modern bottle deposit programs using reverse vending machines in Munich. They were easy to use and had an important added benefit for low income pensioners who would supplement their income by collecting plastic, metal and glass bottles discarded in parks and littering streets for easy redemption in neighborhood markets. Indeed, such a woman showed me how the process worked (and gave me a great way to practice my meager German and better understand the local culture.)

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction, also called the Maryland bottle bill, would be self-funded from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. It would be operated by an industry run non-profit beverage container stewardship organization and is generally based on the extended producer responsibility model that foster a circular and zero waste economy. Thus, the state or local jurisdiction do not pay for operation of the beverage container deposit program but reap the financial benefits of reduced recycling and litter clean-up costs.

Beverage container deposit programs are simple and they work. HB232 would create a beverage container deposit program requiring a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit, depending on the size of the container. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the bottle is returned. Ten states, covering more than 90 million people, have longstanding, successful programs. Results in those states demonstrate that these type of programs dramatically increase bottle returns, often up to a 90 percent return rate – a significant increase from Maryland’s 25 percent rate today.

HB232 includes three important improvements to prior iterations of a bottle deposit programs. It:

- Explicitly excludes cratons, pouches and aseptic packaging
- Authorizes the grant program for reuse/refill to finance an evaluation of the investments and policies needed to increase the share of reusable containers sold in Maryland by 2035
- Allows the Maryland Department of the Environment to add container types in the future as redemption technology and container materials change.

Beverage container deposit programs create multiple other benefits. They reduce waste by promoting the highest tiers – redesign, reduce, reuse, recycle – of the zero waste pyramid. They continue to build a circular, zero waste economy. They reduce plastic litter in our waterways, thereby reducing creation of

microplastics. And by increasing bottle recycling rates, they encourage businesses to create refillable and reusable containers and for businesses to provide bottle refill water dispensers.

For these reasons I support HB232 and urge a FAVORABLE report in Committee. Thank you.

HB0232 Letter of Support - Constellium SE_02.11.25

Uploaded by: Delphine Dahan Kocher

Position: FAV



300 East Lombard Street, 17th floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
(443) 420 7881

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Support for House Bill 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

I am writing to convey our support for House Bill 232.

Constellium is a global industry leader in the production and recycling of aluminum products, with its U.S. headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland. We supply the packaging, automotive, and aerospace markets, and recycle both scrap and used beverage cans (UBCs). We are a public company, listed on the New York Stock Exchange, with 12,000 employees and over \$7.5 billion in revenue.

As a company that recycles just in the United States more than 20 billion beverage cans a year, the availability of scrap is critical to our operations. We manufacture aluminum cansheet that our customers use to produce cans for popular beverages such as Coke, Pepsi, and Budweiser, and our products currently include more than 70% recycled content. We strive to promote the circularity of our products by recycling used cans and transforming them into new ones. Ensuring a steady supply of UBCs is one of our top priorities, and we use UBCs from across the United States.

Using recycled cans instead of primary aluminum also allows us to significantly decrease our CO2 emissions, one of our key public commitments in terms of sustainability, and one that our customers and investors follow closely. Recycling aluminum emits 94% fewer emissions than

producing primary metal. Without recycled aluminum, our carbon emissions would increase by close to 50%, while today we committed to decrease them by 30% in 2030.

Unfortunately, at around 45%, the overall recycling rate for UBCs in the U.S. is still quite low. With demand for product packaged in aluminum cans expected to increase significantly, cansheet producers like Constellium will be forced to rely increasingly on primary aluminum, much of which is imported. By itself, HB 232 will have a measurable impact on the availability of recycled UBCs as data from the United States and globally proves that deposits are the most effective way to increase recycling. And if other states follow, we will be able to do better as a country.

HB 232 would also contribute to Maryland's economy, in addition to protecting the environment. The aluminum can recycling rate in Maryland is currently around 23% according to the 2024 State of Recycling Report from the Recycling Partnership. Concretely, this means that close to 1 billion cans are being sent to landfill every year. If we were to recycle them instead, and reach a 90% rate, we would generate around \$20 million of additional revenue in addition to reducing waste.

Thank you for your willingness to take on this important issue and thank you to Delegate Terrasa for sponsoring the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Dahan-Kocher', with a stylized, flowing script.

Delphine Dahan-Kocher

Delphine Dahan-Kocher

VP Group Communications and Public Affairs North America

Constellium

Office: +1 443 420 7860

Mail: delphine.dahan-kocher@constellium.com

Bottle Bill House.pdf

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Ryznar

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation; Economic Matters

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

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: 2/14 at 1:30 pm (Environment and Transportation)

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility (CPSR) is a statewide evidence-based organization of over 900 physicians and other health professionals and supporters that addresses existential public health threats: nuclear weapons, the climate crisis, and the issues of pollution and toxic effects on health, as seen through the intersectional lens of environmental, racial and social justice.

Healthy Climate Maryland (HCM) is a state-wide coalition of dedicated public health and medical professionals that seeks to address climate change and environmental challenges by focusing on their impacts on public health.

CPSR and HCM strongly support [HB0232](#), a bill establishing a beverage container deposit program in the State of Maryland at no added cost to the State (and with savings to waste management costs for local municipalities). By increasing recycling rates, this “Bottle Bill” will also yield public health benefits by reducing carbon emissions of new plastics production and decreasing environmental plastics.

Each year 2.6 billion plastic bottles litter Maryland’s roads, shores, and waterways or end up as landfill. These plastic bottles are made from fossil fuels and their production contributes to climate change. Due to exponential growth of plastics production, much of it in single-use plastics, the plastics industry accounts for a rising share of global carbon emissions (from 3.7% in 2015 to 5.3% in 2019).¹⁻³ If the plastic industry were a country, it would be the fifth most polluting country in the world. Most of the carbon emissions emerge from fossil fuel extraction and processing as well as from the production of the plastics building blocks (the hydrocarbon monomer and chemical additives).² One strategy of mitigating the climate impacts of plastics production is to increase plastics recycling in order to offset new plastic production.³ This proposed bottle bill will increase Maryland’s bottle recycling rate from 25% to over 90%.

Moreover, we know that these plastic bottles do not biodegrade. Instead, they break up into tiny fragments, called microplastics, which readily disperse in our air, water, and land, contributing to widespread environmental pollution.⁴ Once in the environment, they end up in our bodies through the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink.⁴ Studies have detected microplastics in most human organs tested, including the brain, heart, lungs, intestines, testicles, and placenta.⁴⁻⁶ Research shows that microplastics have negative health impacts. These health impacts emerge from the two components of plastics: the polymer building blocks, which come from fossil fuels, and the chemical additives.^{4,7} Recent animal studies show that microplastic

polymers cause inflammation in every tissue they end up in, disrupt the microbiome in the gut, and cause abnormal protein folding in the brain consistent with dementia.^{4,7-9} Decades of animal and human studies have identified plastics-related chemicals as endocrine-disruptors, implicating them in obesity, type 2 diabetes, preterm birth, decreased sperm count, early puberty in females, and neurodevelopmental conditions like ADHD, autism, and IQ loss.^{4,7,10-12} Health economists estimate the economic burden of these health issues to be substantial, costing the United States \$920.6 billion dollars in healthcare costs, disability, and premature death from just three plastics-related chemicals.⁴ Additionally, this past year, leading cancer researchers named microplastics and related chemicals as drivers of rising cancer rates in adults.¹³

Any bill that helps reduce the environmental burden of plastics is a net win for health of our Marylanders. We therefore urge you to vote in favor of the Bottle Bill.

Sincerely,

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Healthy Climate Maryland

References:

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HB232 Bottle Bill support Feb 14.pdf

Uploaded by: Eric Sterling

Position: FAV

STATEMENT OF
ERIC E. STERLING, J.D.¹
SUBMITTED TO
THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
HON. MARC KORMAN, CHAIR
HON. REGINA T. BOYCE, VICE CHAIR
FEBRUARY 14, 2025

IN SUPPORT OF
HB232
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Honorable Delegates, thank you for reading my brief statement.

I strongly support of HB232 because I believe it will reduce the volume of beverage container litter that plagues our environment. I commend Delegate Terrasa, my District 18 Delegate Kaufman and Senator Brooks for their leadership in sponsoring this bill and SB346.

When I was a kid and started hiking in the 1960s, I started picking up the litter along the trail. In recent years, I have been a volunteer trail maintainer for a stretch of the Cabin John Trail in Montgomery County as a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. For many years, I have been using a mechanical picker and carry a strong reusable bag. I pick up litter every time I walk my dog or go for a walk or a hike – multiple times a day.

Every week, I pick up 20 to 30 bottles and cans that I spot that are thrown on the yards, in the woods, along the streams, in the gutter, around playgrounds, ball fields, schools, churches, and parking lots in my neighborhood. Often, I have too many to carry home to my recycling bin and I put them in a trash can. I walk along Rock Creek every day and see countless bottles and cans floating; gathered upstream of a tree fallen across the creek.

I believe this bill will significantly reduce the litter and will result in a significant recycling of aluminum and glass.

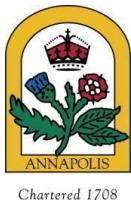
I urge a favorable report.

¹ Eric E. Sterling has lived in Maryland 33 years and in the 18th legislative district over 27 years. He has tried to bicycle across the United States, led wilderness canoe trips in Maine for three summers, and led or co-led hiking trips in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Switzerland, and Italy. He is a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Sierra Club, the Rock Creek Conservancy, Nature Forward, Hosteling International and other outdoors and environmental organizations. He is active with Bethesda Friends Meeting and is joining with Quaker Voice of Maryland in supporting these bills.

HB232_Mayor Buckley_FAV

Uploaded by: Gavin Buckley

Position: FAV



Office of the Mayor
Gavin Buckley, Mayor
160 Duke of Gloucester Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2517

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support of House Bill 735 (Senate Bill 642) Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee Members:

As the Mayor of the City of Annapolis, Maryland, I am writing to express my support for HB735, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, a.k.a. the Bottle Bill. This legislation will address a significant and growing environmental problem - beverage container litter, including single use plastic pollution. By diverting empty metal, glass, and plastic containers from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, the volume of solid waste generated will be reduced, relieving municipalities from some of the significant financial burdens associated with municipal waste and recycling and improving the environmental quality of our communities.

The legislation will add a small refundable deposit to beverage containers, to be refunded when the container is returned by consumers for recycling. By placing a value on empty containers, the public will be incentivized not to litter and to retrieve containers from the environment for the refund. Other benefits of the Bottle Bill are reduced greenhouse gas emissions, creation of new jobs in the recycling industry, and creation of high-quality materials that can be recycled into new beverage containers.

The City of Annapolis is committed to sustainability and values the health of our community and the protection of our natural resources that are vitally important to our economy and culture. The City supports the goal of HB 735 to reduce litter, pollution, and costs associated with beverage containers.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation and for supporting our efforts to protect the environment and reach our sustainability goals.

Sincerely,

Gavin Buckley
Mayor

Letter from L4P re bottle bill (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Hollis Hoglund

Position: FAV



Laurel for the Patuxent strongly supports the Beverage Container and Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, HB 232 (or SB346). The purpose of our organization is to promote the health of our Patuxent River watershed through a variety of environmental projects which include establishing native plant gardens, planting trees, environmental education and art, invasive plant removal, and sponsoring litter cleanups, all in the city of Laurel.

While engaging in these activities and just in general driving throughout our state, we are all aware of the amount of litter along the roadsides, a substantial portion of which are beverage containers. That is because only about 23% of beverage containers sold in the state are collected for recycling. The rest are left in the environment, most of which will eventually enter the river, the Bay and eventually the ocean. We know that a bottle redemption program, which has already proven effective in ten US states and numerous countries around the world, would successfully address this issue. Without this bottle return program, nothing will be done and the litter will just continue to pollute our waterways.

In addition to litter reduction, this program has many other advantages as enumerated in the fact sheet which has been distributed. As written, it would be self-financing - taxpayer funding would not be necessary so it is a win-win solution.

We look forward to the passage of HB232 into law this legislative session so that it becomes an important part of the effort our state continues to make in creating a cleaner, healthier Maryland.

Jessica Coyle, President

Laurel for the Patuxent
329 Prince George St.
Laurel, MD 20707

HB232_Neely_FAV

Uploaded by: James Neely

Position: FAV



Testimony of
Christopher E. Williams, President and CEO
Anacostia Watershed Society
to the
Maryland House of Delegates
Environment and Transportation Committee
in favor of HB 0232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling
Refund and Litter Reduction Program
February 14, 2025

Good afternoon. I am testifying today on behalf of the over 10,000 members, supporters and volunteers of the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS). The Anacostia watershed is a 176 square mile area drained by the Anacostia River, two-thirds of which is in Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland. Founded in 1989, AWS is a small organization of activists, advocates, experts, and educators working to conserve and restore the Anacostia watershed for all who live here and for future generations. And it is so much more. AWS is hundreds of volunteers from Maryland and DC in the field almost every day, picking up trash, monitoring pollution, planting trees and wetland plants, propagating wildlife, and removing invasive species. We are thousands of young students, learning about the natural history and ecology of the watershed. We are scores of naturalists-in-training, preparing to be conservation leaders in Maryland and DC communities. We are neighbors and friends in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, brought together by a shared love for our local watershed and a common determination to see it restored to health.

AWS has long experience battling trash pollution in the Anacostia watershed. In addition to regular volunteer trash clean-ups across the region, AWS advocacy efforts have been instrumental in the establishment of local limitations or bans of Styrofoam containers, single use plastic bags, plastic straws, and plastic utensils, all of which were tremendous sources of trash pollution that have since been visibly reduced, in some cases dramatically.¹

Of all the threats to river health that plague the Anacostia watershed – sewage overflows, toxic pollutants, urban run-off, sedimentation, wetlands and forest loss – the most starkly visible is trash. After a heavy rain, thousands of pounds of trash flows from streets, parking lots, and

¹ For example, a recent study by AWS determined that occurrence of Styrofoam in Anacostia watershed trash traps has plummeted by over 75 percent since the prohibition of Styrofoam containers in DC, Prince George's County, and Montgomery County.

storm drains into streams across the watershed and ultimately into the river's mainstem. Visitors to the river see the result: every eddy and small inlet cluttered with food wrappers, chip bags, single use plastic cups and lids, straws, and aluminum, glass, and plastic single-use beverage containers. Of all the trash collected by AWS trash traps, which are designed to intercept garbage flowing into the river, by far the most ubiquitous piece is the plastic beverage bottle. This trash fouls wildlife habitat, interfering with foraging, feeding, and other behaviors, and is sometimes ingested by wildlife. Moreover, the data suggest that over 70% of the pieces of trash flushed into the river will ultimately sink beneath the surface, raising troubling questions about just how much plastic waste is accumulating on the riverbed and in the water column, and how much that unseen trash is affecting the fish, wildlife and plants of the Anacostia River ecosystem.



A great blue heron finds itself on an island of trash. Wildlife struggling amidst trash is an all too common sight on rivers and streams in Maryland. Note the preponderance of plastic bottles.

In addition, plastic bottles and other trash foul natural areas important to people. The Anacostia watershed is entirely urban and suburban, and many of the parks and green spaces in Prince George's and Montgomery County are along streams and creeks in the watershed. These spaces foster social interaction, exercise, play, and provide places to get away from the noise and bustle of the city.

There is a growing body of evidence that access to urban green spaces is vitally important to our mental, physical, social, and emotional health.² Specific benefits include a higher reported quality of life, lower stress, better mood, and a reduction in mental distress. However, the benefits of urban green space are diminished if the green space itself is stressful or unpleasant to be in. Visible litter makes the environment less inviting, and reduces these benefits.

As the plastic trash decomposes, microscopic pieces are chipped off. These microplastics and nano-plastics persist in the environment for many years, and we are only beginning to learn about their potential negative impacts. For example, a study on the impact of microplastics on fish found damaged digestive and reproductive systems, and an increased chance of mortality.³ Freshwater mussels, organisms essential to the health of the Anacostia watershed, can also be highly impacted by microplastics. Several studies from other watersheds have found that mussels exposed to microplastics suffer from reduced reproductive success, which reduces the resilience of mussel populations facing the many other challenges of living in an urban river.⁴ In other words, microplastics can have cascading health effects for the organisms and populations exposed to them including, potentially, humans. In fact, studies show that humans are ingesting more and more plastic, with recent evidence suggesting that we are constantly taking in significant amounts of micro- and nano-plastics as we breathe, as we drink, and as we eat.⁵

Five point five billion single use beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year.⁶ That is an average of over 15 million plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles purchased, used, and disposed of every day. However, despite curbside pick-up, **less than a quarter of all that trash is actually captured for recycling**. The rest, over 4 billion otherwise recyclable containers, never get into the recycling stream. That is roughly 2 bottles and cans per each of Maryland's 6.2 million residents **per day, every day**, going to rapidly filling, often leaking landfills, to incinerators to be burned into toxic air pollution, or into our neighborhood streets, parks, and rivers.

In AWS's corner of Maryland, our dedicated volunteers have since 1989 removed on average about 42 tons of trash per year from the streams and wetlands of the Anacostia. Today, almost 60% of that trash by weight is plastic bottles. We're proud of our clean-up efforts, but we can only round up a small fraction of the millions of beverage containers that foul the watershed so thoroughly that it is one of only three bodies of water in the U.S. that must be regulated for trash under the federal Clean Water Act (TMDL).

² Numerous studies support this conclusion. See <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10708-021-10474-7/tables/2>

³ Buyun. Md Simul, *Effects of Microplastics on Fish and Human Health*, Frontiers in Environmental Science, vol. 10, March 2022

⁴ Scherer, Christian et al, *Interactions of Microplastics with Freshwater Biota*, The Handbook of Environmental Chemistry vol. 58

⁵ Kieran D. Cox, Garth A. Covernton, Hailey L. Davies, John F. Dower, Francis Juanes, Sarah E. Dudas, *Human Consumption of Microplastics*, Environ. Sci. Technol. 2019, 53, 12, 7068–7074, June 5, 2019; *Dietary and inhalation exposure to nano- and microplastic particles and potential implications for human health*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2022

⁶ Container Recycling Institute, Beverage Marketing Data, 2019



The result of a volunteer clean-up on a stream in the Anacostia watershed on April 22, 2023. The transparent bags are recyclable bottles and cans. The black bags contain all other trash collected. This ratio (about 60-70% recyclables) is typical.

AWS believes that HB 0232 will significantly reduce litter and plastic pollution in the Anacostia and in all of Maryland's rivers and streams. Data from other jurisdictions that have implemented such programs are encouraging. In 6 of the 10 states with deposit/refund laws in place, researchers have examined the impact of the program on litter found on highways. These states— Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, Vermont, and New York— have seen a 40-80% decrease in container litter, which contributed to a 10-39% reduction in total litter.⁷

Data specifically from river cleanups in Massachusetts, another deposit/refund state, suggest that their program has a substantial impact on the amount of litter in rivers, streams, and wetlands as well. In Massachusetts, only containers holding carbonated drinks (beer, malt, carbonated soft drinks) and mineral water are eligible to be returned. Beverage market share data showed that deposit eligible containers made up 76% of sales, and non-deposit eligible containers were 24% of sales. Yet, data collected from river clean-ups revealed that deposit eligible containers made up only 19% of the containers collected and non-deposit containers

⁷ Schuyler, Qamar et al, *Economic incentives reduce plastic inputs to the ocean*, Marine Policy, vol. 96, pp 250-255

made up 81%. This evidence strongly suggests that the incentive provided by the deposit/refund program in Massachusetts routed the bulk of eligible beverage containers to reuse and recycling, while containers with no such incentive littered the riverbanks.⁸

We are facing not just a “litter” problem in Maryland. This is an environmental and impending public health crisis that needs to be forcefully addressed without delay. The type of deposit/return/recycle system laid out in HB 0232 has dramatically increased recycling rates in 10 U.S. states and across Europe. In fact, it has been demonstrated that return/recycle incentive systems work hand in hand and indeed are a necessary part of Extended Producer Responsibility programs. As stated above, in Maryland less than 25% of recyclable beverage containers are captured for recycling; in deposit/return states, that figure is 70% and higher, sometimes much higher. And we have decades of data to demonstrate these systems reduce pollution and are remarkably cost effective.

The proven benefits of deposit/return systems like HB 0232 include:

- A dramatically increased beverage container recycling rate in Maryland. The estimated recycling rate, currently only 25% of containers sold in the state, would increase to more than 90% with HB 0232.⁹
- Reduced beverage container litter and plastic pollution and an increase in water quality. The system would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles, keeping that trash out of our neighborhoods, streets, parks, and rivers.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 231,707 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,371 cars.
- Savings money for taxpayers and local governments. HB 0232 would require beverage producers to finance the costs of collection, processing, and recycling of beverage containers, diverting those materials from landfills and incinerators and saving costs for taxpayers and local governments.
- New job opportunities in collection, redemption, hauling, and processing recyclable material. In fact, recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times more jobs as landfilling or incineration.

There is no reason to delay and every reason to get a deposit/return system in place in Maryland as soon as possible. AWS strongly supports HB 0232, and we urge the Environment and Transportation Committee to favorably report out the bill.

⁸ Cohen, Russ, Worcester Earth Day Cleanup, April 2003; Cohen, Russ, Blackstone Valley Riverways Clean Up Day, October 2007, Massachusetts Riverways Program. See bottlebill.org

⁹ This is the target expressed in HB 0232, and it is achievable. Among the ten U.S states with bottle bills, recycling rates today range as high as 87%. See <https://www.tomra.com/reverse-vending/media-center/feature-articles/bottle-bill-states-and-how-they-work>



A marsh in the Anacostia watershed choked with plastic bottles.

JCR_HB0232_12Feb2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Janet Ruhl

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of HB0232/SB0346
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
House Environment and Transportation Committee 14 February 2025
Submitted on 12 February 2025 by 8:30 am

To the Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Janet Ruhl. I live in Galena, MD, on the Sassafras River, and I urge a **favorable** report on HB0232/SB0346. Thank you in advance for your consideration of support.

Single-use glass, plastic and metal beverage containers are often discarded as unsightly litter, buried in landfills or incinerated as garbage. These practices result in negative climate and health impacts at every stage – production of virgin materials, leaching toxic chemicals and breaking down into micro- and nano-plastics, extraction of fossil fuels, emission of greenhouse gases during degradation/incineration. The materials can be recycled, made into new containers, reducing the need for virgin materials. We must do more to reduce virgin glass, plastic and metal from being produced, used and discarded.

This bill requires that a small deposit is added to the price of beverages in glass, plastic, and metal beverage containers (10¢-15¢). The deposit is refunded when the containers are returned to a convenient retailer or redemption facility for recycling. The program is implemented and financed by beverage producers, w/ enforceable targets and strong oversight from MDE.

This Bill will:

- Provide Maryland consumers with incentives to return single-use glass, plastic and metal beverage containers instead of discarding these products in landfills or as roadside litter.
- Drive the market toward collecting, reusing and/or recycling glass, plastic and metal beverage containers.
- Reduce production of virgin glass, plastic and metal.

This Bill works alone but has even more impact when considered with other bills proposed in the Maryland Senate and House to provide mechanisms for reducing plastic bottle manufacturing and waste. The additional proposals - the Water Bottle Filling Stations Requirement (HB0277/SB0096), the Bill Allowing Reusable Beverage Containers in Sports Venues (HB0639), and the Post-consumer Plastic Recycled Content Program (HB0069) - will:

- Allow Maryland consumers to use refillable beverage bottles not only on a daily basis in buildings with water bottle filling stations but also at sports events.
- Allow Maryland consumers to reduce spending on single-use water bottles.
- Create reliable markets for post-consumer plastic.

I **support** Bill HB0232/SB0346 requiring Deposits on Beverage Containers for multiple reasons. I lead and have led roadside and river trash removal efforts for decades. Amongst the main trash items are bottles and cans, items which should be recycled. Putting a financial incentive into returning bottles and cans to central collection points will not only decrease roadside litter but emphasizes the need to recycle this huge resource.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look to this committee to give HB0232/SB0346 a **favorable** report.

Sincerely,
Janet C. Ruhl

Sponsor Testimony, HB232.pdf

Uploaded by: Jen Terrasa

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 14, 2025

To: The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Delegate Jen Terrasa
District 13, Howard County

Re: Sponsor Testimony in Support of HB232, Maryland Beverage Container
Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chairman Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present HB232, which establishes the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program – a.k.a. the Maryland Bottle Bill – to reduce the volume of litter and plastic pollution from beverage containers. The program will also divert containers from landfills and incinerators and increase recycling.

This is a reintroduction of HB735 from last session, but we have made significant changes to the bill after considering feedback from multiple stakeholders.

The Problem

In 2021, 5.5 billion beverage containers were sold in Maryland, 890 containers per person per year. It is estimated that 1.4 billion of them, only a quarter of the total containers sold, were collected for recycling. That means that every year more than 4 billion beverage containers become waste, ending up in landfills, incinerators, or littering our environment.

Single-use beverage containers are one of the most common items littered across the State. They are more than half of the litter in trash traps on the Anacostia River. Most of these wasted containers are made of plastic. They are polluting our waterways and posing a risk to wildlife and our health. They break into tiny pieces that are ingested by marine life, causing sickness and death. These small plastic particles are in our food and our bodies.

Maryland's beverage container litter problem is so severe that the Environmental Protection Agency declared the Anacostia watershed to be impaired with trash in 2010, and in 2014 did the same for the watershed surrounding Baltimore Harbor. Our state, which is home to the largest estuary in the country – the Chesapeake Bay – also has the dubious distinction of having two of the three water bodies in the country that are impaired for trash and regulated by the EPA under the Clean Water Act.

The 4 billion wasted containers annually not only contribute to litter and plastic pollution – they are also a waste of energy and resources. Rather than conserving and reusing those wasted materials, new beverage containers are being manufactured from virgin materials that generate greenhouse gas emissions at every stage of their life cycle, from extraction to production and disposal, with climate, health, and environmental justice impacts.

What the bill does

HB232 would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a refundable deposit of 10 cents for metal, plastic, and glass beverage containers 24 fluid ounces or less and 15 cents for beverage containers more than 24 fluid ounces up to 3 liters.

Distributors of beverage containers collect the deposit when they deliver their products to a retailer for sale, and the retailer gets refunded for the deposit when a customer purchases the beverage. The customer gets their deposit refunded when they return the container for recycling.

The deposit would be refunded to customers when the redeemable beverage container is returned for recycling at convenient redemption opportunities for customers, mainly at retailers that sell redeemable beverage containers. Think of this as “buying the beverage but borrowing the container.” The deposit ensures that the empty container is returned.

Restaurants and other hospitality businesses where beverages are consumed on the premises would pay the deposit on the redeemable containers they purchase. The deposit is not passed on to customers – it is refunded directly to the business from the Stewardship Organization when the empty containers are returned.

Both retailers and hospitality businesses would receive a “handling fee” per container to pay for the cost of collection, sorting, and storing of redeemable containers.

The metal, glass, and plastic raw materials are sold on the market to be used to make new beverage containers, and the revenue is put back into the program. Use of the high-grade materials recovered from the redeemed beverage containers displaces the production of beverage containers that are using virgin resources, reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

How it would work

The program would be implemented by a non-profit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization (BCSO) selected by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). All beverage producers selling or distributing beverages in redeemable containers in the state would have to register with MDE, belong to and finance the Stewardship Organization. Responsibilities of the Stewardship Organization include:

- Submitting a Stewardship Plan for organizing and implementing the program, according to provisions in HB232 and as established in rulemaking;
- Submitting annual reports, with the information prescribed in HB232;
- Putting in place and financing the necessary infrastructure;
- Collecting and processing empty redeemed containers from redemption sites and hospitality businesses;
- Managing the deposits; and
- Achieving three main targets:
 - Putting in place all convenience standards set by December 2027;
 - A 90% redemption rate of beverage containers by the fifth year of operation; and
 - A target of 10% of all beverage containers sold in the state to be reusable/refillable by December 2035.

MDE would provide oversight of the Stewardship Organization. Besides selecting the stewardship organization, it would:

- Set producer registration fees at a level that will fully compensate for costs incurred by MDE for oversight;
- Approve the Stewardship Plan submitted by the Stewardship Organization;
- Set the convenience standard for customer access to redemption locations;
- Set handling fees per container paid to retailers to cover their collection and sorting costs, and for restaurants and hospitality businesses, to cover preliminary sorting;
- Develop a process for local governments to set up their own redemption center, if they want to, and receive a handling fee;
- Enforce and audit operations; and
- Appoint and consult with an Advisory Council of stakeholders on approval of the stewardship plan, annual reports, and implementation issues.

The program would establish a Grant Fund for developing refill/reuse programs, funded by some of the unclaimed deposits and managed by MDE.

Retailers with more than 3,000 square feet of retail space that sell redeemable beverage containers and have at least 150 square feet of shelf space displaying redeemable containers would be required to receive empty containers for redemption and to refund the deposits. There are many options to satisfy this obligation:

- Reverse vending machines that verify, count, and redeem empty containers, and issue a receipt for the amount that can be refunded by the retailer at checkout;

- Bag drops located in the parking lot where customers can leave all of their empty containers in a bag labeled with a personal barcode, and receive a refund into a personal account;
- Shared redemption facilities among several co-located retailers;
- The ability to collaborate with any nearby redemption center set up by the Stewardship Organization to satisfy the convenience standard, in lieu of on-site redemption.

The program would be self-financed, by registration and Stewardship Organization producer fees, sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. The program would be budget-neutral for the State. MDE's start-up costs in launching the program will be fully reimbursed to the General Fund by the Stewardship Organization at the time of program launch.

The deposit would go into effect on January 1, 2028. Deposits on beverage containers have been enacted in 10 other states and have been ongoing for as long as 50 years. Those programs typically reduced beverage container litter by 70-85%. For those with a 10-cent deposit, 90% of containers have been returned for recycling, compared with only about a quarter of containers returned currently in Maryland.

The benefits of HB232

- Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution: The program would remove 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles, diverting at least 236,000 tons of plastic, aluminum, and glass containers from the environment.
- Increased recovery of beverage containers for recycling: Based on experience in the other states with bottle bills, a 10-cent deposit would achieve a 90% redemption rate for covered beverage containers, compared with the current recovery rate of only about a quarter in Maryland.
- Increased high-quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers. When the targets are achieved, the program will generate an additional 13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers. The resources this bill provides supports the efforts of my companion legislation, HB69, the Postconsumer Recycled Content Program bill. That bill creates demand for food-grade recycled content for beverage and food containers by requiring a certain percentage of recycled content in plastic containers sold in Maryland.
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 231,717 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,000 cars.
- Job creation. Increased recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times more jobs in collection, sorting, and transporting from increased recycling than are created by garbage collection, hauling, landfilling, or incineration.

Maintenance of reverse vending machines and investments in the reuse/refill systems will also create new job opportunities.

- HB232 complements local curbside/single-stream recycling, which will continue to collect beverage containers that customers choose not to redeem, larger beverage containers that are not part of the program, and other residential recyclables.
- Reduced costs for local governments. Local governments will realize potentially substantial cost savings from the Maryland Bottle Bill. They will not have to pay for the collection, transport, or tipping fees for the three quarters of beverage containers that are currently trashed or burned, and will have lower costs for litter collection.
 - Diversion of glass bottles from curbside programs will also save collection costs for a material that in the single-stream system often is low value, creates wear and tear on the machinery, and a source of contamination.
 - While these programs typically reduce costs for local governments, for the first two years of the program there would be compensation for net losses from the overall waste management program that can be attributed to the program.
 - Local governments are not involved in implementation or enforcement of the program, but may set up their own redemption facilities if they choose to, and receive a handling fee per container under this program.
- Investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems. Deposits are critical to the development of refillable and reusable containers. The program will launch that transition, with a target of 10% of beverage containers sold in Maryland to be reusable and refillable by 2035.

Public support for a bottle bill

Since last session, a public opinion survey of registered voters in Maryland conducted by Gonzales Research has found overwhelming support for a Maryland Bottle Bill. That survey, conducted from December 27 - January 4 for the Sierra Club found that more than 90% of registered voters would support a Maryland bottle bill with a 10-cent refundable deposit that could be repaid when the containers are returned to a convenient redemption point, financed by beverage producers, not the taxpayers.

Conclusion

Maryland is facing a plastic pollution crisis that is impacting our health and the environment. Beverage container litter is a major contributor. Based on decades of experience from bottle bills in other jurisdictions, HB232 will substantially reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It will also increase the quality of recycled material for closed loop recycling and provide for a transition from single-use to reusable/refillable containers. These are the unique impacts of deposit programs.

It is also important to pass legislation to reduce packaging, redesign hard-to-recycle packaging for recyclability, reduce its toxicity, and make producers responsible for these outcomes. The bottle bill and the EPR for packaging bill complement each other, but only one of them, HB232, is already proven to be effective and if passed this year can be underway in 2-3 years' time. EPR for packaging bills are relatively new in the United States, and are not yet operational in any of the five states that have passed them. There are not yet any lessons learned from that experience, and the programs are estimated to take 5-8 years to launch after passage.

As of this writing, the Recycling Needs Assessment that has been under preparation in 2024 as part of the 2023 session's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging bill (SB 222), is nearly completed, but we don't anticipate that it will inform the impact of beverage container deposit programs on litter, which is the objective of HB 232. We already know Maryland has a plastic pollution and litter crisis; Bottle Bills are a proven and effective solution for reducing beverage container litter; and the Recycling Needs Assessment will **not** analyze litter issues. It will be important for developing an EPR for Packaging program with respect to the recycling system; it does not include an assessment of programs to reduce litter. The Bottle Bill is a proven policy that will reduce litter and help recover easy-to-recycle beverage containers. This leaves the EPR for Packaging Program to focus on reducing diverse types of packaging and making hard-to-recycle packaging more recyclable. The first three states to adopt an EPR for Packaging program (Maine, Oregon, and California) already have long standing separate bottle bills.

We need to stop kicking the can down the road and pass the Maryland Bottle Bill now. We already know how to reduce beverage container litter and the plastic pollution associated with it. This doesn't require additional information. Every year we wait, another 4 billion beverage containers are entering the environment.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB232.

HB0232, FAV, FCG, OCE, JF, LS25.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Fitzwater

Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 232 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

DATE: February 14, 2025
COMMITTEE: House Environment and Transportation Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the Frederick County Executive, I urge the committee to give HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program a favorable report.

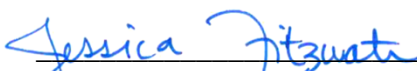
Each year across Maryland, 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold but only 23% of those plastic bottles are recycled while the remaining 4 billion containers are left in landfills, as litter, or are incinerated.

This bill will establish a deposit-refund system for metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers to reduce the burden of litter and trash on the environment and local governments. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. The program would rely on reverse vending machines and other technologies for convenient redemption to ensure as many bottles are recycled as possible, putting money back in the consumer's hands and increasing our recycling rates.

HB 232 is important to Frederick County as we strive to reduce litter and pollution especially in our waterways. As we invest in our future, this bill would encourage the investment in the development of refillable and reusable containers, while incentivizing consumers to recycle single use bottles. Our recycling rate would increase as more material enters the recycling process. This would also lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions due to less virgin material needed to create new containers.

Frederick County's Division of Solid Waste and Recycling has looked closely at this legislation and determined that our facility, which is an enterprise fund, would not be negatively impacted by this policy. While the program could affect commodity pricing for bottle materials, we anticipate savings in the transportation and processing of Frederick County's materials obtained from curbside collection. Ultimately, this program could improve the rates of recycling and provide a net benefit to our Division of Solid Waste and Recycling and the community at large.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 232. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

Thurmont_SB 346-HB 232_2025-02-12.pdf

Uploaded by: John Kinnaird

Position: FAV

Delegate Marc Korman, Environment and Transportation Chair


The Town of Thurmont urges your committee to support of HB 232/SB 346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

This program aims to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a small refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The program would be financed and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, not by the City or its residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide strong oversight.

The Town of Thurmont was the first municipality in Frederick County to start a recycling program for our residents. We learned early on the value of removing recyclable material for our waste stream saving almost 25% in tipping fees in the first year alone. Our residents continue to recycle and are committed to stopping waste wherever possible.

This program would benefit our residents by reducing unsightly litter, increasing recycling, and reducing the amount of municipal solid waste that the City must collect and process. [Add here any estimate of tonnage diverted, or savings in tipping fees and litter cleanup, if available.] The City would not be required to implement or enforce the program, but has the option to set up its own redemption center and receive a handling fee per container to finance it, paid for by the Stewardship Organization.

We urge you to support HB 232/SB 346, to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution, provide cleaner parks and waterways, and create savings for municipalities and local taxpayers.



Sincerely,

John A. Kinnaird, Mayor
Town of Thurmont
615 East Main Street
Thurmont, MD 21788

Testimony in Support of _Bottle Bill HB0232JM.pdf

Uploaded by: John McKusick

Position: FAV

Testimony to the House Environment and Transportation Committee
Hearing date: 2/14/2025

SUPPORT of HB0232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

My name is John McKusick and I reside in District 43. I retired from a career in student services at Towson University in 2017 after working for ten years at CCBC in addition to 20 years at Towson. I have been a volunteer for environmental causes for much of my adult life. This year I am part of the Climate & Environment advocacy team for Quaker Voice of Maryland and lead Quaker Voice advocacy to support the Maryland Bottle Bill.

As a regular volunteer with environmental organizations in Baltimore, like Blue Water Baltimore, I have worked on many stream cleanup projects where large quantities of plastic, metal, and glass are collected. It is a feel good job that delivers the satisfaction one anticipates from completing a useful community supporting activity. However, that good feeling doesn't last long as behaviors have not changed and the site quickly returns to a contaminated state.

This is why I love HB0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. They are simple, straightforward, and understandable in design and structure. The authors of the Maryland bill have established targets for improvement including a ninety percent redemption rate! To me, that means less plastic, metal, and glass I'm picking up in my neighborhood streams. How different many of our waterways will look and be as a result. And how much healthier these waterways will be.

Quaker Voice of Maryland, a small but growing advocacy group that is engaging Quakers and other people with similar interests across the state, is pleased to designate HB 0232 as one of four pieces of environmental legislation for which we are advocating. We are committed to both pragmatic and spiritual approaches to "seeking a world renewed" and value community and dialogue as pathways to bringing people together to care for the earth. Quakers believe and try to embody the idea that there is that of God in each person. As a result, we are optimistic problem solvers. Collectively and working together, we can succeed and we must. A Maryland bottle bill would be a great way to care for our earth. We urge a favorable report for HB0232.

Sincerely,

John McKusick
Climate & Environment Team
Quaker Voice of Maryland
410-830-9225 john.ca.mckusick@verizon.net or quakervoicecmd@gmail.com

bottle bill hb232.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: John Nader

Position: FAV

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

Hearing Date: Feb 14, 2025

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Terrasa, Feldmark, Foley, Kaufman, Mireku-North, Pena-Melnyk, Ruth, Vogel, and Ziegler

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Submitting Organization: The Green Team of St John The Evangelist Roman Catholic Church

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB232. The Green Team at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic (SJERC) Church in Columbia, Maryland, urges this committee to vote favorably on the "Bottle Bill." Our group's mission is to care for God's creation as instructed by Catholic social teaching. To that end, our activities include planting trees and gardens, educating ourselves and our communities about environmental issues, and engaging in advocacy. We are providing written testimony today in strong support of HB232, which would greatly reduce plastic and litter pollution that would protect our waterways and our Chesapeake Bay.

As you well know, Beverage container deposit programs are a proven and very effective method for reducing litter and recovering used containers. In other states that have instituted these programs, they have achieved recovery rates of nearly 90%. And if you are old enough to remember, we used to have beverage deposit programs in the 60s and 70s which worked quite well then. Now with new technology such as the reverse vending machines, the program will be easier and more effective.

This proposal has been around a bit and so the details on how this program would operate have been satisfactorily worked out to address earlier concerns. The program would:

- set a deposit level that will motivate the public to change behavior;
- have beverage producers take responsibility for financing and implementation with significant oversight from MD Department of Environment (MDE);
- promote development of reusable/refillable beverage container systems;
- would pay for itself, including the MDE oversight.

And the benefits are immense in reducing our beverage container litter and plastic pollution, increasing water quality, quadrupling our beverage recycling rates, reducing greenhouse gases, saving taxpayers and local governments money, and creating jobs.

So now is the time to pass this law and move forward on the protection of Maryland's environment and our people.

The Green Team of SJERC Church strongly support HB232 and urges a FAVORABLE report in Committee.

HB232_FAV_ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Uploaded by: Julie K. Hummer

Position: FAV

COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No. 4

Resolution No. 7-25

Introduced by Ms. Rodvien

By the County Council, February 18, 2025

1 RESOLUTION urging members of the General Assembly to support House Bill 735
2 and Senate Bill 642 in furtherance of increasing the recycling and reuse of beverage
3 containers, and reducing litter and pollution

4
5 WHEREAS, the persistence of litter on community roadways, parks, and
6 waterways degrades our precious habitats, fouls our waterways, remains a danger
7 to wildlife, and creates unsightly and hazardous environments; and

8
9 WHEREAS, the County Council is a great supporter of protecting and improving
10 our natural environment, as well as the beautification of our communities; and

11
12 WHEREAS, approximately 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland
13 every year, and, despite the widespread availability of curbside recycling, only 23%
14 of those containers are recycled; and

15
16 WHEREAS, at this time 10 states have passed legislation to incentivize the return
17 of beverage containers to redemption centers, with 9 of these 10 states boasting the
18 highest recycling rates in the country; and

19
20 WHEREAS, establishing greater incentives to recycle beverage containers in
21 Maryland would reduce the beverage container litter, increase the quality of
22 recycled material going to market, and result in savings to taxpayers and local
23 governments; and

24
25 WHEREAS, the General Assembly is currently considering House Bill 735 and
26 Senate Bill 642, also known as The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and
27 Litter Reduction Bill, that would create a self-financed program to provide reverse
28 vending machines for convenient redemption; now, therefore, be it

29
30 *Resolved by the County Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland,* That it hereby
31 urges members of the General Assembly to support House Bill 735 and Senate Bill 642 in
32 furtherance of increasing the recycling and reuse of beverage containers, and reducing litter
33 and pollution; and be it further

34
35 *Resolved,* That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Wes Moore; the Anne
36 Arundel County Senate Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly; and the Anne
37 Arundel County House Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly.

Resolution No. 7-25

Page No. 2

READ AND PASSED this 18th day of February, 2025

By Order:

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

Kaley Schultze
Administrative Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT RESOLUTION NO. 7-25 IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND DULY
ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Julie K. Hummer', written in a cursive style.

Julie K. Hummer
Chair

Justin Heckelman HB0232 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Justin Heckelman

Position: FAV

Justin Heckelman
Riverdale, MD 20737
February 11, 2025

Re: Favorable position on HB0232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Committee Members,

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter to all Marylanders. I am writing to ask that the committee provide a favorable report on HB0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program and support its passage in the House and General Assembly.

HB0232 would help reduce significant amounts of single use bottles that are littered in Maryland each day and increase recycling rates, which have been trended down throughout the country for decades. I have participated in many formal trash cleanups with groups throughout my area in District 22 and bottles are typically the most frequently collected item. Outside of the cleanups that I have participated in, I regularly see and pick up many of the bottles that litter our roadways and trails in the area, especially along the Northeast Branch Anacostia River that is near my house.

Without being recycled or otherwise properly disposed of, these bottles take hundreds to thousands of years to break down in the environment. During that time, they break down into microplastics and nanoplastics that pose a danger to animal and human health. These plastics eventually make it into the food web and eventually become ingested by humans.

A small deposit provides the financial incentive to increase the recycling rates of our single use bottles and remove them from the waste stream. This deposit model has been successfully employed in many other countries and states. The ten states that currently have bottle deposit rates much higher than Maryland. The states with bottle deposits have about a 70% recycling rate compared to only 33% nationwide.

This bill would also help the state support its climate initiatives in reducing the need for virgin materials in the manufacturing process, while reducing the need for landfilling or incinerating the bottles that are thrown away. Both of those two methods of disposing of trash are expensive and onerous for the state. By reducing the number of bottles thrown away, the state will improve local water quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce energy use.

I emphatically support HB0232 and ask that the committee return a favorable report and support its passage in the House and General Assembly.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter and please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Justin Heckelman

HB232_Kathleen_Reilly.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathleen Reilly

Position: FAV

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,

Kathleen Reilly

10046 Cotton Mill Ln, Columbia MD 21046

Katerei42@gmail.com

410-707-3215

HB232_FAV_SignOn_TrashFreeMD.pdf

Uploaded by: Kelly Doordan

Position: FAV



HB232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Date: February 14, 2025

Position: Support

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

We enthusiastically support HB 232. This bill would set up a recycling refund program for beverage containers. The most effective recycling programs in the United States are in states where consumers can get a refund in exchange for returning their beverage container for recycling. HB 232 will bring this program to Maryland.

Litter reduction (and the cost savings from avoided litter abatement) is a primary and unique benefit of deposit-return programs. A 2020 national litter study found states with recycling refund programs have 50% less litter than other states.¹

In states with recycling refunds, the recycling rate for plastic bottles is 63%. States without a recycling refund program recycle only 17% of their plastic bottles on average.²

Bottle bill states represent 28% of the population, 47% of glass bottles and jars recycled, 51% of aluminum cans recycled, and 62% of all PET bottles recycled nationally.³

The ten US states with recycling refund programs produce cleaner material streams and supply

¹ Keep America Beautiful 2020 National Litter Study <https://kab.org/litter-study>

² National Stewardship Action Foundation and Eunomia State of the States Report 2021

³ The 50 States of Recycling: A State-by-State Assessment of Containers and Packaging Recycling Rates 2021

more than 50% of glass cullet the glass container industry can use.⁴

Environmental benefits are maximized when well-designed beverage container recycling refunds are paired with extended producer responsibility for other packaging materials.⁵

That's how effective these programs are. This is a tried and true policy that will significantly reduce the estimated 40-60% of trash and litter composed of beverage containers in our streets, neighborhoods, and waterways.

By contrast, where we stand now has taxpayers funding significant costs associated with litter. Here are just a few small examples. According to MDOT, the SHA alone spends nearly \$8M annually to remove approximately 5,300 truckloads of litter. According to the agency "that's more than 27,000 truckloads and nearly \$40 million" every 5 years. Maryland local governments each fund litter cleanup programs. Trash Free Maryland knows of hundreds of cleanups across Maryland conducted by thousands of volunteers annually. There are thousands more conducted by residents in their communities. Perhaps the largest cost is that to our society. Health professionals tell us children who grow up in communities with litter are less likely to have successful outcomes. Littered plastic containers can break down in the environment into microplastics. Recent studies suggest levels of microplastics are increasing in human brains. Litter affects us all.

All of these costs are avoidable! There are better ways and this bill brings one of the most effective ways to reduce litter to Maryland.

We also note recycling refund programs for beverage containers can go hand in hand with legislation to adopt producer responsibility for packaging. Well designed producer responsibility programs can help us *reduce* our volume of waste, while modern recycling refund programs help us *reuse* and *recycle* a major portion of the packaging waste stream. Recycling refund programs help capture highly recyclable beverage containers that might otherwise be wasted or littered to satisfy high demand for high quality recycled materials.

Marylanders take great pride in our recycling efforts and are fed up with litter and concerned about health impacts from plastics in the environment. Modern recycling refund programs are proven policy winners that are effective, equitable, and supported by the general public. We look forward to working with you on this exciting and highly impactful policy. We respectfully urge your favorable consideration.

Contact: Kelly Doordan, Trash Free Maryland (kelly@trashfreemaryland.org)

Trash Free Maryland

Blue Water Baltimore

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Indivisible HoCoMD Environmental Action

⁴ Glass Packaging Institute 2024

⁵ Eunomia: The 50 States of Recycling: A State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates 2023
<https://eunomia.eco/the-50-states-of-recycling-a-state-by-state-assessment-of-us-packaging-recycling-rates/>

Maryland Legislative Coalition – Climate Justice Wing

Friends of Quincy Run Watershed

Maryland Ornithological Society

Safe Skies Maryland

Vernal Pools

Surfrider Foundation

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Rock Creek Conservancy

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

National Aquarium

HB232_Green Towson Alliance_Hoffman_FAV.pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Kirsten Hoffman

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

**HB232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Environment and Transportation Committee
Hearing February 14, 2025
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce and Honorable Members of the Committee,

The Green Towson Alliance writes in support of HB232 which creates a self-funding program placing a five cent deposit on aluminum, glass and plastic beverage containers which is refunded to consumers when containers are returned. This bill will increase recycling rates and greatly reduce the amount of beverage container litter in Maryland. Marylanders purchase more than 5.5 billion beverage containers each year and only about one quarter of those containers are recycled. That leaves more than four billion containers ending up in our waterways and on our land every year.

Each spring, the Green Towson Alliance partners with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore County to organize clean-ups of local streams to remove plastic litter and other trash. In 2024, clean-ups at just eleven sites produced 150 bags of trash with the most commonly found items being plastic bottles and other plastics. Due to plastic bag legislation in our area, we are finding much less plastic bag trash, but the volume of beverage containers and other plastics persists. This plastic trash, if not hand collected and removed by volunteers, breaks down into microplastics which are consumed by fish and other wildlife moving up the food chain to eventually reach us. One estimate states that humans are ingesting up to a credit card's worth of plastic per week.

The small deposit that is added to the purchase of beverage containers and refundable upon return of the bottle will act as a much-needed incentive for consumers to return these containers for their deposit instead of littering the environment. This is not a new idea and the ten states that have long-standing bottle bills have seen major reductions in beverage container litter (up to 84%) and large increases in recycling rates. Michigan and Oregon have achieved recycling rates of 90% with a ten cent deposit. What a difference to our waterways if 90% of beverage containers were to be recycled!

We ask for a favorable report on HB232 as an important step toward the goal of a greener, healthier Maryland for all.

Respectfully,
Kirsten Hoffman for the Green Towson Alliance
701 West Joppa Road Towson, Maryland 21204

The Green Towson Alliance unites Towson area environmentalists to create a greener, healthier and more beautiful community through collaboration and activism.

MOS HB0232 Beverage Container Recycling Fund Febru

Uploaded by: Kurt Schwarz

Position: FAV



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.¹

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.

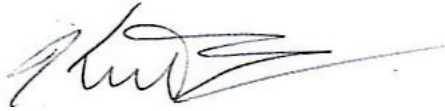
HB0232 will reduce litter, including plastic bottles, which will also benefit our declining bird populations. It will also markedly improve the recycling feedstock, increasing its value, and promoting proper recycling.

North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.² 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.

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

² 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

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

20250212 testimony HB0232-SB0346 Brentwood.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren R

Position: FAV



Tuesday, February 4, 2025

THE TOWN OF BRENTWOOD SUPPORTS HB0232/SB0346 MARYLAND BEVERAGE CONTAINER RECYCLING REFUND AND LITTER REDUCTION PROGRAM.

For the Honorable Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee; Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee; Senator Augustine; Delegates Fennell and Ivey.

The Town of Brentwood urges you to support HB 232/SB 346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

This legislation would reduce plastic pollution and litter, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create jobs through a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers, depending on container size.

About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold annually in Maryland. Despite the widespread availability of curbside collection of recyclables and public recycling receptacles, only about a quarter of the containers (25%) are captured for recycling. Four billion containers a year, 2.6 billion of which are plastic, are left in the environment – in landfills, roadsides, waterways – or incinerated. According to the Anacostia Watershed Society, beverage containers are about half of the trash by volume in the watershed's trash traps.

Humans are being exposed to both plastic particles and chemical additives being released from plastic debris according to Environmental Science and Technology (2016). The material is fragmenting, leaching, and spreading throughout the biosphere, including indoor and outdoor air, soil, and water systems. Microplastics are ingested by marine life, injuring, and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Consumers who meet their recommended water intake through bottled sources may be ingesting an additional 90000 microplastics annually, compared to 4000 microplastics for those who consume only tap water.

The objective of this program is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The program would be financed and implemented by beverage





BRENTWOOD Maryland

producers through a nonprofit beverage container stewardship organization, not by the Town or its residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment would establish and oversee the organization with an advisory council providing support. This program would benefit our residents by incentivizing the recycling of plastics; reducing the amount of municipal solid waste that the county must collect and process; and redirecting litter from the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River, our parks, and our streets. It also directly supports the state, county, and Brentwood Climate Action Plans.

Programs like this have been operating in 10 U.S. states for decades and are the most effective policy for reducing beverage container litter. With a 10-cent deposit on most containers, it could capture 90% of beverage containers sold in the state annually, diverting an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing pollution from littered plastic bottles that break down in the environment and get washed into the Chesapeake Bay. Recent polling has found that more than 90% of Maryland's voting public would support the Bottle Bill.

We urge you to support HB 232/SB 346 to create savings for municipalities and local taxpayers, provide cleaner parks and waterways, and reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution.

Sincerely,

Rocio Treminio-Lopez, Mayor

BCC Council

Vice Mayor Quianna Taylor

Council Member Marcus Monroe

Council Member Jerry Burgess

Council Member Lauren Rauk

Town Hall | 4300 39th Place | Brentwood, Maryland 20722 (301) 927-3344 | info@brentwoodmd.gov
www.brentwoodmd.gov



HB232_Bottle_Deposit_E&T_CJW_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Monica O'Connor, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 14, 2025

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB232. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of nearly 30 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB232.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction aka the “MD bottle bill” is a very sensible bill. It is an easy, low-hanging fruit solution to reduce plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the energy needed to produce new beverage containers.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. This bill would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10 or 15-cent refundable deposit, depending on the size of the container. The deposit is refunded to the customer when the bottle is returned and is estimated to achieve a 90% return rate - up from a 25% rate today.

This program would be self-funded from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. So while the state and local counties are grappling with extremely tight budgets, the program established by the bill would not cost the state at all and would relieve the counties and ultimately the taxpayers from the burden of expensive waste/ recycling costs.

This bill would provide a high rate of return for containers by creating incentives for the development of refillable and reusable containers. It isn't cost effective to produce reusable containers if they are not being returned as part of a circular and zero waste economy. We also note recycling refund programs for beverage containers can go hand in hand with legislation to adopt producer responsibility for packaging. Well-designed producer responsibility programs can help us *reduce* our volume of waste, while modern recycling refund programs help us *reuse* and *recycle* a major portion of the packaging waste stream. Recycling refund programs help capture highly recyclable beverage containers that might otherwise be wasted or littered to satisfy high demand for high quality recycled materials.

Three substantive changes to the 2025 Bottle Bill include:

- **Explicitly excluding cartons, pouches, and aseptic packaging**

- **Authorizing the Grant program for reuse/refill to finance an evaluation of the investments and policies required to increase the share of reusable containers sold in the state by 2035.**
- **Adding language to allow MDE to add additional container types in the future as redemption technology and the container materials change over time.**

The State of Maryland needs to protect our waterways and our beloved Chesapeake Bay from plastic and litter pollution and this bill will accomplish this goal. Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. Ten states, covering more than 90 million people, have longstanding, successful programs. The MLC Climate Justice Wing strongly supports HB232 and urges a FAVORABLE report in Committee.

350MoCo

Adat Shalom Climate Action

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Chesapeake Earth Holders

Climate Parents of Prince George's

Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition

Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County

Echotopia

Elders Climate Action

Fix Maryland Rail

Glen Echo Heights Mobilization

Greenbelt Climate Action Network

HoCoClimateAction

IndivisibleHoCoMD

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Mobilize Frederick

Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Mountain Maryland Movement

Nuclear Information & Resource Service

Progressive Maryland

Safe & Healthy Playing Fields

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee

The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

WISE

HB232_AACo Council_FAV

Uploaded by: Linda Rodvien

Position: FAV

COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No. 4

Resolution No. 7-25

Introduced by Ms. Rodvien

By the County Council, February 18, 2025

1 RESOLUTION urging members of the General Assembly to support House Bill 232
2 and Senate Bill 346 in furtherance of increasing the recycling and reuse of beverage
3 containers, and reducing litter and pollution

4
5 WHEREAS, the persistence of litter on community roadways, parks, and
6 waterways degrades our precious habitats, fouls our waterways, remains a danger
7 to wildlife, and creates unsightly and hazardous environments; and

8
9 WHEREAS, the County Council is a great supporter of protecting and improving
10 our natural environment, as well as the beautification of our communities; and

11
12 WHEREAS, approximately 5.2 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland
13 every year, and, despite the widespread availability of curbside recycling, only 23%
14 of those containers are recycled; and

15
16 WHEREAS, at this time 10 states have passed legislation to incentivize the return
17 of beverage containers to redemption centers, with 9 of these 10 states boasting the
18 highest recycling rates in the country; and

19
20 WHEREAS, establishing greater incentives to recycle beverage containers in
21 Maryland would reduce the beverage container litter, increase the quality of
22 recycled material going to market, and result in savings to taxpayers and local
23 governments; and

24
25 WHEREAS, the General Assembly is currently considering House Bill 232 and
26 Senate Bill 346, also known as The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and
27 Litter Reduction Bill, that would create a self-financed program to provide reverse
28 vending machines for convenient redemption; now, therefore, be it

29
30 *Resolved by the County Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland, That it hereby*
31 urges members of the General Assembly to support House Bill 232 and Senate Bill 346 in
32 furtherance of increasing the recycling and reuse of beverage containers, and reducing litter
33 and pollution; and be it further

34
35 *Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Wes Moore; the Anne*
36 Arundel County Senate Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly; and the Anne
37 Arundel County House Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly.

Resolution No. 7-25

Page No. 2

READ AND PASSED this 18th day of February, 2025

By Order:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Schultze', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kaley Schultze
Administrative Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT RESOLUTION NO. 7-25 IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND DULY ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie K. Hummer', written in a cursive style.

Julie K. Hummer
Chair

HB232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refun

Uploaded by: Lindsey Turnbull

Position: FAV

February 12, 2025

Delegate Terrasa
Environment and Transportation Committee
217 Lowe House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Delegate Terrasa and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

As a resident and eco-friendly business owner in Montgomery County, Maryland, I, Lindsey Turnbull, am writing to ask for your support of HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program would increase recycling programs and reduce litter and plastic pollution by incentivizing recycling, by placing a refundable deposit on beverage containers sold in the state. that can be returned when the bottle or can is returned. This bill creates a fund that will also support counties across the state to implement recycling plans, including electronics recycling, pain, newsprint, and phone books.

As the owner of a small business that focuses on reducing plastic usage and waste, it is incredibly disheartening to see plastic and other waste along our state's roads, in our parks, on our hiking trails, and in our communities. This litter is harmful to residents as well as wildlife. While Montgomery County has reliable recycling collection, it is simply not enough to encourage proper disposal of bottles and cans.

Research shows that bottle bills incentivize people to return bottles and cans they have used, as well as encourage people to pick up littered bottles and cans in their neighborhood. Similar bills have reduced container litter from 69% to 84%- meaning a cleaner, healthier Maryland. Additionally, increasing recycled content in bottles over creating new plastics via implementing a deposit program is the equivalent of saving the energy needed to power 8,600 homes annually, according to the Container Recycling Institute. Furthermore, bottle bills create jobs for those who collect, sort, and transport containers for recycling, adding to our state's economy and spending power.

Overall, I believe the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program will add jobs to the state while increasing our recycling rate, making the state more beautiful and more economically prosperous.

I urge a favorable report on HB 232.

Sincerely,
Lindsey Turnbull
Owner, From Here to Home Essentials

HB0232_FAV_Bottle_Deposit_ENT_LPP.org .pdf

Uploaded by: Liz Feighner

Position: FAV



[HB0232](#): Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Hearing Date: February 14, 2025

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Terrasa

Committee: Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters

Submitting Organization: **Less Plastic Please** by Liz Feighner

Position: Favorable

[Less Plastic Please](#) is a Howard County based grassroots organization representing more than 200 subscribers. We are also a partner of the [Zero Waste Team](#) of [Howard County Sierra Club](#) and a [Beyond Plastics](#) Affiliate. **We urge support of HB0232**, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, which would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland with a 10- or 15-cent deposit that is refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling.

Reducing the production of plastics and creating a zero-waste economy is one of our top concerns. Less Plastic Please spearheaded campaigns with several organizations in Howard County to advocate for reducing single-use plastics through two successful bills, [Plastic Bag Fee](#) and [Plastic Reduction Law](#). We also hosted a [webinar on the Story of Plastics in 2020](#). As we highlighted during the discussion, plastic pollution is an environmental justice and public health crisis: Fracking, plastics production, litter, and disposal in landfills and by incineration harm communities of color disproportionately. We believe that social justice, racial justice and environmental justice are all part of a single, globally connected Movement for Justice.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction aka the “MD bottle bill” is a very sensible bill. It is an easy, low-hanging fruit solution to reduce plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the energy needed to produce new beverage containers. This could also be called the Back-to-the-Future bill as we easily did this before years ago and would be much better off had we gone back in time and continued bottle deposits instead of switching to single-use beverage containers.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. It is estimated to achieve a 90% return rate - up from a 25% rate today.

This program would be self-funded from fees paid by producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties. So while the state and local counties are grappling with extremely tight budgets, the program established by the bill would not cost the state at all and relieve the counties and ultimately the taxpayers from the burden of expensive waste/recycling costs.

This bill would provide a high rate of return for containers by creating incentives for the development of refillable and reusable containers. It isn't cost effective to produce reusable containers if they are not being returned in order to create a circular and zero waste economy.

The state of Maryland needs to protect our waterways and our beloved Chesapeake Bay from plastic and litter pollution and this bill will accomplish this goal.

We urge a **favorable report for HB0232**.

Submitted for [Less Plastic Please](#)

by Liz Feighner

LessPlasticPleaseHoCo@gmail.com

HB232-2025 Bottle Bill Testimony Liz Walsh Howard

Uploaded by: Liz Walsh

Position: FAV



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Liz Walsh
Council Chair

District 1

February 11, 2025

Testimony in Support of House Bill 232
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chairman Korman, Vice Chairwoman Boyce and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 232, which seeks to reduce litter by instituting a recycling refund program for beverage containers. This program could significantly increase the percentage of beverage containers that are successfully recycled in our State – a number that as of 2019 is a dismal twenty-three percent compared with nearly sixty to ninety-one percent for states with initiatives similar to HB 232's proposal.

According to a 2023 Howard County study, an estimated 8,340 tons of beverage containers are collected through our curbside program. We anticipate that the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program would reduce the volume that our waste management facilities need to process, thereby saving taxpayer money. We appreciate the provision that allows for unclaimed deposits to be added to a fund that may be used for grants to municipalities to improve waste management programs.

According to the Container Recycling Institute, about seventy-five percent of over five million beverage bottles sold annually in Maryland end up in landfills, waterways, roadsides, or are incinerated. The refund could be an added incentive to recycle bottles, thereby improving the health of our soil, green spaces, shared public spaces, and waterways by reducing litter.

Therefore, I urge you to move this legislation forward with a favorable recommendation. Thank you for considering my testimony.

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Liz Walsh", is written over a horizontal line.

Liz Walsh, Chair, Howard County Council

HB 232 - National Aquarium - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Maggie Ostdahl

Position: FAV



Date: February 14, 2025

Bill: HB 232 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Position: Support

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **HB 232**. If enacted, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program would increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers, reduce litter and pollution, and lower waste management costs.

Reducing litter from beverage containers across Maryland is related to all the National Aquarium's strategic conservation goals: combatting climate change, saving wildlife and habitats, and stopping plastic pollution. Most plastic is made from fossil fuels, and every stage of the plastic use cycle contributes to climate change, air pollution and environmental justice concerns. In Maryland, more than 5 billion single-use beverage containers, more than half of which are plastic, are sold every year¹, yet only about a quarter of these containers are recycled. The rest end up in landfills, are incinerated or become litter in our environment. Over time, plastic containers break down into smaller pieces that endanger wildlife, contaminate the global food web, and transport toxins harmful to human health.

The National Aquarium is committed to holistic, solutions-focused approaches to reducing plastic pollution, which includes implementing various plastic reduction and waste diversion measures throughout our operations. As part of this commitment, the National Aquarium has eliminated all single-use plastics from our cafes, including plastic beverage containers. The National Aquarium has worked with thousands of dedicated volunteers to remove over 35,000 plastic beverage containers from the environment during the last four years alone. As just one of the many organizations in Maryland that conduct regular debris cleanups, this figure only underscores the need for a change in approach that includes passing the Maryland Bottle Bill.

The U.S. remains one of the world's top generators of new plastic production and plastic waste. The plastic pollution crisis is well-documented around the world, with the global cost of waste management and litter cleanup activities totaling approximately \$47 billion each year². Closer to home, the state funds several grant programs to support litter removal, and the Maryland Department of Transportation estimates spending approximately \$8 million annually to remove truckloads of litter, including beverage containers, from roadways. Marylanders' time and capacity as well as millions of dollars could be better allocated by reducing how many beverage containers become litter and this legislation offers a proven source reduction policy solution.

Action by the state of Maryland is long overdue. Refundable bottle deposit programs currently operate in ten other U.S. states and have been shown to be highly effective policies that recover beverage containers and increase recycling rates while reducing litter and associated costs of

¹ [Container Recycling Institute](#), Beverage Market Analysis

² [World Wide Fund for Nature 2022. Plastics: the costs to society, the environment and the economy.](#)

mitigation. Enacting a beverage container deposit return system in our state is a critical and cost-effective step towards a cleaner and healthier future for Maryland.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 232.

Contact:

Ryan Fredriksson

Vice President, Government Affairs

410-385-8276

rfredriksson@aqua.org

Maggie Ostdahl

Sr. Conservation Policy Manager

410-385-8275

mostdahl@aqua.org

HB232_MDSierraClub_fav 14Feb2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Martha Ainsworth

Position: FAV



SIERRA CLUB

MARYLAND CHAPTER

P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 232 – “Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 14, 2025

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports HB 232. The primary objective of this bill is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution in Maryland. It would create a beverage container deposit program with a 10- or 15-cent refundable deposit on metal, glass, and plastic beverage containers. The deposit would be refunded to the customer when the beverage container is returned for recycling. By attaching value to empty beverage containers, fewer are littered and those that are littered do not remain in the environment. These programs have been highly effective in the U.S. and around the world for reducing beverage container litter and diverting containers from disposal. They also produce a number of other important benefits, highlighted below.

The problem

Beverage container litter in Maryland is pervasive and growing, and is a major source of plastic pollution, posing threats to the environment and human health. About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland every year, but only about a quarter are recycled.¹ Four billion containers annually are wasted – left in landfills, on roadsides, in waterways, or incinerated. More than half of these wasted containers are plastic. Beverage containers, most of them plastic, account most of the trash in trash traps on the Anacostia River watershed (Exhibit 1).²

Maryland’s beverage container litter problem is so severe that the Environmental Protection Agency declared the Anacostia watershed to be impaired with trash in 2010, and made the same determination in 2014 for the watershed surrounding Baltimore Harbor. Our state, home to the largest estuary in the country – the Chesapeake Bay – also has the dubious distinction of having two of the three water bodies in the country that are impaired for trash and regulated by the EPA under the Clean Water Act.

Plastic pollution from beverage containers poses a threat to wildlife and human health. The containers break into ever smaller pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Plastic particles have been found in the food we eat, the air we breathe, and in most human organs. Scientists estimate that we are ingesting up to a credit card’s worth of plastic weekly.³ The impact of plastic ingestion on human health is of great concern.

The solution

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs.⁴ Beverage container litter in those states was reduced by 70-84%.⁵ A study of coastal litter in debris surveys in Australian and U.S. states with and without container deposit legislation found that

¹ Container Recycling Institute (CRI). “2024 Beverage Market Data Analysis (BMDA)” for Maryland, based on 2021 data.

² Anacostia Watershed Society, Anacostia Riverkeeper.

³ Dahlberg and University of Newcastle, Australia. 2019. *No Plastic in Nature: Assessing Plastic Ingestion from Nature to People*. Commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund.

⁴ California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont.

⁵ Reloop and CRI. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Reduce Litter*. <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/DRS-Litter-Fact-Sheet-Summary-14June2021.pdf>

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

the share of containers in states with container deposit legislation was 40% lower than in states without the laws.⁶ A 2011 University of Maryland analysis of the impact of a potential beverage container deposit system in Maryland concluded “there is little evidence that any other program, in and of itself, is nearly as effective as deposit programs at reducing litter rates.”⁷

Refundable deposits both reduce litter and greatly increase recycling rates for beverage containers covered by these programs. Recycling rates for beverage containers in the ten deposit states in 2019 averaged 75%, ranging from 59% to 91%, compared with an estimated 23% in Maryland, with no deposit (Exhibit 2). Two states – Michigan and Oregon – have achieved recycling rates of 90% with a 10-cent deposit. Deposit beverage containers are 2-3 times more likely to be recycled than are containers not subject to a deposit (Exhibit 3). The ten deposit states represent 27% of the U.S. population but contribute 48% of U.S. beverage container recycling.⁸ In states with beverage container deposit programs, deposits coexist with curbside collection to maximize recycling by capturing containers for beverages consumed at and away from home.

The **Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program** (HB 232, a.k.a, the “Maryland Bottle Bill”) would initiate a deposit as of January 1, 2028 and has benefitted from lessons learned over the past 50 years for successful beverage container deposit programs.

- It would maximize the reduction of beverage container litter and waste by including all beverages in metal, plastic, and glass beverage containers⁹ and setting a deposit level that will motivate the public to change behavior: 10¢ for containers holding up to 24 fluid ounces and 15¢ for larger containers, up to 3 liters.
- It would require beverage producers to take responsibility for financing and implementing the program, with significant oversight from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The program would be implemented by a non-profit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization of all beverage producers selling or distributing redeemable beverage containers in the State. MDE’s responsibilities would include: appointing the Stewardship Organization; approving a Stewardship Plan and annual reports; and setting convenience standards and handling fees, among others. An Advisory Council of stakeholders would advise MDE on approval of the Stewardship Organization, its stewardship plan, annual reports, and program implementation and performance.
- It would create the conditions for future development and adoption of reusable/refillable beverage container systems. Ten percent of unclaimed deposits would fund a Recycling Refund Grant program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers.
- The program would pay for itself, including MDE oversight. It would be funded from registration and Stewardship Organization fees paid by beverage producers, the revenue from sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties paid by producers. Registration fees calculated to completely cover the costs of MDE oversight in the next year would be kept in a special account in the State Recycling Trust Fund that can only be used for specific program purposes. MDE’s start-up costs will be reimbursed by producers to the General Fund at the start of the first year of operation.

Several features of the bill have been updated in response to feedback from stakeholders since it was first introduced in the 2023 General Assembly, including:

- Implementation by a single stewardship organization, rather than potentially multiple organizations, to facilitate MDE oversight
- Extension of the preparation time for program launch by one year (from 18 to 30 months)
- Ensuring that MDE’s expenditures leading up to the launch are fully covered, via reimbursements of any General Fund expenses. The program is completely self-financing.

⁶ Schuyler, Qamar, *et al.* 2018. “Economic incentives reduce plastic inputs to the ocean,” *Marine Policy* 96: 250-255. October.

⁷ University of Maryland, Environmental Finance Center (EFC). 2011. “2011 Impact Analysis of a Beverage Container Deposit Program in Maryland.” December 15, p. 4.

⁸ CRI. “2024 Beverage Market Data Analysis (BMDA)” for Maryland, based on 2021 data. *Op.Cit.*

⁹ Medical beverages and infant formula are the only excluded beverages.

- Clarifying the expectations for retailers and hospitality establishments (sellers of beverages consumed on premises, such as restaurants, hotels, bars, sports venues)
- Exempting small retailers with less than 3,000 square feet of sales area from having to accept most containers for redemption and refund.
- Adding a per container materials handling fee for hospitality establishments for collecting and pre-sorting empty redeemed containers to be picked up by the program for recycling.
- Adding provisions for MDE to add more container types in the future, as materials change and technologies for redemption improve.
- Explicitly excluding cartons, pouches, and aseptic packaging from the program.
- Authorizing the grant program to finance an evaluation of the investments and policies required to increase the share of reusable containers sold in the state to 10% by 2035.

The program's benefits

Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution: The program would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually for recycling, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles, diverting at least 236,000 tons of plastic, aluminum, and glass containers from litter, landfills, and incinerators.

Quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate: With a 10-cent deposit, the recycling rate for beverage containers, currently estimated at only about 25% of containers sold in the state, would more than triple, to 90% or more, within the first five years of operation..

Increase in high quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers: When the targets are achieved, the program would generate an additional 13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers annually. The program would contribute to creating a circular, bottle-to-bottle economy that maximizes the reduction in waste.

Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions: By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from the bill would eliminate 231,707 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent, annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,000 cars from the road.

Savings for taxpayers and local governments: Beverage producers would finance the costs of collecting and processing the three-quarters of beverage containers currently being disposed or littered, as well as the collection and processing of some containers currently recycled. The program will divert materials from costly landfills and incinerators. These disposal costs are currently borne by taxpayers and local governments.¹⁰

Investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems: Deposits are critical for development of refillable and reusable containers. The program will launch that transition, with a target of 10% of beverage containers sold in Maryland to be reusable and refillable by 2035.

Job creation: Increased recycling generated by a deposit program would create five times as many jobs in collection, sorting, and transporting as created by garbage collection, hauling, landfilling, or incineration.¹¹ The maintenance of reverse vending machines and investments in the reuse/refill systems will also create new opportunities.

Overwhelming public support for the Maryland Bottle Bill

According to a recent statewide public opinion poll of registered voters conducted by Gonzales Research, 95% of respondents are concerned about the environmental and health impact of plastic beverage containers and pollution (Exhibit 4). More than 90% of respondents supported a beverage container redemption program in Maryland with a 10-cent refundable deposit that could be refunded at a convenient retailer or redemption site, financed and

¹⁰ A review of more than 30 studies of the impact of beverage container deposit programs on costs to local governments worldwide found that in the context of the overall waste management system, local governments saved costs by adopting the deposit program. Reloop. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Generate Cost Savings for Municipalities*. <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Fact-Sheet-Economic-Savings-for-Munis-8FEB2021.pdf>

¹¹ Reloop. 2021. *Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Create Jobs*. <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DRS-Factsheet-Jobs-27Jan2021.pdf>.

implemented by beverage companies, not taxpayers. The level of support was at least 80% among all demographic groups, party affiliations, and geographic regions of the state (Baltimore City, Baltimore suburbs, Washington suburbs, and rural areas).¹²

Deposit programs complement extended producer responsibility for packaging laws

Deposit programs are a type of producer responsibility program that is uniquely effective in reducing beverage container litter, and can be set up in relatively quickly. They complement other programs that aim to reduce packaging, redesign hard-to-recycle packaging for recyclability and reuse, improve recycling systems, and to make producers responsible for those outcomes. Maryland needs both of these programs. Producer responsibility for packaging bills have been approved in five states so far, but they take 5-8 years to go into effect¹³ and there is still a lot to learn about what works. There's no need to wait to pass the Maryland Bottle Bill, because the elements for success are already well established, and this is the only bill of the two that will reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution.

Conclusion

Maryland is facing a plastic pollution crisis that is impacting our health and the environment. Beverage container deposit programs are highly effective in reducing beverage container litter. These programs are spreading worldwide, fueled by public concern about plastic pollution. The proposed program makes beverage producers responsible for fixing the problem and paying for it. And there is overwhelming public support for the program. **There's no excuse for kicking the can down the road. It's time to pass the Maryland Bottle Bill now.** Every year we wait, another 4 billion containers are left in the environment.

The Sierra Club respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 232.

Martha Ainsworth, Chair
Chapter Zero Waste Team
Martha.Ainsworth@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 - Beverage containers account for more than 70% of trash in Anacostia River trash traps.
- Exhibit 2 - Recycling rates for covered beverage containers in deposit states vs. Maryland, 2019
- Exhibit 3 - Recycling rates by material type in deposit and non-deposit states, 2019
- Exhibit 4 - Public support for the Maryland Bottle Bill

¹²Gonzales Polls, Inc. *Maryland Statewide Survey January 2025, Beverage Container Results*, conducted 12/27/2024 – 1/4/2025, with a sample of 811 registered voters. The margin of error is +/- 3.5%..
<https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/gonzales-report-sierra-club-beverage-container-redemption-program-january-2025.pdf>.

¹³ Eunomia. 2023. *The 50 States of Recycling: A State-by-State Assessment of U.S. Packaging Recycling Rates*. p.61.
https://www.ball.com/getmedia/dffa01b0-3b52-4b90-a107-541ece7ee07c/50-STATES_2023-V14.pdf. Three of the five states that have passed producer responsibility for packaging laws (California, Maine, Oregon) already had longstanding bottle bills in operation.

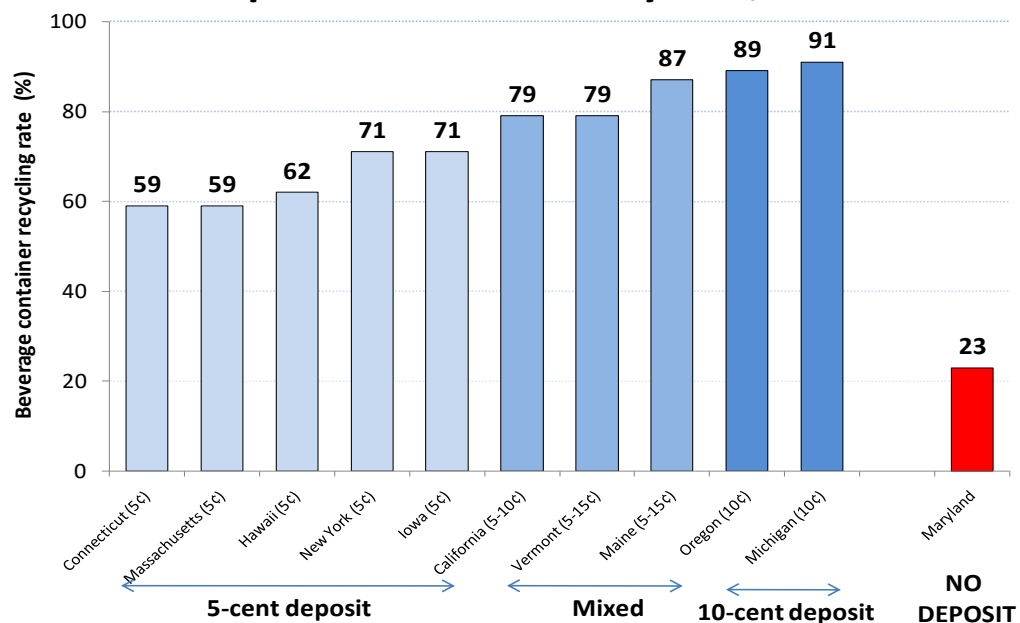
Exhibit 1: Beverage containers account for more than 70% of trash in Anacostia River trash traps, by volume



Source: Trash sort from the River Terrace Trash Trap, Anacostia River, September 28, 2024

Exhibit 2:

Recycling rates (%) for covered beverage containers in deposit states vs. Maryland, 2019



Source: Container Recycling Institute, 2022 Beverage Market Data Analysis

Exhibit 3:

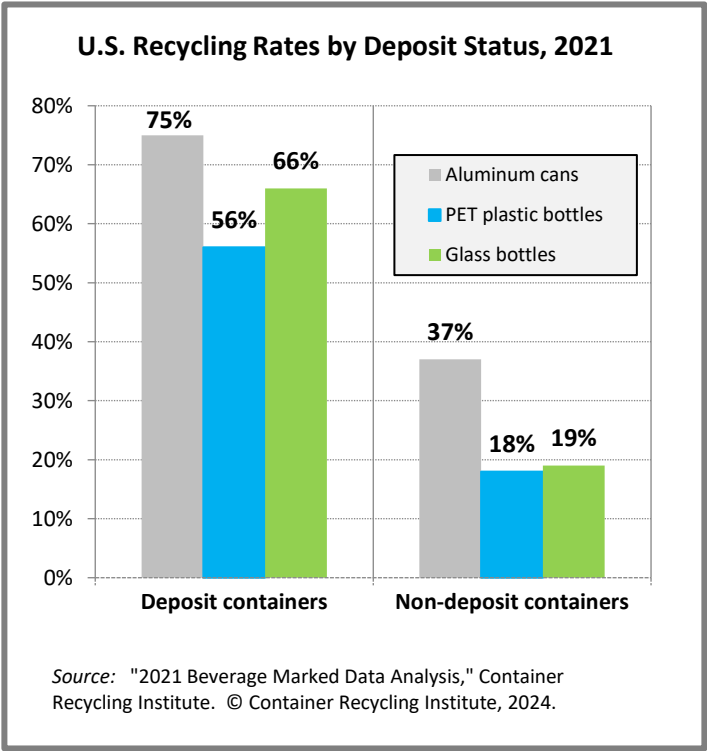
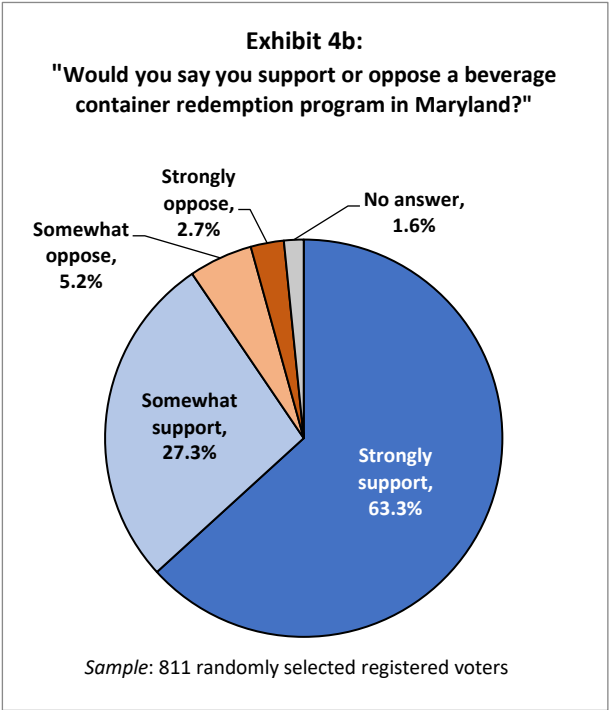
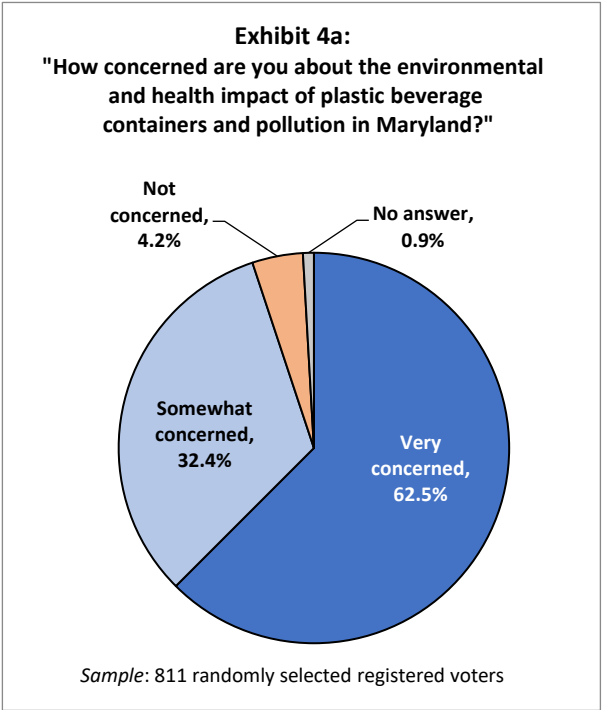


Exhibit 4: Public support for a Maryland Bottle Bill



Source: Gonzales Polls, Inc. *Maryland Statewide Survey January 2025, Beverage Container Results*
<https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/gonzales-report-sierra-club-beverage-container-redemption-program-january-2025.pdf>

HB 232 - CBF - FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Stegman

Position: FAV



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

House Bill 232

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Date: February 11, 2025

To: Environment and Transportation Committee
Economic Matters Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**

From: Julieta Rodrigo, Urban &
Community Resilience Manager

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 232 which establishes the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers and reduce the litter, pollution, and costs associated with beverage containers.

Most plastic beverage containers in Maryland are not recycled, and current disposal processes worsen human and environmental health:

Although recycling programs have existed in Maryland for many years, less than one-quarter of the 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in the state in 2019 were recycled and reused.¹ The remaining 4 billion containers were landfilled, incinerated, or littered. This is a large waste of resources, as virgin plastic requires large amounts of fossil fuels, the extraction and burning of which result in higher greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. Incineration of plastic bottles also worsens Maryland's air quality, releasing nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and other pollutants that impact human health and affect the acidity and balance of our Chesapeake Bay.²

Plastic beverage bottles contribute to microplastic pollution and environmental damages:

Contrary to the popular belief that plastic pollution largely ends up in the ocean, most of the plastic pollution that makes its way into the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay stays in and along local waters. Indeed, about 94% of microplastics – particles measuring 5 millimeters or less in diameter – that feed into the system via its rivers stay in the system, with an additional 5% carried to the ocean and 1% remaining in the water column.³

Microplastics threaten the health of the biodiversity that lives within the Bay watershed. For example, microplastics can physically block or fill up an animal's gut, potentially reducing its ability or desire to feed. Microplastics can also cause behavioral changes as their presence changes a fish's buoyancy or swimming behavior, which can make the fish more susceptible to predators. Microplastics also can carry toxic

¹ Container Recycling Institute, 2022. "2019 Beverage Market Data Analysis."

² "CBF Study: Baltimore Incinerator Causes \$55 Million in Health Problems per Year." *Chesapeake Bay Foundation*, 11 Dec. 2017, <https://www.cbf.org/news-media/newsroom/2017/maryland/cbf-study-baltimore-incinerator-causes-55-million-in-health-problems-per-year.html>.

³ Pipkin, Whitney. "The Chesapeake Bay Is a 'Sink' for Plastic Pollution." *Bay Journal*, Bay Journal Media, 13 Oct. 2021, https://www.bayjournal.com/news/pollution/the-chesapeake-bay-is-a-sink-for-plastic-pollution/article_ca6f12ec-21fd-11ec-b0c4-cf096494dd62.html.

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.

chemicals into the fish's body, which could bioaccumulate as the fish consumes other prey that have ingested plastics, and eventually make its way to human consumption.⁴ All of these factors threaten the health of our ecosystem, as well as threaten the longevity and safety of Maryland's seafood industry.

Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter:

Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have longstanding, successful beverage container deposit programs (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont).⁵ Together, they average a 60% recycling rate for beverage containers, compared to 24% in states without these programs.⁶ The recycling rate for deposit beverage containers is much higher than for containers not subject to a deposit, and it increases with a higher deposit amount. The two states that offer a 10-cent redemption refund, Michigan and Oregon, have the highest beverage bottle recycling rates in the nation, reaching 73%⁷ and 87% recycling rates in 2023⁸, respectively.

Beverage container deposit programs make financial sense for our local and state governments.:

Beverage container deposit programs do not add cost burdens to our state, but rather can provide significant savings, which is especially important considering Maryland's budget constraints. Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection, processing, and recycling of beverage containers currently disposed, littered, and recycled, diverting materials from landfills and incinerators, saving costs for taxpayers and local governments. The reduction of disposed materials is critical, as Maryland counties are dedicating much time and resources to extend the capacity of their almost-full landfills.⁹

Recycling is also beneficial for job creation in the state. Indeed, deposit programs create 11 to 38 times more jobs than a curbside recycling system for beverage containers and at least five times more jobs in container collection, sorting, and transport than in garbage collecting, hauling and landfilling.¹⁰

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 232.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

⁴ Pipkin, Whitney. "Picture of Chesapeake Microplastics Grows Clearer." *Bay Journal*, Bay Journal Media, 7 June 2021, https://www.bayjournal.com/news/pollution/picture-of-chesapeake-microplastics-grows-clearer/article_87bd3606-c3e1-11eb-bdc4-4f1a3864c6f9.html.

⁵ "Redemption Rates and Other Features of 10 U.S. State Deposit Programs." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/images/Allstates/10-state%20Summary%208-5-22r.pdf>.

⁶ "Bottle Bills", Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.container-recycling.org/index.php/issues/bottle-bills>.

⁷ "Michigan." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/current-and-proposed-laws/usa/michigan>.

⁸ "Oregon." *Bottle Bill Resource Guide*, Container Recycling Institute, <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/current-and-proposed-laws/usa/oregon>.

⁹ "Olszewski Announces Plans to Consider Vertical Expansion of Eastern Sanitary Landfill to Extend Site Longevity by up to 20 Years." *Olszewski Announces Plans to Consider Vertical Expansion of Eastern Sanitary Landfill to Extend Site Longevity by up to 20 Years* / *Baltimore County Government*, Baltimore County Government, 22 Jan. 2024, www.baltimorecountymd.gov/county-news/2024/01/22/olszewski-announces-plans-to-consider-vertical-expansion-of-eastern-sanitary-landfill-to-extend-site-longevity-by-up-to-20-years.

¹⁰ "Fact Sheet: Deposit Return Systems Create More Jobs." *ReLoop*, 5 Feb. 2021, www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/DRS-Factsheet-Jobs-5FEB2021.pdf.

Support HB 232_SB346.pdf

Uploaded by: Maureen Fine

Position: FAV

Subject: Support the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter
Reduction Program (Bottle Bill HB 232/SB346) Date of Hearing 2/14/25

Sponsors: Delegates Terrasa, Feldmark, Foley, Kaufman, Mireku-North, Pena-Melnyk,
Ruth, Vogel, and Ziegler

To:Environment and Transportation Committee

Name—Maureen Fine

Dear Committee Members,

There are 10 states (90 million people) that have long standing container deposit bills that have achieved container recycling rates of 90%. Not only do these programs increase beverage container recycling to prevent litter, they also improve water quality, reduce GHG emissions, create jobs, increase the availability of high quality, food grade recycled content for new containers, etc.

Washington, D.C. just passed a similar bill. Let's join them Maryland! We need to do something about plastic pollution—our children don't need the threat of microplastics in their developing brains! Please support HB 232.

Thank you,
Maureen Fine
2509 Knighthill Lane
Bowie, MD 20715

Testimony FAV HB0232 Container Recycling NNWB 0212

Uploaded by: Melissa Schweisguth

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 4314
Silver Spring, MD 20914

February 12, 2025

Re: FAVORABLE position on HB0232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Committee members,

Thank you for your service to the State of Maryland. I am writing on behalf of Neighbors of the Northwest Branch (NNWB), a local 501(C)(3) nonprofit, citizen-based action group dedicated to restoring the health of the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. We work to ensure that this urban treasure can be safely enjoyed by wildlife, our families, and Montgomery and Prince Georges county residents for generations to come.

NNWB takes a FAVORABLE position on HB0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. We respectfully ask that you issue a favorable committee report and continue to support it through passage.

HB0232 would solve two major problems: littering and lack of recycling of single-use beverage containers (e.g., plastic water and soda bottles, beer bottles, cans), which have negative environmental and economic impacts. As we know from the many clean ups we have led and the time we spend enjoying the watershed, discarded single-use beverage containers are common due to littering or unintentional loss from recycling bins and trucks. The Anacostia Watershed Society determined that beverage containers are one of the most common litter items in Anacostia River trash traps. Plastic bottles break into tiny toxic particles (microplastics) that contaminate soil and waterways and enter the food chain when animals ingest them.

Data indicate that less than one-quarter of beverage containers sold in Maryland are recycled, resulting in continued use of virgin materials, which has negative impacts on the environment and climate. Of the 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland annually, only about 1.2 billion (23 percent) are recycled while 4 billion are wasted—landfilled, littered or incinerated.

HB0232 addresses these problems by creating a statewide deposit and return system with a small deposit (10 or 15 cents) that consumers would pay when they purchase beverages and then receive back when they return beverage containers for recycling. HB0232 provides for the establishment of efficient, conveniently located redemption facilities with measures to prevent

fraud, a Stewardship Organization representing producers that sell beverage containers in Maryland, and a Plan approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MDE would provide oversight and enforcement, with input from an Advisory Council.

The proposed deposit system is a proven model: ten states, covering about 90 million people, have long standing, successful beverage container deposit programs. Data indicate that programs with at least a 10-cent refundable deposit recover as much as 90 percent of used beverage containers for reuse or recycling - a result that equates to tripling Maryland's current beverage container recycling rate.

The approach that HB0232 proposes is cost effective as it leverages beverage industry funding to launch and maintain the program, avoiding increased costs for the government, and provides an incentive for consumers to maximize recycling. Moreover, it would reduce the costs of collecting, recycling, landfilling and incinerating beverage containers for governments and consumers, provide high quality, food-grade recycled content that can be made into new containers, stimulate regional recycling markets, improve water quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use, and stimulate investments in refillable and reusable beverage container systems.

For these reasons, NNWB endorses HB0232 and asks that the committee return a favorable report and support its passage in the House and General Assembly. HB0232 is a win-win and a positive return on investment for governments, consumers and producers.

Thank you for considering NNWB's comments on this important measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora Swisher".

Nora Swisher
President, Neighbors of the Northwest Branch
www.neighborsnwb.org

Testimony HB0232 FAV MSchweisguth Bottle Bill 0212

Uploaded by: Melissa Schweisguth

Position: FAV

Melissa A Schweisguth
Hyattsville, MD 20782

February 12, 2025

Re: FAVORABLE position on HB0232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Committee members,

Thank you for your service to the State of Maryland. I am writing to ask that the committee provide a favorable report on HB0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, and support its passage in the House and General Assembly.

HB0232 would solve two persistent and widespread problems that have negative environmental and economic impacts: littering and lack of recycling of single use-beverage containers (e.g. plastic water and soda bottles, beer bottles, cans).

I live in District 22, where I have adopted a trail with my local watershed group, lead and carry out trail clean ups, and run and bike across the extensive trail system spanning Prince George's and Montgomery counties. Discarded single-use beverage containers are the most common item collected in every cleanup. They dot the trails, river and streambank, and roads throughout my area and the state, too. Beverage containers are one of the most common litter items in the . The Anacostia Watershed Society's Anacostia River trash traps, which capture litter from my watershed. Plastic bottles are especially concerning as they break into tiny "microplastics" that contaminate the environment and enter our food chain when animals ingest them.

Data indicate that less than one-quarter of beverage containers sold in Maryland are recycled; only about 1.2 billion (23 percent) of the 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland annually are recycled while 4 billion are wasted—landfilled, littered or incinerated. This results in negative climate and environmental impacts due to continued use of virgin materials, as well as the impacts of incineration (e.g., toxic ash) and landfilling (e.g., methane)

HB0232 solves these problems by creating a refundable deposit system, wherein consumers pay a small deposit (10 or 15 cents) when they purchase beverages, and can get the deposit back when they return containers for recycling. The proposed system includes conveniently located return facilities, a Stewardship Organization representing the container industry, and a Plan that would be approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MDE would oversee the program and provide enforcement, with input from an Advisory Council.

The proposed deposit system is a proven model: ten states, covering about 90 million people, have well-established deposit programs with high success rates. According to data provided by the Maryland Sierra Club, programs with at least a 10-cent deposit recover up to 90 percent of containers for reuse or recycling, more than triple Maryland's beverage container recycling rate.

The proposed deposit program is cost-effective as it provides an incentive for consumers to maximize recycling and would leverage beverage industry funding to run the program, avoiding increased costs for the government. It would reduce the cost of collecting, recycling, landfilling and incinerating beverage containers, provide high quality recycled materials for container manufacturing, stimulate recycling markets and investments in deposit systems, improve water quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use.

For these reasons, I enthusiastically support HB0232 and ask that the committee return a favorable report and support its passage in the House.

Thank you for considering my comments on this important measure.

Sincerely,

Melissa A Schweisguth

2025 HB0232-SB0346 Beverage Container Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael O'Connor

Position: FAV



FREDERICK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

February 11, 2024

To: Environment and Transportation Committee Chair Delegate Marc Korman

**Re: Support for Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill
Maryland HB0232 and SB0346**

Chair Korman, and members of the Committee,

The City of Frederick offers support for the vision of the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction bill. Though City government operations are not likely to incur any costs to operate this program, it will benefit our residents by reducing litter, increasing recycling, and reducing the waste stream the city processes through its trash collection operations.

By encouraging reuse and recycling, the City hopes this will reduce the amount of litter on our roadways and in our streams and waterways. The City operates Adopt-a-Road and stream cleanup programs multiple times per year to reduce the litter before it reaches our downstream neighbors.

Concessions to allow our small businesses to either be exempted or more easily comply are also appreciated.

Overall, this is a positive step toward sustainability by improving the places we live, work, and play, including our waterways and wildlife habitats. We look forward to a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Michael O'Connor

Maryland Catholic Conference_FAVHB232_.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Zelaya

Position: FAV



February 14, 2025

HB232

**Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Economic Matters Committee
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 232**. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 232 would create The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program which will seek to enhance recycling efforts by establishing a system where consumers can return beverage containers for a refund. The program aims to reduce litter, pollution, and associated cleanup costs. Producers will be required to register with the Department of the Environment, pay a fee, and participate in a stewardship organization to sell or distribute redeemable beverage containers in the state.

Pope Francis, in his encyclical "Laudato Si'," calls upon all people of goodwill to recognize the interconnectedness of ecological, social, and economic concerns and to work together towards the common good. This program reflects a commitment to the care of God's creation. By reducing pollution and promoting responsible use of resources, the legislation aligns with the moral duty to safeguard the environment for future generations. Supporting initiatives like this reflects the principle of stewardship, which calls us to protect and nurture the earth as a gift from God, and the common good, which seeks to ensure a healthy and clean environment for all members of society.

This program promotes environmental stewardship by reducing waste and pollution caused by beverage containers. By encouraging recycling, the program decreases litter in public spaces and lowers cleanup expenses for local governments. It also fosters a circular economy by creating opportunities for job growth in recycling industries and increasing community engagement in sustainability efforts.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 232**.

HB 232 written testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Nancy Koran

Position: FAV

Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB 232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Position: Support
Hearing date: February 14, 2025

The Earth Ministry of River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Bethesda MD¹ strongly supports HB 232, commonly known as the bottle bill. It is designed to reduce pollution from plastic, glass and metal beverage containers and to boost recycling.

In Maryland, 5.9 billion beverage containers were sold in 2021, but only about a quarter were recycled. The remaining 4.4 billion went into landfills, incinerators or were littered.² During heavy rains, beverage bottles littered along our landscape and roadways wash into storm drains where they eventually reach streams, rivers, the Chesapeake Bay and even the Atlantic Ocean. These plastic bottles break into ever smaller pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds and marine animals.³ These microplastics have also been found in our food, air and water, and in our blood, saliva, liver, kidneys and in placentas.⁴

Even when plastic bottles are placed in curbside recycling containers, they are often contaminated by other co-mingled trash. Contaminated bottles can't be recycled and are either incinerated, where they release toxic air pollution, or put into landfills, where they leach harmful chemicals. Because plastic is a "forever" chemical, plastic waste is an overriding concern of our Earth Ministry.

This is a good place to explain that one of the central tenets of our Unitarian Universalist faith is a call to "respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Because of the failure to control plastic waste, plastic now permeates and pollutes the environment that we, along with all life on Earth, depend on to sustain our lives. And the volume of plastic is growing.

About half a billion tons of plastic are produced globally each year, more than twice the amount two decades ago.⁵ "More plastic is being produced, and an even smaller percentage of it is being recycled. The crisis just keeps getting worse and worse, and without drastic change it will continue to worsen as the industry plans to triple plastic production by 2050."⁶

Of course, plastic is not inherently bad. "Disposable plastic syringes prevent the spread of disease. Contact lenses, hearing aids, artificial limbs, tubing to unblock veins and live-saving heart valves

¹ The Earth Ministry is a member-created committee established in accordance with the Congregation's bylaws. This testimony is submitted by and on behalf of the Earth Ministry. The Congregation has not taken a position on this bill.

² Container Recycling Institute estimate, based on 2021 data.

³ Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter. https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/beverage-container-recycling-refund-litter-reduction-coalition-fact-sheet_1-20-2025_0.pdf

⁴ HARVARD medicine magazine, Spring 2023, "Microplastics Everywhere."

⁵ Hiroko Tabuchi, "Saudi Arabia Leads Pushback Against Global Plastic Treaty," NY Times, Nov. 30, 2024.

⁶ Lisa Ramsden, Greenpeace USA on NPR's All Things Considered, Oct. 24, 2022.

are all composed of plastic.”⁷ But pollution from plastic bottles is different--it’s a global crisis. Yet there is a simple fix.

Bottle bills are a tried-and-true solution to address litter and improve recycling. “...Since the 1970s, these programs have proven to be the most effective post-consumer recycling systems ever created”.⁸ Currently, 10 states and more than 40 countries have enacted bottle bills. Globally, Australia, Europe and India have passed container deposit laws in recent years. In the US, however, no state has passed a bottle bill since 2017. The US congress considered a national bottle bill in 2021 and 2023. Those too, failed. Maryland has been trying to pass a bottle bill for nearly 20 years, since at least 2007, without success. In an editorial last November, The Baltimore Sun wrote, “It’s time for Maryland to get serious about imposing a deposit on plastic bottles.”⁹

Failed attempts to pass bottle bills come at a time when public concern about plastic pollution is soaring, especially among young people concerned about the environment. Citizens are asking for these programs. Numerous states and the District of Columbia have tried to pass a bottle bill.¹⁰ States with bottle bills can achieve recycling rates of up to 90% of their beverage bottles. In Maryland, by comparison, the estimated recycling rate is only 22%. So, what is preventing Maryland and other states from passing bottle bills?

“The old industry playbook has kept new Bottle Bills at bay in the US for decades,” the New England-based Conservation Law Foundation explains in its 2022 report, *The Big Beverage Playbook for Avoiding Responsibility*. It details how the industry delays, distracts and derails proposed bottle bills. And it notes that when these bills were beginning to gain momentum in the mid-1970s, the industry spent “a minimum of \$20 million a year” fighting bottle bills. It also notes that between 1991 and 2011, according to the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, the beverage industry “outspent proponents of Bottle Bills by as much as 30 to 1.”¹¹

Fast-forward to today. The trade group for plastic producers, National Association for PET Container Resources (NAPCOR), concerned by rising anti-plastic sentiment, has developed social media campaigns and an infomercial by actor Dennis Quaid to tout the virtues of single-use plastic.¹²

This fierce and long-standing opposition comes from those who created this environmental tragedy in the first place. Meanwhile, conservation groups such as Anacostia Waterkeepers, Anacostia Watershed Society, Alice Ferguson Foundation and private organizations such as Baltimore’s Waterfront Partnership have taken on the task of collecting plastic bottles and other litter from our communities and waterways. But they are facing an ever-increasing tide of beverage containers and other litter.

⁷ Danielle Smith-Llera, *You Are Eating Plastic Every Day*, North Mankato, MN, Compass Point Books, 2020, p. 50.

⁸ Kirstie L. Pecci, Peter W. Blair and Kevin P. Budris, *The Big Beverage Playbook for Avoiding Responsibility*, Feb. 2022, p. 3.

⁹ “If Maryland had a dime for every wasted plastic bottle,” Editorial, *Baltimore Sun*, Nov. 23, 2024.

¹⁰ *Bottle Bills in the USA*, Jan. 18, 2025. <https://www.bottlebill.org/legislation/usa.htm>.

¹¹ Kirstie L. Pecci, Peter W. Blair and Kevin P. Budris, *The Big Beverage Playbook for Avoiding Responsibility*, Feb. 2022, p.11.

¹² Hiroko Tabuchi, “Inside the Plastic Industry’s Battle to Win Over Hearts and Minds.” *NY Times*, Nov. 27, 2024.

The sensible approach is to keep beverage containers out of the environment in the first place by enacting bottle bills. We join in support of Marylanders across the state in asking for a bottle bill this year and urge a favorable report on HB 232.

Nancy Koran
4960 Fairmont Ave. 1001
Bethesda, MD 20814
nancykoran@hotmail.com
Member, Earth Ministry of River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda MD

PGCSWACLetter of Support. HB232.Bottle Bill.Final.

Uploaded by: Nancy Meyer

Position: FAV

**Nancy J. Meyer
Chair
Prince George's County
Solid Waste Advisory Commission
c/o Kevin Roy Serrona
3500 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772**

Honorable Marc Korman
Chair

February 12, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee
Committee Members
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 250/251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission (PGCSWAC) which was established "to provide community input, guidance and advice to the County Executive and County Council on matters relating to solid waste management in the County". The powers and duties of the PGCSWAC include providing review, recommendations, and impacts of various plans, reports, operations, budgets and impacts of County actions related to solid waste management and resource recovery. We also seek and support input from citizens, business and industries throughout the County.

PGCSWAC's powers and duties includes recommending local and state legislation necessary to accomplish effective solid waste management. The PGCSWAC is made up of concerned local citizens, advocates, and professionals in fields relating to solid waste management, resource recovery and environmental stewardship.

Our concern today is the critical necessity of passing and implementing House Bill 232, **The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill** now which would create a beverage container deposit program in Maryland.

Despite enormous local efforts in Prince George's County to address litter that is prolific on our roads, our parks, our waterways, and commercial areas, litter and its deleterious impacts, remains more than a persistent problem.

The ubiquitous presence of litter says a lot. And none of it is good. The material impact degrades our precious habitats, fouls our waterways, is ingested by birds and animals and creates unnecessary work that never realizes success. Its presence denigrates and depresses our communities, our business and our neighborhoods. And beverages are one of the biggest contributors to litter.

In one year alone, in Maryland, approximately 5.5 BILLION beverage containers are sold. And despite the widespread availability of curbside recycling, only 23% of these containers are recycled. And 2.6 billion of the 4 billion containers left are available to be disposed of in the trash, and unfortunately all around our communities.

Ten states already have passed legislation to incentive the return of Beverage containers to redemption centers and is being considered by several others. In those ten states, nine of those states boast the highest recycling rates in the country.

The Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill would provide reverse vending machines for convenient redemption in order to achieve at least a 90% redemption rate. The program would be self-financing from fees paid by producers, revenue from material sales and penalties.

The benefits are many. There would be an enormous reduction in beverage container litter, a quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate, an increase in the quality of recycling material going to market, a reduction in greenhouse gas, savings for tax payers and local governments, and job creation. And of course, a much cleaner Prince George's County.

Please support the Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Bill (HB232). We need to pass this bill now. Other states have demonstrated the success of this legislation and we need to follow suit this year.

Sincerely yours,



Nancy J. Meyer

CC: Honorable Eric Olson, Councilmember, District 3
Prince George's County Council
Kenneth Battle, Committee Chair
Transport, infrastructure, Energy and Environment
Prince George's County Council
Marilyn E. Naumann, Associate Director
Resource Recovery Division, Dept. of Environment
Barbara Sollner-Webb, Vice-Chair,
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Na'ilah Dawkins, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Charles L. Renninger, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
David C. Brosch, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Mouhaman S. Kola, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
William L. Walmsley, Jr, Commissioner
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Jonathan P. Madagu
Prince George's County Solid Waste Advisor Commission

Letter of Support HB0232_Econ_Com_Envir_Transp_Com

Uploaded by: Nate Groenendyk

Position: FAV

Robert S. Croslin
Mayor



Tracey E. Douglas
City Administrator

February 5, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable C. T. Wilson, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB0232/SB0346 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

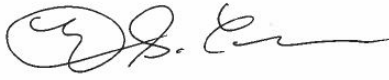
Dear Chairman Korman and Chairman Wilson,

On behalf of the Hyattsville City Council, I am writing to express our strong support of HB0232/SB0346, which proposes instituting a refundable deposit on recyclable beverage containers sold in the state of Maryland. This legislation addresses the significant issue of littering in our community and the entire state. Our roads, parks, streams, and rivers are strewn with single-use beverage containers. Clean-up efforts in our community routinely find these containers to be the most common of all litter items and some of the most damaging to our environment as their contaminants enter our waterways and eventually our food chain.

The proposed refundable deposit, which is also supported by the Maryland Sierra Club, Anacostia Watershed Society, and Anacostia Riverkeeper, will incentivize the return of beverage containers to redemption or recycling facilities. This will decrease the amount of litter while increasing the number of containers sent for recycling rather than the landfill, which will have a significant environmental impact.

We strongly urge you to support this legislation and thank you for your commitment to this critical issue. We look forward to your continued partnership in improving and protecting our environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. S. Croslin", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Robert S. Croslin

Mayor

cc: Hyattsville City Council

HB232 Ramos Testimony E and T 2.25.pdf

Uploaded by: Odette Ramos

Position: FAV



Odette Ramos

Baltimore City Councilwoman

District 14

(410) 396 - 4814

odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov

100 N. Holliday Street, Room 553

Baltimore MD 21202

HB232- Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Fund and Litter Reduction Program
February 14, 2025
FAVORABLE

Honorable Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee and
Honorable Chair Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

I am writing to urge your support of **HB 232 The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

The objective of this program is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a small refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The bill outlines that the program would be financed and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, not by the City or its residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide strong oversight.

Programs like this have been operating in 10 U.S. states for decades and are the most effective policy for reducing beverage container litter. With a 10-cent deposit on most containers, it would capture 90% of beverage containers sold in the state annually, diverting an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing pollution from littered plastic bottles that break down in the environment and get washed into the Chesapeake Bay. Recent polling has found that more than 90% of Maryland's voting public would support the Bottle Bill.

Baltimore City would work to pass our own law to implement this program. Ours could include redemption in our own already existing city-run recycling and transfer stations, which will not be an additional burden to our municipal solid waste collections nor to grocery stores or other businesses. This program would benefit our residents in two main ways:

- **Shut down the Baltimore incinerator.** By diverting bottles and cans from the waste stream, the amount of waste to the incinerator and to the landfills is reduced, thus making it easier to close the incinerator. The incinerator is one of the leading causes of cancer and other health problems to areas in our city.
- **Reduce in litter.** Residents would either keep their bottles and cans to redeem another time, or residents would pick up any bottles and cans that were littered on the ground so they can redeem the deposit.

Please pass a favorable report for HB232.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached on 410-396-4814 or via email at odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov.

Respectfully Submitted:

Odette Ramos, Baltimore City Councilwoman, District 14

HB232_Bodine_FAV

Uploaded by: Patricia Bodine

Position: FAV

March 3, 2025

Additional testimony for HB 232 Maryland Beverage Container
Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Sir,

I am in favor of HB 232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program and want to encourage you to vote in favor of this bill and move it out of committee. Please accept my written testimony regarding this bill.

I am part of a church community team that picks up litter four times a year. One of the main things we pick up is bottles and cans. With this bill people will be motivated to return their bottles themselves instead of what they currently do: toss them out the window of a moving car.

Please add the attached testimony to the witness list for HB 232, heard by the ENT Committee on February 14, 2025

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Patricia Bodine

8120 Overlook Dr

Frederick, Md 21702

St Katharine Drexel Catholic Church Environmental Stewardship Team, member

8428 Opossumtown Pike

Frederick, Md 21702

Just Zero - Testimony in Support of HB 232.pdf

Uploaded by: Peter Blair

Position: FAV



February 14, 2025

Chair Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 232 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Maryland Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 232. **Just Zero strongly supports this bill.**

Just Zero is a national environmental non-profit advocacy organization that works alongside communities, policy makers, scientists, educators, organizers, and others to implement just and equitable solutions to climate-damaging and toxic production, consumption, and waste disposal practices. We believe that all people deserve Zero Waste solutions with zero climate-damaging emissions and zero toxic exposures.

HB 232 would establish a beverage container recycling refund program – more commonly known as a “Bottle Bill” – in Maryland. Just Zero supports Bottle Bills because they reduce litter, increase recycling rates, create jobs, and develop both the consumer culture and infrastructure necessary for reusable beverage systems. If enacted this bill will significantly improve Maryland’s environment and economy.

We understand that Maryland is also considering adopting an Extended Producer Responsibility (“EPR”) for packaging program (SB 901). While we strongly support the development of an EPR for packaging program, it does not alleviate the need to enact a strong Bottle Bill.

Maryland should enact both programs because they are complementary. Passing both programs will enhance the benefits and goals of each, while choosing one program over the other will undermine Maryland’s efforts to effectively address the plastic pollution and waste crisis.

I. Bottle Bill Programs Are Incredibly Popular and Prevalent Across the World.

Bottle Bill programs have been implemented in dozens of jurisdictions around the world, with new programs developing each year. The first Bottle Bill was established in 1970, in British Columbia, Canada.¹ Since then, over 50 jurisdictions have adopted programs, including ten U.S.

¹ Reloop, [Global Deposit Book 2024: An Overview of Deposit Return Systems for Single-Use Beverage Containers](#), 108 (Dec. 2024).



states, almost all Canadian providences, and a large portion of the European Union.² Right now, over 300 million people live in communities with a Bottle Bill.³ This number is expected to grow as more programs come online. Internationally, France, Poland, Singapore, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay are all considering or actively developing Bottle Bill programs.⁴ This legislative session, Illinois, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Texas, Washington state, and Washington D.C. are all considering proposals to implement Bottle Bill programs. Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, and Vermont are considering proposals to expand and strengthen their existing Bottle Bill programs. These states understand Bottle Bills are necessary to meet waste reduction, recycling, and climate goals.

II. Bottle Bills Provide Significant Environmental and Economic Benefits

The reason Bottle Bill programs are so popular and prevalent throughout the world is because they're incredibly effective at reducing litter, increasing recycling, and creating jobs. Moreover, these programs create the consumer culture and infrastructure that is necessary to shift away from single-use disposal beverage containers to reusable and refillable beverage systems. Importantly, through producer responsibility requirements, Bottle Bill programs provide these benefits while saving consumers and governments money.

A. Litter Reduction

Placing a refundable deposit on every single-use beverage container sold in Maryland will incentivize consumers to recycle their empty containers. Essentially, the refundable deposit creates an understanding that while you are buying the beverage, you are renting the container. This incentive is extremely important because most single-use beverages are consumed on-the-go and outside of the home. This is why you see plastic soda bottles littering parks, streets, and streams, but not plastic peanut butter jars.

Bottle Bills can dramatically reduce the amount of litter that we see. After Hawaii enacted a Bottle Bill program in 2005, the number of beverage containers collected in Hawaii for Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup fell from 23,471 in 2004, to 8,200 in 2008 – a 65% drop in just four years.⁵ All ten states with Bottle Bills have experienced significant litter reduction. A 2020 study by Keep America Beautiful found that states without Bottle Bills have double the amount of beverage container litter than their Bottle Bill counterparts.⁶ The report also found that states with Bottle Bills had less overall litter.⁷ Less litter doesn't just mean

² *Id.* at 22, 72.

³ *Id.* at 13.

⁴ *Id.* at 189, 215-16.

⁵ Haw. Dep't of Health, [Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature 2010, Deposit Beverage Container Program](#), 6 (Dec. 2009).

⁶ Keep America Beautiful, [2020 National Litter Study](#), 3 (May 2021).

⁷ *Id.*



cleaner, more vibrant communities, it also means less spending on clean-up efforts. Estimates show that the United States spends more than \$11 billion on litter clean up every year.⁸

B. Increased Recycling of Beverage Containers

Though the ten current Bottle Bill states only represent 27% of the U.S. population, they account for over 50% of all beverage containers recycled annually.⁹ On average, states with Bottle Bills have double the recycling rates than those that rely solely on curbside recycling programs.¹⁰ For plastic and glass bottles, Bottle Bill programs achieve recycling rates that are three times higher than single-stream recycling systems.¹¹

While curbside recycling is convenient, it is operated as a single-stream, and this comes with a cost – contamination. Single-stream recycling depends first and foremost on educated consumers making the right choice about what can and cannot go into the blue bin. From there, the burden is on Material Recovery Facilities (“MRFs”) to remove any unrecyclable materials while also processing and sorting the commingled recyclables into distinct separate streams. These sorting processes are imperfect. According to the National Waste and Recycling Association, roughly 25% of what is placed into the single-stream recycling system is too contaminated to go anywhere other than a landfill.¹²

Bottle Bill programs, on the other hand, evade contamination more effectively and properly sort recyclable materials on the front end. This results in higher quality recycled material, significantly increasing its ability to be made into new products. Higher quality also is critical in avoiding downcycling. Downcycling results in recycled material being used for purposes that fail to capture the full environmental and economic benefits associated with recycling a product. In the case of beverage containers, the highest and best use is bottle-to-bottle recycling, where containers are recycled directly into new beverage containers. Common examples of downcycling with beverage containers include turning plastic beverage containers into carpet and textiles and using glass beverage containers for road improvement projects or landfill cover. While these uses are preferential to disposing of the material, it still means the materials can only be used once as opposed to being recycled repeatedly.

Creating a standalone program to collect and recycle beverage containers ensures that the materials are uncontaminated and able to be readily recycled. Moreover, Bottle Bill programs lead to higher overall recycling rates in those states since municipal and curbside recycling systems can then focus their efforts on capturing and recycling other common recyclables.¹³

⁸ Andrew Lisa, [It Costs Over \\$11 Billion Per Year to Clean Up Litter – How the Pandemic’s Effect on Trash Output May Make It Worse](#), Yahoo (April 22, 2021).

⁹ Marissa Heffernan, [Report: Bottle bill states recycle more, provide models](#), Resource Recycling (Jan. 2, 2024).

¹⁰ Container Recycling Institute, [U.S. Nominal Recycling Rates by Deposit Status](#) (2019).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Maggie Koerth, [The Era of Easy Recycling May be Coming to an End](#), FiveThirtyEight (Jan. 10, 2019).

¹³ Eunomia, [The 50 States of Recycling: a State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates](#), 6 (Dec. 2023).



C. Job Creation

Bottle Bills also create good, local jobs. Reports show that Bottle Bills can create between 11 and 38 times more jobs than curbside recycling.¹⁴ These jobs include technicians to service reverse vending machines, bag drop systems, as well as other forms of beverage container collection, storage systems, and sorting systems. Bottle Bills also create jobs associated with hauling beverage containers from redemption locations to centralized storage areas. There are also other indirect jobs created that are associated with increased recycling and manufacturing of products from recycled materials. A recent analysis of New York's Bottle Bill program found that it supports 5,700 jobs statewide.¹⁵

D. Creating a Pathway to Reusable and Refillable Beverage Systems

Additionally, Bottle Bill programs develop the infrastructure and consumer culture necessary to support reusable and refillable beverage systems. Historically, beverage companies relied on consumers to return bottles to be refilled. Because glass bottles were expensive to manufacture, refilling existing bottles saved costs. So, to encourage refilling, beverage companies utilized a deposit-return program to ensure glass containers were brought back and refilled. This harkens back to the days of the “milk man.”

Just Zero strongly supports the language in HB 232 that requires at least 10% of all beverage containers sold in Maryland be returned and refilled by December 31, 2034. This is a necessary and achievable program goal as demonstrated by other countries and states with high functioning Bottle Bill programs. For example, in Germany, 82% of all beer is sold in reusable bottles, 99% of beer bottles are returned for reuse, and 54% of beverages sold in Germany are in reusables.¹⁶ Moreover, refillables account for 24%, 27%, and 54% of the beverage market share in Brazil, Mexico, and Columbia respectively.¹⁷ 84% of beer sold in Ontario, Canada is in refillable bottles collected through the provinces Bottle Bill system.¹⁸

Finally, since launching a statewide refillable beer bottle system through its Bottle Bill program, Oregon reported a diversion of 407,840 bottles from recycling for reuse in 2019..¹⁹ Unfortunately Oregon's reuse program stalled because it was entirely voluntary. HB 232 shows that Maryland learned from Oregon's mistake by including a mandate for reusables which will ensure that the program consistently grows to foster reuse, not just recycling.

¹⁴ Reloop, [Factsheet: Deposit Return Systems Create More Jobs](#), 2 (2022).

¹⁵ Sarah Edwards, Eunomia Research and Consulting, Inc., [Employment and Economic Impact of Container Deposits](#), table E1 (Jan. 2019).

¹⁶ Upstream, [Beverage Refill and the New Reuse Economy](#) (July 1, 2023).

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ Container Recycling Institute, [Exploring refillables in the United States](#), 2 (April 7, 2021).



E. Bottles Bills Provide All These Benefits While Saving Residents and Communities Money.

Bottle Bill programs also provide these benefits at no cost to consumers or government, instead placing financial responsibility on producers who are creating and distributing single-use beverage containers. If a Bottle Bill program is developed in Maryland, cities, towns, and residents will no longer be stuck paying to collect, sort, and recycle all these containers. Instead, the large companies that manufacture them will.

The reduction in litter resulting from this program will also save the state and local governments money. In a span of five years, the Maryland Highway Administration spent \$39 million to clean up trash along state roads.²⁰ This is only a fraction of the cost of addressing litter as the figure does not include the costs of addressing beverage container litter along local roads, along beaches, and in rivers.

III. Maryland Should Adopt a Bottle Bill *and* an EPR for Packaging Program.

We understand that Maryland is considering adopting an EPR for packaging program.²¹ While we strongly support the legislative efforts to enact an EPR for packaging program, it must be in conjunction with a strong Bottle Bill. **Maryland should pass both programs because they will complement each other.**

Forgoing the development of a Bottle Bill program in favor of an EPR for packaging program – even if it includes beverage containers – because that will result in several negative consequences, such as:

- (1) **Elimination of litter reduction benefits associated with Bottle Bills:** When beverage containers are part of an EPR for Packaging Program, you do not get the refundable deposit on each container. As a result, consumers do not have an economic incentive to hold on to their containers for recycling. This means the containers are likely to continue to get littered and discarded, rather than recycled.
- (2) **Lowered quality of recycled material from beverage containers:** The containers that are currently captured through Maryland's recycling system are commingled with other recyclables. This commingling increases contamination, lowering the quality and value of the containers making it harder to recycle them. This is true even when the system is enhanced through an EPR for Packaging Program. A Bottle Bill will remove these containers by processing them through a separate recycling system which maximizes value and recyclability.
- (3) **Lowered recycling rates for all packaging materials:** One of the key goals of an EPR for packaging program is to develop new ways to collect and manage hard to recycle materials. If a state does not have a Bottle Bill, EPR programs must divert precious

²⁰ Bryna Zumer, [Stop Littering! Trash on state roads cost MD Taxpayers \\$39M in 5 Years](#), Fox News (Dec. 3, 2021).

²¹ [SB 901](#), 2025 Leg., 447th Sess. (Md. 2025).



resources to manage beverage containers rather than focusing on addressing other, more problematic packaging. There is already evidence of the higher recycling rates for packaging achieved through enacting a Bottle Bill.²² States with Bottle Bill recycle 34% of packaging, compared to 7% in non-Bottle Bill states.²³

IV. Conclusion

The time to act is now. This bill will improve recycling, create green jobs, and reduce litter which will protect Maryland's land, rivers, lakes, and oceans. With HB 232, Maryland can create a robust and effective Bottle Bill program that will protect the environment and strengthen the economy. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Blair, Esq.
Policy and Advocacy Director
Just Zero

²² Eunomia, The 50 States of Recycling: a State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates, 6. (Dec. 2023).

²³ *Id.*

HB 232 - Bottle Bill-Support-Phil Webster-UULM-MD.

Uploaded by: Phil Webster

Position: FAV



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support of HB 232 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

TO: Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee and
Chair Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Phil Webster, PhD, Lead Advocate, Climate Change
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.
DATE: February 14, 2025

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports **HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**. We are a faith-based advocacy organization based on Unitarian Universalist (UU) Values, including Interdependence (honoring the interdependent web of all existence) and Justice (where all feel welcome and can thrive). Working to mitigate, adapt to, and build resilience for climate change is central to our beliefs. The **Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program** aligns with both of the values by reducing the amount of waste generated by un-recycled beverage containers, the amount of fossil fuels used in their production and the litter in our communities.

The Program would have the following benefits:

- **Reduction in beverage container litter and plastic pollution, and an increase in water quality.** It would capture 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles.
- **Quadrupling of Maryland's beverage container recycling rate.** The estimated recycling rate, currently only 25% of containers sold in the state, would increase to more than 90% with the Bottle Bill.
- **Increase in high quality, food-grade recycled content for new food and beverage containers.** The program would generate an additional 13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers, annually.
- **Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.** By reducing the production of new cans and bottles from virgin materials, the additional recycling from this program would eliminate 231,707 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually, the equivalent of removing the emissions of 50,371 cars.
- **Savings for taxpayers and local governments.** Beverage producers would finance the costs of collection, processing, and recycling of beverage containers currently disposed, littered, and recycled, diverting materials from landfills and incinerators, saving costs for taxpayers and local governments.
- **Job creation.** Recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times more jobs as landfills or incineration.

UULM-MD c/o UU Church of Annapolis 333 Dubois Road Annapolis, MD 21401 410-266-8044,

www.uulmmd.org info@uulmmd.org www.facebook.com/uulmmd www.Twitter.com/uulmmd

Establishing **Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program** would reduce litter, prevent plastic pollution, increase recycling, and conserve resources!

We urge a FAVORABLE report on **HB 232**.

Phil Webster, PhD

Lead Advocate, Climate Change UULM-MD

UULM-MD c/o UU Church of Annapolis 333 Dubois Road Annapolis, MD 21401 410-266-8044,

www.uulmmd.org info@uulmmd.org www.facebook.com/uulmmd www.Twitter.com/uulmmd

MSCRF_ support letter_house1.pdf

Uploaded by: Rama Modali

Position: FAV

Rama Modali
REPROCELL USA
9000 Virginia Manor Rd., Suite 207
Beltsville, MD 20705
rmodali@reprocell.com
301-470-3362

Dear Chairman of House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee members:

My name is Rama Modali, a resident of Anne Arundel County and I work as CEO at REPROCELL USA. My company is in Prince Georges County. As a CEO and grant awardee of MSCRF, I am seeking your support to maintain MSCRF funding at \$20.5 million for fiscal year 2026. This investment is essential to sustain Maryland's economic growth, innovation, and healthcare advancements and retaining talent in the state.

Over the last few years, MSCRF's investment of \$1.4 million in Reprocell has yielded tens of million dollars in sales revenue, with annual revenues approaching 10 million dollars each year. Notably, 80% of the REPROCELL's annual revenue comes from customers outside of Maryland, contributing to the economy of Maryland. This investment from MSCRF has also helped REPROCELL to expand our workforce from 10 to 26 employees with high paying salaried positions. We were able to recruit scientists from renowned institutions such as Jhons Hopkins, Yale, University of Michigan and Case Western Reserve.

MSCRF support is enormous, particularly when we talk about bringing some unique products and services to Maryland. In May 2024, REPROCELL inaugurated a state-of-the-art GMP biomanufacturing laboratory facility partially funded by MSCRF through its Manufacturing Assistance Grant Program. This facility meets the growing needs of companies and scientists propelling the development of stem cell therapies and treatments. We expect to provide GMP clinical-grade products and services to companies around the globe, which will drive our revenues and bolster Maryland's economy. Furthermore, we expect this growth trajectory to continue, with the company's operational footprint and workforce in Maryland projected to expand by 50% over the next five years. MSCRF provides resources beyond funding to companies and researchers in Maryland. It fosters collaboration by connecting its grantees who share similar interests, thereby enhancing the life science ecosystem in Maryland. This support has directly benefited REPROCELL, enabling us to sign two collaborative agreements with scientists at Johns Hopkins and another at Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. Such public-private partnerships nurture a vibrant ecosystem where innovation flourishes and lives are transformed. MSCRF is instrumental in propelling Maryland toward becoming the leading innovative economy in regenerative medicine. Given this mission, I respectfully advocate for state's continued commitment in sustaining MSCRF budget of \$20.5 million.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rama Modali

CEO

Testimony in support of HB0232 - Maryland Beverage

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

02/14/2025

Richard Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#0232 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Maryland has an ambitious program to reduce waste and pollution. This bill is one component of that strategy dealing specifically with reduction in plastic waste from the use of plastic bottles. It implements a program to deal with recycling of those bottles and reduction of litter from discarding them into the environment.

According to a report from the World Economic Forum discussing a new report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) “We Can Cut Plastic Pollution by 80% by 2040 – here’s how” reduction of plastic bottle usage is a component of achieving that goal.¹

NPR reported “The plastic problem isn't your fault, but you can be part of the solution.”² This forward-looking bill says that Maryland is listening and will become a model on adopting solutions to achieve our environmental goals.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#0232.

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/06/reduce-plastic-pollution-unep/>

² <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/12/1015296355/zero-waste-single-use-plastic-trash-recycle>

HB 232_Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home_FAV.

Uploaded by: Robert Simon

Position: FAV



Hearing before the House Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
February 14, 2025

**Statement of Support (FAVORABLE)
of Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home on
HB 232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program**

Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home (MCCH) is a lay-led organization of Catholics from parishes in the three Catholic dioceses in Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. It engages in education about, and advocacy based upon, the teachings of the Catholic Church relating to care for creation and respect for all life. MCCH is a grassroots voice for the understanding of Catholic social teaching held by a wide array of Maryland Catholics. In the 2024 Legislative Session, 570 Maryland Catholics from 22 different Catholic parishes and religious communities across the State joined together through MCCH to support several key environmental bills under consideration by the General Assembly. MCCH is independent, though, and should be distinguished as an organization from the Maryland Catholic Conference, which represents the public policy positions of the bishops who lead these three dioceses.

MCCH would like to express its strong support for the passage of House Bill 232, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

We see it on our highways, byways, city streets, county roads, pastures, fields, and woods. We see it in our waterways, streams, and creeks. Discarded aluminum cans, plastic, and glass bottles are everywhere. It contaminates our soil, wastes needed resources, and—if not dumped there already—the litter eventually flows to our treasured Chesapeake Bay and then into our ocean. It is a threat to our human health and to wildlife. The plastic beverage containers break up into small pieces and are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Scientists estimate that humans are ingesting up to a credit card's worth of microplastics weekly. And then there is the intangible harm. The dumping of trash reinforces the philosophy that those who are able can engage in excessive consumerism and waste resources without any regard to the effect it has on others. Something must be done.

As Maryland Catholics, when advocating for the care of our common home, we are guided by the words of Pope Francis. In his 2015 encyclical, entitled *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*,¹ the Pope states "Political activity on the local level could also be directed to modifying consumption, developing an economy of waste disposal and recycling." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 180) Further, "Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money, but rather an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 191). In this connection, he specifically mentions "intelligent and profitable ways of reusing, revamping, and recycling." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 192)

¹ The English text of the encyclical, to which the paragraph numbers in the following parentheses refer, can be found at:
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

In his 2023 apostolic exhortation, *Laudate Deum*², Pope Francis observes “Efforts by households to reduce pollution and waste, and to consume with prudence, are creating a new culture. The mere fact that personal, family and community habits are changing is ... helping to bring about large processes of transformation rising from deep within society” (*Laudate Deum*, no. 71).

House Bill 232 is responsive to the Pope’s observations and recommendations. When enacted, it will respond to the current waste of resources resulting from the trashing of most of the 5.5 billion beverage containers annually sold in Maryland. The bill will also produce numerous benefits to our economy, environment, and health. Some of these benefits include:

- Capturing 3.6 billion additional beverage containers annually, including 2.3 billion plastic bottles, thereby increasing the rate of recycling in the state from 25 percent of containers to more than 90 percent.
- Increasing the availability of high-quality recycled feedstock, as the program under this bill is projected to generate annually an additional 13,328 tons of aluminum, 47,665 tons of PET plastic, 7,847 tons of HDPE plastic, and 159,397 tons of glass to be recycled into new containers.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions—231,707 metric tons of CO₂-equivalent air emissions would be eliminated each year, as a result of not having to produce new cans and bottles from virgin materials. This is comparable to removing the emissions of over 50,000 cars.
- Benefitting taxpayers and local governments, as they currently pay for disposal of beverage containers in our landfills and incinerators. These costs will be reduced because beverage containers will be diverted from landfills and incinerators. The program under this bill is self-financing. Fees from beverage producers, revenue from the sale of raw materials, unclaimed deposits, and penalties will finance the costs of collection and processing of beverage containers by a nonprofit Beverage Container Stewardship Organization, not by local governments.
- Creating jobs through investments in new refillable and reusable beverage container systems. The recycling generated by a deposit program creates five times as many jobs as landfilling or incineration.³
- Improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and other local waterways, where beverage containers account for a substantial proportion of the volume of trash polluting these waterways—trash that degrades both the God-given beauty and ecosystem health of our streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.⁴

House Bill 232 builds on the proven success of similar programs in other states and can lead to a positive cultural change. Currently 10 states covering 90 million people have successful recycling programs.⁵ When consumers receive cash for empty beverage containers, there is an incentive not to litter. This incentive over time can become part of the tapestry of our culture. As Pope Francis noted in the above quote from *Laudate Deum*, personal changes (such as recycling empty bottle containers) can lead to positive cultural changes and transformation.

At one time Maryland had a bottle refund program. Now is the time to bring back the bottle bill and begin to realize the environmental, health, economic, and cultural benefits it will bring.

For these reasons we strongly urge your support for this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our views and our respectful request for a **favorable** report on House Bill 232.

² The English text of this apostolic exhortation, to which the paragraph numbers in the parentheses refer, can be found at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html.

³ Maryland Sierra Club, “Maryland Needs a Bottle Bill! HB 232/SB 346” [Fact Sheet], 2025.

⁴ According to the Anacostia Watershed Society, beverage containers are more than half of the trash by volume captured in the Anacostia watershed’s trash traps.

⁵ California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Vermont. Redemption rates in 2021 ranged from 50 percent to 89 percent. There are currently 72 container deposit programs worldwide in 61 countries. Increased interest in the past decade has been fueled by public concern about plastic pollution. Susan Collins, “International Embrace,” *Plastics Recycling Update*, Winter 2020, pp. 38-43.

FAV_ HB232 - Bottle Deposit -2.pdf

Uploaded by: Robin Broder

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

HB232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Hearing Date: Friday, February 14, 2025

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed organizations respectfully request a FAVORABLE report on HB232 which establishes a long-overdue beverage container recycling refund and litter reduction program in the state of Maryland.

Bottle trash, particularly plastic, is a pervasive blight in our waterways, posing a serious threat to the environment and aquatic life. As plastic breaks down into microplastics and nanoplastics, it further contaminates the environment, creating long-term ecological damage. This pollution doesn't just affect wildlife - it enters the human food chain through the consumption of contaminated seafood, and bioaccumulates in our brains at an alarming rate.¹ **Enacting a bottle deposit bill is crucial to reducing plastic waste and protecting both our environment and public health.**

The Anacostia River and Baltimore Harbor are two of the few waterways in the United States with a waterway listed as "impaired" under the federal Clean Water Act for trash, and an accompanying Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or "pollution diet" for trash. **This means that trash is so prevalent in the watersheds that feed into the Anacostia River and Baltimore Harbor that the rivers aren't meeting water quality standards and that significant efforts are necessary to stop the damage and heal our waterways.** Establishing a state-wide beverage container deposit program would reduce the amount of trash that enters the waste stream in the first place, and would ultimately lead to cleaner, healthier waterways in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and beyond.

¹ Bioaccumulation of microplastics in decedent human brains. Nature Medicine. Nihart et al. February 3, 2025. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-024-03453-1>

Even when beverage containers are properly discarded instead of being littered, their disposal can contribute to the compounding harms that disproportionately impact historically disenfranchised and overburdened communities. Maryland's CY2021 recycling rate was 42.46%, but that rate is highly variable by county and ranges from 62% in Prince George's County to 5% in Somerset County.² The remainder of the waste generated in Maryland is buried in landfills or burned in incinerators, which exacerbates the environmental injustices shouldered by lower-income residents across the state.

A beverage container deposit program is a common-sense and proven strategy to reduce litter, increase recycling rates, and incentivize environmental stewardship by turning trash into treasure with a fully-refundable deposit on plastic, glass, and metal bottles. Ten states in the US have already paved the way for this type of program in Maryland, and the results are clear; states with bottle deposit programs are achieving recycling rates of up to 65%, which is significantly higher than both Maryland's rate and the national average of 32%.³⁴

The Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program will create a statewide deposit refund program for single use beverage containers similar to successful programs that already exist in other states. This will increase the monetary value of these bottles, which will therefore keep them out of our incinerators and landfills because people will be incentivized to recycle them properly.

This bill will result in:

- **Less trash** in our streets, streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Fewer plastic, glass, and metal bottles going to Maryland's incinerators, which means **cleaner air and less pollution** in our environment.
- **More space** in our landfills.
- **Reduced strain on public waste management** with a system that removes beverage containers from the municipal waste stream.

For all of the reasons outlined above, Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed organizations urge this committee to issue a favorable report on HB232.

Sincerely,

Robin Broder, Acting Executive Director

² County Recyclables by Commodity in Tons for CY21. Compiled by the Maryland Department of the Environment from Reports Submitted for CY21.
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Documents/County%20Commodity%20CY21.pdf>

³ The 50 States of Recycling. A State-by-State Assessment of US Packaging Recycling Rates, pp. 15-17. December 2023. Eunomia Research & Consulting Inc.

⁴ National Overview: Facts and Figures on Materials, Wastes and Recycling. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Last updated on November 8, 2024.
<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

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FAV_ HB232 - Bottle Deposit .pdf

Uploaded by: Robin Broder

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

HB232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Hearing Date: Friday, February 14, 2025

Position: FAVORABLE

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rate was 42.46%, but that rate is highly variable by county and ranges from 62% in Prince George's County to 5% in Somerset County.² The remainder of the waste generated in Maryland is buried in landfills or burned in incinerators, which exacerbates the environmental injustices shouldered by lower-income residents across the state.

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- **Reduced strain on public waste management** with a system that removes beverage containers from the municipal waste stream.

For all of the reasons outlined above, Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed organizations urge this committee to issue a favorable report on HB232.

Sincerely,

Robin Broder, Acting Executive Director
Waterkeepers Chesapeake
robin@waterkeeperschesapeake.org

² County Recyclables by Commodity in Tons for CY21. Compiled by the Maryland Department of the Environment from Reports Submitted for CY21.
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Documents/County%20Commodity%20CY21.pdf>

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CLYNK testimony in support of HB 232 (MD).pdf

Uploaded by: Sam Tracy

Position: FAV



**Testimony of Sam Tracy in support of H.B. 232:
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Environment and Transportation Committee
February 14, 2025**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 232, which would create a Recycling Refund program, also known as a Deposit Return System or simply a “Bottle Bill.” Passage of H.B. 232 would make Maryland the 11th state to pass a Bottle Bill, the gold standard for beverage container litter reduction and recycling.

I work for **CLYNK**, a circular economy solutions provider. We make it easy for people and brands to do the right thing through our consumer-centric “bag-drop” technology solutions. Our technology is used in 5 of the 10 Bottle Bill states throughout the country, and dramatically reduces the time and effort required for consumers to redeem their empty containers. We make recycling quick, easy, clean, and fun.

CLYNK, founded 18 years ago, is the pioneer of bag-drop redemption, and has processed over 2.5 billion beverage containers. We have also enabled nearly \$5 million in donations to local charities through our CLYNK To Give program, where we support non-profits organizing bottle drive fundraisers.

Recycling Refunds are effective.

Recycling Refund programs have now existed for over 50 years, and have proven to be incredibly effective at protecting the environment in a variety of ways.

Bottle Bills reduce litter.

There is no other policy that is as effective at reducing litter as Recycling Refunds. This is because they establish a cost to littering, as throwing an empty bottle out of your car window effectively becomes throwing away money. Similarly, they attach a monetary value to picking up litter, turning empty drink containers into dimes just waiting to be redeemed.

In states with effective Bottle Bills, you rarely see empty drink containers littering roads or public spaces. When you do, they aren't there for long, because someone will come by to earn some money by picking them up.

Several studies on Bottle Bills' litter reduction effects have been published, with many showing reductions over 70 or even 80%.¹

Bottle Bills dramatically increase recycling rates.

Along with the massive benefits in litter reduction come substantial increases in recycling rates. States without Recycling Refunds only recycle about 24% of their beverage containers,² while those with Bottle Bills generally recycle more than double that amount.

Oregon, the best-performing Bottle Bill state after CLYNK helped establish its bag-drop program, boasts a recycling rate of 87%,³ and it's reasonable to expect that Maryland could match or even surpass that number with the right policy specifics. For additional context, the best-performing Deposit Return System in the world is Germany's, where 98% of drink containers are returned.⁴

Bottle Bills save natural resources and save money.

In addition to increasing recycling rates, Deposit Return Systems establish a new stream of recycling that is significantly cleaner than beverage containers recycled through curbside programs. When beverage containers are mixed into single-stream systems, they are often too contaminated to be made into new drink containers, instead being "downcycled" into lower-value products like fleece clothing or park benches.

When beverage containers are returned through a Bottle Bill, they are clean and high-quality enough to be recycled into new beverage containers, creating a truly circular economy where both waste and the need for new materials are minimized. This has a positive impact on the environment, and brings cost savings as well.⁵

- Aluminum can be recycled using less than 5% of the energy to make a new can
- Plastic can be recycled using only two-thirds the energy as using raw materials
- Glass can be recycled using about 77% the energy to make new bottles

¹ See this collection of studies, compiled by the Container Recycling Institute: <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/benefits-of-bottle-bills/litter-studies-in-bottle-bill-states>

² See this report from Frontier Group: <https://frontiergroup.org/articles/power-nickel-bottle-bills-and-producer-responsibility/>

³ See data from the Container Recycling Institute: https://d12v9rtnomnebu.cloudfront.net/paychek/10_states_Redemption_Rates_080524.pdf

⁴ See Reloop's fact sheet: <https://www.reloopplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Fact-Sheet-Performance-22Sept2022.pdf>

⁵ See data from the Environmental Protection Agency: <https://archive.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/smm/wastewise/web/html/factoid.html>

Bottle Bills create jobs and drive investment.

Beyond the cost savings for businesses, establishing a Recycling Refund program will create thousands of jobs in Maryland. This program will create business opportunities in transportation, logistics, manufacturing, technology, and numerous other sectors. This will bring significant investment in facilities and equipment to handle the collection and processing of recycled material.

For comparison, over 100 of CLYNK's 173 employees are in Maine, where we operate dozens of bag-drop locations and two processing facilities. Maryland has over four times Maine's population, requiring even more jobs and infrastructure. We would love to participate in the Recycling Refund system proposed in this bill, and doing so would result in substantial investments and hiring across the state. There are numerous other companies in the recycling space who would be making similar investments in Maryland as a direct result of this bill passing.

Recycling Refunds can be convenient.

Since most Bottle Bills are many decades old, there is sometimes a perception that returning bottles and cans is a slow, dirty, and cumbersome process. We're happy to share that this is no longer the case.

CLYNK's bag-drop system makes container redemption quick, easy, clean, and fun. That's why there are millions of satisfied bag-drop customers in Bottle Bill states.

To start, customers simply create an account online or over the phone, which they can then access using our smartphone app or a physical card.

They then fill a bag with their empty containers, and when that bag is full, attach a sticker with a unique QR code that's linked to their account. This bag can be dropped at one of our sustainability stations, located conveniently near supermarkets or other retailers. This process takes less than 15 seconds and can easily be added onto other errands like a trip to the grocery store.



CLYNK customers dropping bags at one of our sustainability stations in Maine

Once a station is full, our team picks up the bags and brings them to our processing facility. Here, they are counted, credited to users' accounts, sorted, and processed into a form that can be used to make new drink containers. The bags are also recycled to make new CLYNK bags, which are 50% recycled content.

CLYNK users can see their deposit balance accumulate in their account, withdrawing the funds whenever they choose. Some make frequent withdrawals, while most like to build their balance until it reaches a meaningful amount, using it to cover the cost of a grocery run or make a special purchase.



An overview of how CLYNK works

We strive to make recycling easy for consumers and businesses alike, and would be dedicated to making sure Maryland's Recycling Refunds program runs as smoothly as possible. This will allow it to reach its full potential of reducing litter, increasing recycling, saving resources, and growing the economy.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Of course, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sam Tracy

Director of Legislative Affairs & Business Development

stracy@clynk.com

HB232_Dems Women Club Worcester Co_FAV

Uploaded by: Susan Buyer

Position: FAV



Dear Members of the House ENT Committee,

We are writing to express our strong support for the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (HB 232), a crucial piece of legislation that promises to have a significant positive impact on our environment and communities. As concerned citizens committed to sustainability and environmental stewardship, I believe that the Maryland Bottle Bill represents a vital step towards a cleaner, greener future for our state.

The Maryland Bottle Bill, which proposes a deposit-return system for beverage containers, has proven successful in numerous other states across the country. This system incentivizes the recycling of bottles and cans by offering a small refund for each container returned, ultimately reducing litter, conserving resources, and decreasing the burden on our landfills.

Implementing the Bottle Bill in Maryland would yield numerous benefits:

Environmental Impact

By encouraging the recycling of beverage containers, the bill would significantly reduce the amount of litter in our cities, parks, and waterways. This initiative would help protect wildlife and preserve the natural beauty of our state. Additionally, recycling reduces the need for raw materials, thereby conserving energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic Advantages

The deposit-return system would create new jobs in the recycling and processing industries, boosting our local economy. Furthermore, the reduction in litter would decrease the costs associated with cleanup efforts, allowing municipalities to allocate resources to other pressing needs.

Community Engagement

The Bottle Bill fosters a sense of responsibility and environmental consciousness among residents. By participating in the deposit-return system, individuals of all ages can contribute to a collective effort to protect our environment. This engagement can lead to broader support for other sustainability initiatives and a stronger sense of community.

In conclusion, the Maryland Bottle Bill is a forward-thinking and effective solution to address the pressing issue of waste management and environmental conservation. I urge you to support this legislation and help pave the way for a cleaner, healthier Maryland. Together, we can make a meaningful difference for our environment and future generations.

Please add this testimony to the witness list for **HB 232** heard by the ENT Committee on February 14th, 2025.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Democratic Women's Club of Worcester County

PO Box 1242

Ocean Pines, MD 21811

Democraticwomensclubworcesterc@gmail.com

HB232_Indivisible Worcester MD_FAV

Uploaded by: Susan Buyer

Position: FAV



Indivisible Worcester Maryland

<http://indivisibleworcestermd.org>

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admin@indivisibleworcestermd.org

Susan Buyer and Toby Perkins

Coordinators

Testimony for Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee on HB 232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill

Indivisible Worcester MD strongly supports HB 232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.

The objective of this program is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a small refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The program would be financed and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, not by Maryland residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide strong oversight.

Programs like this have been operating in 10 U.S. states for decades and are the most effective policy for reducing beverage container litter. With a 10-cent deposit on most containers, it would capture 90% of beverage containers sold in the state annually, diverting an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing pollution from littered plastic bottles that break down in the environment and get washed into the Chesapeake Bay. Recent polling has found that more than 90% of Maryland's voting public would support the Bottle Bill.

We urge you to support HB 232, to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution, provide cleaner parks and waterways, and create savings for municipalities and local taxpayers.

Susan P. Buyer and Toby J. Perkins

Coordinators, Indivisible Worcester MD

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<https://indivisibleworcestermd.org/>

facebook @IndivisibleWorcesterMD

CRI Supports MD HB232 2-12-25 Final .pdf

Uploaded by: Susan Collins

Position: FAV

February 12, 2025

Environment & Transportation Committee
Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman; Delegate Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
250 Taylor House Office Building
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee,

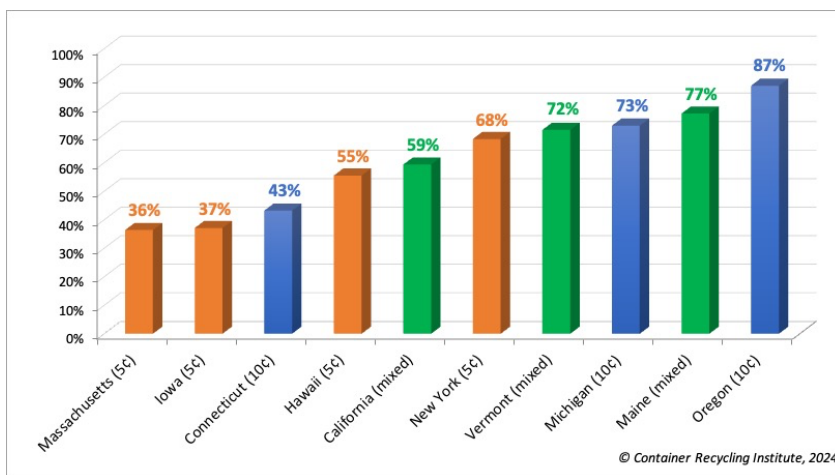
We are writing in support of House Bill 232, “Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program,” a bill that would establish a beverage container deposit program in Maryland.

We applaud the bill for:

1. Incorporating most beverage types into the proposed deposit-refund program (DRS), including **wine and liquor**. Doing so will generate clean, high-quality glass that is desired by glass manufacturers, and will help alleviate the pressure that the state has been experiencing to find aggregate uses for glass collected through municipal programs.
2. Including a **wide scope of beverage containers**, as per the definition.
3. Specifying a **deposit of 10¢ for containers less than or equal to 24 fluid ounces and 15¢ for containers more than 24 ounces**, with options to increase the refund value in the future.
4. Including **robust performance targets** as well as a description of the penalties for not completing these targets.

Ten cents is a strong financial incentive for people to return containers rather than throw them in the trash or litter them. Michigan and Oregon, the two U.S. states with dime deposits, have achieved much higher redemption rates—73% and 87% respectively in 2024—than the deposit states with 5¢ deposits (where reported redemption rates range from 38% to 72%). When consumers

10 Deposit States Redemption Rates with Deposit Amounts



who purchased the drinks do not take bottles and cans in for refunds themselves, there are always other people and groups ready to do the redemption for them to generate income.

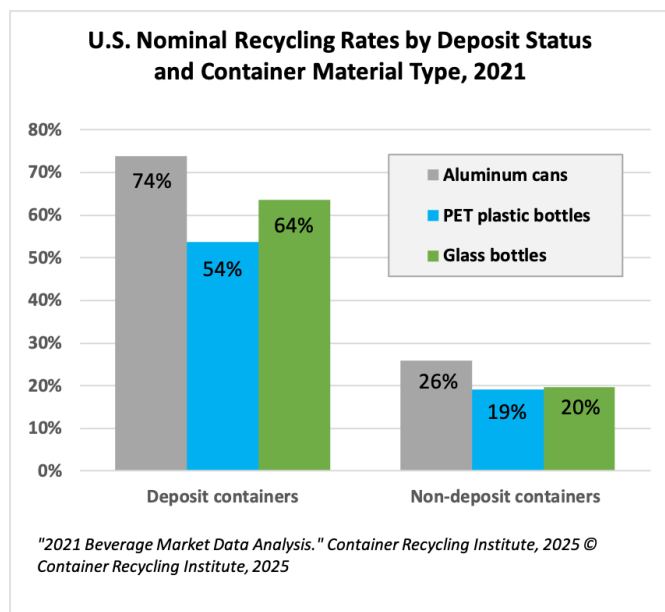
For more than 50 years, beverage container deposit refund laws have been successful in achieving recycling rates that are up to 3 times higher than those of bottles and cans without deposits. As the graphic below shows, about three quarters (74%) of aluminum cans with a deposit were recycled nationwide in 2021, in contrast to just 26% of cans lacking a deposit. The differences for bottles are more pronounced: 54% vs. 19% for non-deposit PET plastic, and 64% vs. 20% for non-deposit glass.

Increasing beverage sales nationwide has led to burgeoning bottle and can waste.

Based on national statistics, CRI estimates that 79% of the 5.5 billion beverage bottles and cans sold in Maryland in 2021 were wasted: littered, landfilled, or incinerated. That level of consumption and wasting represents a significant burden on taxpayers: whether through city-run recycling programs or municipally-contracted trash pick-up and disposal.

Deposits have multiple benefits, including:

- **Achieving higher recycling rates** than municipal programs alone.
- **Transferring** the financial and operational responsibility for recycling from taxpayers and ratepayers to the producers of disposable beverage containers.
- **Adding value to local and regional economies** through the sale and processing of scrap materials.
- **Avoiding greenhouse gas emissions and reducing energy use** by displacing virgin materials in manufacturing.
- **Reducing litter** that is expensive for public and private entities to clean up, that causes injuries to people and domestic animals, and that adds to harmful ocean plastic waste.
- **Promoting job growth**; it is estimated that there are more than 20,000 jobs resulting from the existing deposit return systems in the 10 states where the law exists.



Beverage container deposit programs are extremely popular – a recent public opinion poll by Gonzales Research and Media Services found that **90%** of Maryland voters would support a deposit return system in the state.

If Maryland were to pass this DRS bill, CRI estimates that the state would recycle **3.4 billion additional containers annually—or just over 210,000 tons of metal, glass, plastic and paper—**

over and above the recycling currently taking place. By reducing the need to make new bottles and cans from virgin materials, this additional recycling would eliminate about 239,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions: ***an amount equivalent to taking almost 52,000 cars off the road for a year.***

We are optimistic that there will be strong markets for deposit containers generated in Maryland, in part because multiple global beverage brands have made public announcements about increasing their use of recycled materials, as the below table shows.

Selected plastics reduction commitments by global brands		
Company	Timeframe	Commitment or target
Coca-Cola	by 2030	Equivalent of 100% of containers collected and recycled
Coca-Cola	by 2030	Average 50% recycled content in bottles
Danone	by 2025	100% of packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable
McDonald's	by 2025	100% of guest packaging from renewable, recycled or certified sources
Kraft Heinz	by 2025	100% of packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable
Nestlé	by 2025	100% of packaging recyclable or reusable
Reprinted from CRI's Winter 2018 newsletter		
© Container Recycling Institute, 2018		

These lofty goals can only be met through the increased availability of high-quality beverage bottles and cans for use as feedstock in new containers. Deposit programs consistently generate such high-quality bottles and cans. For example, deposit-grade PET bottles have recently had a value of 21.13¢ per pound, ***twice the value of non-deposit, curbside PET*** (10.47¢ per pound).

Deposits on beverage containers are now available to more than 553 million people worldwide. With the announcement of multiple new deposit laws in 2023 and 2024 (including Poland, Singapore, England, Northern Ireland, and Spain), it is expected that more than **800 million people will have access to deposit programs by 2027**. This trend is projected to continue as more nations realize that deposits are a vital part of the solution to the problem of bottle and can waste and plastic pollution.

In sum, CRI supports the passage of a beverage container deposit law in Maryland. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Susan Collins
President, Container Recycling Institute

About the Container Recycling Institute: CRI is a nonprofit organization and a leading authority on the economic and environmental impacts of beverage containers and other consumer-product packaging.

HB232-SB346 Letter of Support County Council.docx.

Uploaded by: Tyasia Johnson

Position: FAV



City of Cambridge

410 Academy Street, Cambridge, MD – P.O. Box 255
Phone: 410-228-4020 Fax: 410-228-4554

February 11, 2025

The Honorable County Council of Dorchester County

Dear Councilmembers:

The City of Cambridge urges you to support HB 232/SB 346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill.


The objective of this program is to reduce beverage container litter and plastic pollution. It would add a small refundable deposit to the purchase of beverage containers. The deposit is fully refunded when the empty containers are returned to a convenient retailer or other redemption point. The program would be financed and implemented by beverage producers through a nonprofit Stewardship Organization, not by the City or its residents. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide strong oversight.

Programs like this have been operating in 10 states for decades and are the most effective policy for reducing beverage container litter. With a 10-cent deposit on most containers, it would capture 90% of beverage containers sold in the State of Maryland annually, diverting an additional 3.6 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, and the environment, reducing pollution from littered plastic bottles that break down in the environment and get washed into the Chesapeake Bay. Recent polling has found that more than 90% of Maryland's voting public would support the Bottle Bill.

This program would benefit our residents by reducing unsightly litter, increasing recycling, and reducing the amount of municipal solid waste that the City must collect and process. The City would not be required to implement or enforce the program, but has the option to set up its own redemption center and receive a handling fee per container to finance it, paid for by the Stewardship Organization.

We urge you to support HB 232/SB 346 for the purposes of reducing beverage container litter and plastic pollution, providing cleaner parks and waterways, and creating savings for municipalities and local taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Lajan Cephas
Mayor, City of Cambridge

HB232-SB346 Letter of Support Mayor Statement.docx

Uploaded by: Tyasia Johnson

Position: FAV



City of Cambridge

410 Academy Street, Cambridge, MD – P.O. Box 255
Phone: 410-228-4020 Fax: 410-228-4554

February 11, 2025

The City of Cambridge urges you to support HB 232/SB 346, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program, also known as the Maryland Bottle Bill. We support HB 232/SB 346 for the purposes of reducing beverage container litter and plastic pollution, providing cleaner parks and waterways, and creating savings for municipalities and local taxpayers.

The city of Cambridge as well as other municipalities could save thousands of dollars and some municipalities hundreds of thousands of dollars with the passing of this bottle bill. What we take to the dump comes with a financial cost. The less we take to the landfill, the less we pay in tipping fees.

I personally support this bill because I know first hand the effects of poverty and pollution. My cousin did not have the best life growing up and I remember multiple summers collecting aluminum cans with him, so he could provide for himself. This would be a revenue generating opportunity for those with limited incomes. This will empower non-profits, create jobs, and create entrepreneurship opportunities for the less fortunate.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signed by:


C3B62A7AE3CD4A1...

Lajan Cephas

Mayor, City of Cambridge

HB0232 Favorable Written Testimony - MEPPN2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Walter Tucker

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB0232

**Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction
Program**

FAVORABLE

TO: Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Regina Boyce, Vice Chair and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Rev. Walter Tucker, Member, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

DATE: Feb 12, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 0232. The Episcopal Church along with many other faith communities endorses responsible stewardship of God's creation. Our faith teaches us that all creation is interconnected, and the health of our environment directly impacts the well-being of our communities. Our standard of living has led to a degradation of our sacred earth, and we have a moral responsibility to work for restoration of the environment.

About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland each year. Of those, only 1.5 billion containers are captured for recycling – even with Maryland's curbside pickup of recyclables. Of the 4 billion remaining containers, 2.6 billion are plastic, and end up in landfills, in our waterways and as litter. Plastic pollution is a major problem worldwide. Beverage container deposit programs are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used containers and keeping them out of our environment. 10 U.S. states have successful beverage container deposit programs.

All creation is a gift from God that we need to nurture. This bill promotes environmental stewardship and care for our environment, our local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. It aligns with our faith's teachings on the importance of caring for God's creation and ensuring that future generations can enjoy a healthy and sustainable environment.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.

2024 Daily Trash Bottle Pickup .pdf

Uploaded by: William Walmsley Jr.

Position: FAV

	January		February		March		April				
Date	Total	Film +	Total	Film +	Total	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass
1	0.9	0.35	1.57	0.99	3.15	1.3	3.86	2.01			
2	3	1.44	6.22	2.05	13.95	6.19	2.51	1.17			
3	1.43	0.46	0	0	0	0	0.77	0.17			
4	2.07	0.6	1.85	1.06	3.7	1.81	4.92	2.49			
5	0	0	1.34	0.46	2.54	1.26	1.08	0.71			
6	3.97	1.98	2.49	1.41	3	1.52	10.17	8.6			
7	1.23	0.68	0.84	0.44	1.7	0.22	0	0			
8	2.6	0.62	1.96	0.88	2.07	1.12	2.89	1.68			
9	1.63	1.17	0.57	0.37	6.59	3.4	2.8	2.01			
10	6.39	2.93	0	0	0	0	3.79	2.03			
11	2.34	1.65	7.25	3.35	8.55	2.27	4.92	3.49			
12	1.63	0.88	5.34	2.38	4.87	1.3	1.76	1.08			
13	5.8	1.54	2.78	1.59	2.62	1.5	6.74	4.58			
14	3.31	1.7	2.78	1.85	0.53	0.29	0	0			
15	1.26	0.64	1.06	0.77	1.96	0.44	3.53	2.71			
16	0	0	2.87	1.17	6.2	2.27	5.58	5.05			
17	2.12	1.04	0	0	0	0	1.29	0.95			
18	1.81	1.32	3.17	1.34	6.28	1.29	3.37	2.47			
19	0	0	2.25	1.1	2.65	0.99	0.55	0.13			
20	0	0	2.36	1.39	1.72	0.79	8.69	7.23			
21	0	0	1.04	0.4	2.93	0.88	0	0			
22	1.7	0.64	1.9	0.66	3.11	2.47	1.14	0.5			
23	1.92	0.97	4.89	3.04	7.89	3.89	1.52	0.73			
24	2.12	1.39	0	0	0	0	0.88	0.51			
25	8.29	2.38	3.84	0.64	8.75	2.01	2.05	1.34	14	3	1
26	3.59	1.54	1.7	0.66	2.14	0.77	0.57	0.28	2	2	0
27	0	0	1.22	0.53	2.91	1.1	1.74	1.25	9	7	1
28	6.32	2.88	2.67	1.15	3.48	2.4	0	0	0	0	0
29	1.28	0.77	7.45	0.9	0.64	0.51	3.55	0.24	2	0	0
30	4.59	1.53			0	0	2.58	2.05	6	2	1
31	1.43	1.23			6.57	3.88					
Total	72.73	32.33	71.41	30.58	110.5	45.87	83.25	55.46	33	14	3
Daily Avg.	2.35	1.04	2.46	1.05	3.56	1.48	2.78	1.85	5.50	2.33	0.50
Current YTD	72.73	32.33	144.14	62.91	254.64	108.78	337.89	55.46	33	14	3

	May						June				
Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass
1.85	0.82	0.53	1	1	0	0.29	1.23	0.63	5	1	1
1.34	0.77	0.62	1	1	1	0.15	3.09	2.21	14	6	1
0.6	0.53	0.29	0	2	0	0.24	0.71	0.4	6	1	0
2.43	7.08	4.22	31	3	3	2.86	0.73	0.44	3	2	0
0.37	2.71	1.87	17	5	0	0.84	1.39	0.71	6	0	1
1.57	0.73	0.4	2	2	0	0.33	1.7	0.82	4	0	0
0	1.28	0.66	1	0	1	0.62	1.3	0.88	5	2	1
1.21	1.19	0.4	8	0	0	0.79	0	0	0	0	0
0.79	2.16	1.65	6	0	0	0.51	4.01	2.61	20	8	1
1.76	1.52	0.48	5	1	0	1.04	1.15	0.89	4	2	2
1.43	1.68	0.53	7	3	0	1.15	5.42	4.1	19	4	4
0.68	3.06	2	19	4	1	1.06	2.82	2.11	14	3	0
2.16	1.28	0.82	5	4	1	0.46	0.79	0.48	6	1	0
0	1.68	0.95	0	0	0	0.73	0.73	0.27	2	2	0
0.82	0.86	0.42	15	3	0	0.44	2.25	1.15	16	2	0
0.53	2.69	1.19	20	1	0	1.5	1.76	1.39	11	4	1
0.34	1.17	0.62	2	6	0	0.55	0.64	0.4	3	0	0
0.9	3.04	1.58	13	5	1	1.46	2.36	1.46	7	1	1
0.42	2.98	1.79	3	4	2	1.19	1.26	0.66	6	2	0
1.46	1.5	0.77	1	0	0	0.73	1.74	0.29	4	1	0
0	1.72	0.57	5	1	0	1.15	0.95	0.58	3	2	3
0.64	0.29	0.11	0	1	0	0.18	1.74	1.12	11	3	1
0.79	1.08	0.82	11	1	0	0.26	0.99	0.79	7	1	1
0.37	2.05	1.68	9	2	0	0.37	1.76	1.3	1	4	2
0.71	6.06	4.3	10	12	6	1.76	5.36	2.43	34	5	1
0.29	0.73	0.4	5	2	0	0.33	0.79	0.59	2	0	0
0.49	1.19	0.7	4	2	0	0.49	2.36	1.74	6	4	2
0	7.43	5.81	42	5	3	1.62	1.12	0.68	7	0	0
3.31	1.61	0.77	15	3	0	0.84	5.16	3.42	19	17	3
0.53	5.88	3.41	28	3	2	2.47	2.07	1.7	3	0	3
	2.03	1.72	7	0	1	0.31					
27.79	68.8	42.08	293	77	22	26.72	57.38	36.25	248	78	29
0.93	2.22	1.36	9.45	2.48	0.71	0.86	1.91	1.21	8.27	2.60	0.97
136.57	406.69	97.54	326.00	91.00	25.00	163.3	464.07	133.79	574.00	169.00	54.00

2024 Daily Trash Pickup (lbs.)

	July						August			
Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans
0.6	1.25	1.12	8	5	1	0.13	5.95	2.2	38	10
0.88	0.77	0.31	8	0	0	0.46	0.99	0.73	8	1
0.31	1.34	1.01	10	2	1	0.33	4.63	3.55	11	4
0.29	0.87	0.61	3	0	1	0.26	3.81	2.49	9	8
0.68	0.97	0.37	8	1	0	0.6	0.93	0.36	4	1
0.88	6.37	4.47	9	7	4	1.9	1.59	1.22	7	1
0.42	0.51	0.14	1	1	0	0.37	4.37	2.36	25	7
0	0.71	0.51	6	1	1	0.2	8.68	3.67	37	4
1.4	0.57	0.15	2	2	0	0.42	2.32	1	3	2
0.26	1.06	0.82	7	1	1	0.24	2.71	1.92	14	6
1.32	0.86	0.62	10	3	0	0.24	0	0	0	0
0.71	5.45	3.88	15	4	4	1.57	7.07	6.5	10	4
0.31	3.22	2.62	7	4	2	0.6	0.64	0.29	3	1
0.46	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.82	2.38	5	1
1.1	0.46	0.26	2	3	0	0.2	1.34	0.41	4	6
0.37	0.75	0.46	5	2	0	0.29	2.74	2.54	5	2
0.24	1.72	1.23	4	2	2	0.49	8.99	5.75	19	6
0.9	5.31	4.03	27	15	4	1.28	6.2	3.33	14	5
0.6	3.29	2.08	17	5	1	1.21	0.98	0.83	14	2
1.45	3	2.82	3	1	4	0.18	5.12	2.98	11	3
0.37	3.77	2.14	7	4	3	1.63	7.34	6.66	6	2
0.62	7.48	5.05	38	6	5	2.43	4.78	4.43	7	2
0.2	3.35	2.56	38	0	1	0.79	1.65	0.97	4	1
0.46	2.2	1.63	7	4	1	0.57	2.62	1.65	8	1
2.93	2.6	1.63	9	2	1	0.97	2.36	1.68	6	3
0.2	2.29	1.41	6	2	0	0.88	1.04	0.8	4	5
0.62	0.75	0.57	6	3	0	0.18	0.57	0.39	3	4
0.44	2.31	1.49	18	6	1	0.82	2.98	2.45	2	1
1.74	1.98	1.67	3	2	3	0.31	4.56	3.1	34	7
0.37	2.89	2.43	7	2	3	0.46	5.49	4.39	11	1
	1.39	1.02	9	1	1	0.37	6.79	5.58	21	8
21.13	69.49	49.11	300	91	45	20.38	112.06	76.61	347	109
0.70	2.24	1.58	9.68	2.94	1.45	0.66	3.61	2.47	11.19	3.52
184.42	533.56	182.90	874.00	260.00	99.00	204.8	645.62	259.51	1221.00	369.00

		September							
Glass	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight
1	3.75	1.76	0.3	5	4	0	1.46	1.23	0.83
0	0.26	3.22	0.99	6	1	1	2.23	0.77	0.35
5	1.08	2.2	0.33	2	0	0	1.87	0.55	0.13
2	1.32	0.55	0.37	5	2	0	0.18	1.92	1.68
0	0.57	1.08	0.35	5	0	0	0.73	2.93	2.27
1	0.37	2.67	2.18	9	2	2	0.49	3.35	2.86
1	2.01	10.16	8.37	15	12	7	1.79	2.03	1.63
2	5.01	0.55	0.26	7	0	0	0.29	1.3	0.88
0	1.32	0.53	0.33	3	2	0	0.2	3.46	3.02
2	0.79	1.19	0.99	3	0	2	0.2	1.46	0.91
0	0	1.52	0.9	5	1	1	0.62	0.68	0.36
2	0.57	1.46	1.28	4	0	0	0.18	1.19	0.9
0	0.35	0.51	0.25	1	1	0	0.26	3.48	2.58
2	0.44	21.78	10.64	19	1	4	11.14	3.02	2.62
0	0.93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.97	0.42
0	0.2	0.79	0.53	10	3	0	0.26	0.93	0.38
6	3.24	1.59	1.15	5	0	0	0.44	1.43	0.75
4	2.87	4.85	3.13	16	3	3	1.72	0.64	0.33
3	0.15	3.97	3.22	35	3	4	0.75	0	0
1	2.14	1.28	0.91	5	2	0	0.37	2.14	1.15
0	0.68	2.95	2.2	15	7	2	0.75	1.61	1.06
0	0.35	5.12	4	27	2	3	1.12	0.57	0.26
1	0.68	4.48	1.15	9	3	1	3.33	1.7	0.95
2	0.97	4.19	3.02	6	1	7	1.17	0.75	0.29
3	0.68	1.98	0.81	3	3	0	1.17	0.44	0.22
1	0.24	0.97	0.33	0	0	0	0.64	2.03	1.85
0	0.18	2.29	0.64	5	2	0	1.65	1.88	0.38
4	0.53	7.54	4.81	8	7	6	2.73	1.04	0.31
1	1.46	1.9	1.3	3	0	2	0.6	2.87	2.56
5	1.1	1.98	1.25	0	0	0	0.73	0.77	0.24
7	1.21		0					0.53	0.2
56	35.45	95.06	55.99	236	62	45	39.07	47.67	32.37
1.81	1.14	3.17	1.81	7.87	2.07	1.50	1.30	1.54	1.04
155.00	240.25	740.68	315.50	1457.00	431.00	200.00	279.32	788.35	347.87

October				November				
Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass
7	3	2	0.4	3.95	3.31	4	2	3
5	0	0	0.42	2.25	1.76	4	1	1
2	7	0	0.42	0	0	0	0	0
8	5	2	0.24	2.14	1.24	13	7	0
3	3	1	0.66	0.86	0.51	6	2	0
11	4	2	0.49	0.64	0.18	3	0	0
5	4	3	0.4	2.07	1.65	8	5	2
11	4	2	0.42	0.68	0.35	2	3	0
9	4	1	0.44	2.73	1.87	10	4	1
4	1	4	0.55	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	1	0.32	1.41	0.45	5	1	0
1	1	0	0.29	0.9	0.35	10	2	0
5	1	1	0.9	2.93	2.16	11	3	3
10	3	3	0.4	3.64	2.6	7	7	1
1	1	0	0.55	2.36	1.46	10	3	1
5	1	0	0.55	3.64	2.87	4	2	4
8	0	0	0.68	0.99	0.68	5	4	0
3	2	0	0.31	1.65	1.03	3	4	1
0	0	0	0	1.41	0.53	4	2	0
7	5	0	0.99	1.37	0.77	5	1	1
8	0	1	0.55	4.45	2.62	29	7	0
5	0	0	0.31	3.15	2.09	4	3	1
4	3	0	0.75	6.53	3.93	18	10	2
2	0	0	0.46	3.86	2.38	16	11	0
1	0	0	0.22	2.47	1.83	8	2	0
10	2	1	0.18	2.56	0.71	5	3	1
2	2	0	1.5	1.85	1.12	5	4	1
8	0	0	0.73	2.18	1.23	2	7	3
2	3	2	0.31	3.19	2.26	6	3	3
2	2	0	0.53	3.29	1.15	20	10	1
1	1	0	0.33					
152	63	26	15.3	69.15	43.09	227	113	30
4.90	2.03	0.84	0.49	2.31	1.44	7.57	3.77	1.00
1609.00	494.00	226.00	294.62	857.50	390.96	1836.00	607.00	256.00

	December						
Film +	Total	Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	Total
0.64	2.54	0.45	7	5	1	2.09	28.21
0.49	1.23	0.81	12	7	3	0.42	38.77
0	0.86	0.44	9	2	0	0.42	13.02
0.9	1.85	1.3	4	3	0	0.55	31.49
0.35	4.34	3.11	12	0	3	1.23	20.17
0.46	2.2	1.78	8	4	2	0.42	38.88
0.42	2.8	1.59	6	1	2	1.21	28.29
0.33	4.1	2.53	22	3	1	1.57	26.73
0.86	2.01	1.37	12	2	1	0.64	29.38
0	1.23	0.44	5	2	0	0.79	20.5
0.96	3.48	2.2	7	3	2	1.28	38.11
0.55	4.59	2.94	6	2	1	1.65	40.14
0.77	5.07	3.84	10	3	2	1.23	35.86
1.04	4.45	2.8	10	13	3	1.65	44.74
0.9	2.9	2.02	19	5	0	0.88	18.95
0.77	3.29	2.69	5	3	4	0.6	31.24
0.31	4.54	3.61	7	3	4	0.93	24.48
0.62	1.76	0.72	8	3	1	1.04	40.44
0.88	1.43	1.1	3	1	1	0.33	20.77
0.6	0.86	0.29	1	0	0	0.57	32.86
1.83	5.84	3.92	9	2	2	1.92	31.3
1.06	1.43	0.35	1	0	0	1.08	32.41
2.6	2.62	1.98	6	1	1	0.64	34.74
1.48	4.59	3.51	9	3	5	1.08	23.44
0.64	4.78	4.27	2	4	4	0.51	45.8
1.85	1.68	1.37	9	3	1	0.31	20.09
0.73	2.67	1.1	8	3	0	1.57	19.43
0.95	14.73	10.99	16	19	17	3.74	51.8
0.93	2.89	1.9	8	4	1	0.99	37.08
2.14	2.76	1.61	8	1	1	1.15	32.3
	2.82	2.16	4	1	3	0.66	21.56
26.06	102.34	69.19	253	106	66	33.15	952.98
0.87	3.30	4.32	8.16	3.42	2.13	1.07	
320.68	959.84	460.15	2089.00	713.00	322.00	353.83	

Year Total					Date
Recycle Weight	Plastic Bottles	Metal Cans	Glass	Film +	
14.36	75	28.2	9	13.85	1
22.44	58	17.73	7	16.33	2
7.29	40	19.55	6	5.73	3
18.99	76	32.49	8	12.5	4
12.42	61	11.36	5	7.75	5
27.06	53	14.22	11	11.82	6
19.71	66	33.36	17	8.58	7
14.29	93	17.67	6	12.44	8
17.86	65	23	4	11.52	9
11.94	42	13.92	11	8.56	10
23.52	55	13	8	14.59	11
28.32	79	22.5	8	11.82	12
24.19	48	14.29	9	11.67	13
25.04	53	29.38	13	19.7	14
11.28	67	20.41	1	7.67	15
22.73	65	18.54	9	8.51	16
16.22	53	24.75	12	8.26	17
25.39	91	26.33	15	15.05	18
13.15	82	14.83	11	7.62	19
22.19	37	14.98	6	10.67	20
21.14	82	27.66	11	10.16	21
20.85	93	15.43	10	11.56	22
16.8	97	20.97	7	17.94	23
15.12	58	23.65	17	8.32	24
31.6	73	30.68	15	14.2	25
12.2	41	15.8	4	7.89	26
10.39	39	21.39	3	9.04	27
33.81	103	41.45	34	17.99	28
24.41	90	40.1	15	12.67	29
21.29	79	21.39	15	11.01	30
13.57	42	15.58	12	7.99	31
599.57	2056	684.61	319	353.41	37%

MD HB 232 Favor_w_amend_APR.pdf

Uploaded by: Allison Kustic

Position: FWA

February 12, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of the [Association of Plastics Recyclers \(APR\)](#), I am submitting comments as **favorable with amendments on HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.**

[The Association of Plastic Recyclers \(APR\)](#) is a US-based non-profit and the only North American organization focused exclusively on improving the recycling of plastics. The APR represents over 90% of the processing capacity for post-consumer plastic packaging—our members include the businesses that recycle most of the plastic packaging after it has been collected and sorted by Maryland's recycling programs. APR understands the challenges facing the industry and the solutions needed to scale recycling effectively as a key solution to reduce plastic pollution and waste and move toward a more sustainable, circular economy.

This is a proven solution to reduce litter, recycle more beverage containers, and build a more resilient domestic supply chain. This bill will take plastic bottles off the streets and out of the waterways of Maryland, and instead put them back into the hands of U.S. manufacturers to be made into new packaging.

SUGGESTED AMENDMENT: INTEGRATE WITH EPR FOR PACKAGING

Both Recycling Refunds and EPR for packaging policies are needed solutions to collect more plastic packaging for recycling. Recycling Refunds are the most proven, effective solutions for collecting and recycling plastic beverage containers, while EPR for packaging improves recycling for all types of plastic packagings. Recycling Refunds can also substantially reduce litter, providing a critical complementary benefit to EPR for packaging. It is important to recognize these two policies are most effective when implemented in tandem and we urge the legislature to consider these as both-and policies, not an either-or approach. APR is committed to working with stakeholders to find a pathway to align this bill with the work currently underway on EPR for packaging through SB 222, passed in 2023, as well as the active consideration of SB 901, an EPR for packaging bill, in the legislature.

THIS BILL IS A WIN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

If implemented in a prudent manner, Recycling Refunds will:

Reduce litter and plastic waste.

Beverage containers are among the most littered items across beaches, parks, streets, and other public areas. Recycling refunds are proven to [reduce bottle litter by 30-50%](#), and [70% of US residents want the government](#) to take action to reduce plastic waste and litter.

Significantly increase plastics recycling.

Plastics recycling works every day all across the US. Nearly [5 billion pounds](#) of plastic were recycled in the US in 2020. This is led by states with bottle deposit programs where over [70% of plastic beverage containers are collected and recycled](#). With more deposit policies, U.S. plastic recyclers would have access to more material. [Recyclers could process 40% more](#) soda bottles, water bottles, milk jugs and other common plastics today using our country's existing infrastructure if they were able to access more material.

Support US jobs.

Five billion pounds of post-consumer plastics are recovered for recycling from US sources each year, and more than [92% of plastics are recycled within](#) North America, supporting jobs and local economies across the country. [Recycling plastics, metal, glass, paper, and other materials supports over 680,000 jobs](#) and contributes more than \$37.8 billion in wages and \$5.5 billion in tax revenues across the U.S.

Strengthen domestic supply chains.

Recycling provides companies with the raw feedstocks to make new products. By collecting and reusing our plastics domestically, we strengthen local supply chains, reduce global market volatility, and keep more value circulating in local economies.

Reduce carbon pollution.

Plastics recycling also saves energy, reduces pollution, and reduces use of fossil fuels. Recycling #1 and #2 plastic bottles can save [75 to 88% of the energy used to make virgin plastics and reduce GHG emissions by 70%](#).

Business leaders are calling for policy to drive change.

Business leaders around the US are calling for state and federal legislation to accelerate investments in recycling to meet their circular economy goals. The [US Plastics Pact supports bottle deposit policies](#), and the [major U.S. trade associations representing plastics, glass, and aluminum](#) all support deposit policies.

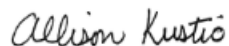
US companies want to buy more recycled plastics but supply is lacking

Major consumer goods companies, [such as Nestle, Procter & Gamble, and PepsiCo](#), have made substantial commitments to use more recycled plastic in their packaging. Recycling rates for PET water bottles and soda bottles need to nearly triple by 2025 to meet this demand. Without greater participation in recycling, companies will need to import plastics from other sources outside the U.S. to meet these goals.

MOVING FORWARD

We encourage you to amend this bill and align it with the EPR for packaging initiatives to deliver a best-in-class program for Maryland. APR staff are available at your convenience to discuss these comments and share further technical, regulatory, and policy information. Please do not hesitate to contact Allison Kustic, State Government Relations Manager, at allison@plasticsrecycling.org.

Sincerely,



Allison Kustic

State Government Relations Manager
The Association of Plastics Recyclers

HB 232 Glass Packaging Institute (GPI) Testimony -

Uploaded by: Lorenzo Bellamy

Position: FWA



February 14, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 250
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony for House Bill 232– Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members:

The Glass Packaging Institute (GPI) offers the following comments in support with amendment of House Bill 232, which would create a deposit return/recycling refund program for beverage containers in the State, and to answer any questions the committee may have regarding the manufacturing or recycling of glass containers.

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass food and beverage manufacturing companies, glass recycling processors, raw material providers and other supply chain partners within the industry. GPI and its members work closely with local and state governments throughout the country on issues surrounding sustainability, recycling, packaging manufacturing and energy use. We are working nationally and, in most states, to improve the glass recycling infrastructure and system to help achieve a 50 percent consumer glass recycling rate, and advance policies that further that goal.

Glass Container Recycling Background

Glass is a core circular packaging material which is reusable, refillable, and endlessly recyclable. Glass containers are largely used for food or beverage products, and glass is the only packaging material generally recognized as safe by FDA for all food and beverage products. Over 70 percent of glass containers are used for some sort of beverage product. Public sentiment strongly rates glass as one of the most supported materials in the recycling stream, and glass has the strongest profile to aid in refillable beverage systems.

The glass container manufacturing industry has a significant stake in the effectiveness of glass recycling programs. Recycled glass is a key component of the manufacturing

process. The industry purchases about 2.3 million tons of recycled glass each year and the average bottle or jar produced in the U.S. contains from 25 to 33 percent recycled glass. Glass made in regions with high glass recovery rates, such as deposit return systems, have much greater opportunity for more recycled content. For every 10% of recycled glass added to the batch mix, energy usage can be reduced 2-3 percent, with additional corresponding reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. When you add the benefit of what is a better than 1 to 1 offset of raw materials saved by using recycled glass to make new containers, it is clear that using recycled glass has significant benefits to the environment of the region and should be prioritized.

Quality and contamination are key differentiators to the value and potential end-markets for recycled glass. We estimate that nearly 60 percent of the glass cullet that makes it back to a container plant for reuse originates from the ten bottle bills states, which provide the highest volume of clean, source-separated glass. This separation drastically reduces contamination, increases the value, and provides the best opportunity to return the glass to a manufactured product.

Critically, containers recovered in a deposit return system avoid the most common fate and costs associated with glass in the commingled single-stream system, which is purposeful or passive landfill disposal. Curbside material that flows through many material recovery facilities *can* be recycled into new containers, and several MRFs do so quite well, but it is completely dependent on the capabilities of the facility receiving the material and the yield is far lower. While less expensive for collection costs, the value of most materials in these single-stream systems, and especially glass, is harmed from the moment the typical recycling truck hydraulic press crushes the mixed load of materials. Glass suffers to a larger degree due to how most MRFs then process the broken glass as a “negative sort”, screening the smaller fragment material into a pile of residuals, while the larger media is sorted whole or in larger segments and baled. The glass commodity is laden with residual contamination, usually shredded paper, small plastics, and other small non-recyclables that do not belong in the bin in the first place.

Often, this leads local government officials and their contract service partners to suggest that the “glass commodity” value is negative. Without context, the glass commodity at most MRFs is going to be 30-50 percent non-glass residue (NGR), and then the glass processor must haul that contamination and pay the landfill tip fee, which is what results in the negative value for the ton of material. The benefit of a deposit return system is that it preserves positive market value of the glass, dramatically increases yield from the bottle, and ensures the potential of highest best use, while also allowing for a broader variety of end-market uses that include the same ones as single-stream.

As I have testified in prior years before this committee, there are end-markets for glass containers made in three neighboring states: Pennsylvania, Virginia and New Jersey. There is glass processing in Pennsylvania and a movement to add capacity in New Jersey and Virginia. In addition, one of our member companies has added a pre-cleaning

location in Baltimore that can accept more glass than it is currently getting. Glass from Maryland consumers should not be going to landfill. A bottle deposit program would triple or potentially quadruple the glass recovery and recycling rate for the state of Maryland and could work on its own or within an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program.

In Washington state, a preliminary study that worked on a part of the state EPR needs assessment determined that the policy combination that produced that highest recovery and recycling rates was an EPR that was combined with a beverage container deposit program. In fact, the combined policy was the only option that was found to meet the state's recycling goals.

In Colorado, a state without a DRS, and where I serve on the State EPR Advisory Board, the draft proposed needs assessment for the most involved EPR system – but without an DRS modeled – could only suggest an increase of recycling rates from around 25% to near 50% in the first five years and topped out closer to 60 percent recovery and recycling by 2035. A deposit return system should be contemplated as a part of the EPR system being considered if Maryland wants to maximize its recycling.

This is even more important for glass. We currently estimate that roughly one-third of the glass in Maryland is recovered. Montgomery County dual-stream collection aides that number. Our research indicates that a well-constructed EPR program might double that recovery, but the yield loss from the curbside material lost to residual and landfill would mean less than half that would make it back into feedstock for new bottles. A DRS system like that envisioned in HB 232 on top of the EPR would nearly triple the recovery of glass and dramatically increase the quality of the material so that the vast majority would be able to be made into new bottles in the region.

As to the specific provisions on HB 232, we would like to highlight several key points that show that this policy concept has advanced considerably in the past several years and need not be compared to systems or debates of the past.

- The majority of the responsibility for operating the program is given over to a stewardship organization. There is oversight from the Department of the Environment. This is consistent with best practice principles on modern management of the container deposit program. While there could be some more responsibility given to the private sector, the construct strikes a balance compared to government run programs.
- The bill includes an Advisory Council that pulls in additional stakeholders who can assist in keeping the program balanced and modern, plus add transparency and accountability.
- Most all beverages are included, and traditionally recyclable materials are all included. This is far better than having an exhaustive list and definitions of varieties of beverages in statute that will constantly need to be tweaked and modified to accommodate innovation in the beverage industry.

- Accommodation has been made for a differential redemption value based on size, which is reasonable, and a wide variety of reasonable consumer sized containers are included, as well as a variety of convenient redemption alternatives – drop off centers, bag drop programs and in-person return centers. We believe that convenience is key, but that not all returns should be forced back into a specific retail establishment. A series of well-placed redemption centers and drop-off locations can alleviate the need to force returns into smaller retail stores.
- We generally do not support provisions that compensate private MRF operators for the “loss” of revenue that may come with the creation of a deposit refund program; however, the provision in HB 232 meets our criteria for a transition system that takes into account the loss of revenue from specific commodity streams being moved away from the curbside system, while also accounting for the savings to the governments attributable to less landfill costs, lower processing expense and higher value to other remaining commodity streams from less contamination.
- I would like to note a concept in the bill that I recall discussing with the committee a couple of years ago. Deposit return programs are aided by the active involvement of local governments, so we support the concept that a city or county could create their own redemption center(s) and participate in the benefits of the program as long as they meet all the same requirements of the other program contractors.
- We support the encouragement of refill/reuse programs. While the provisions in HB 232 are aggressive, our amendment would require a robust deposit return and recovery system as an essential element for beverage refill/reuse. Additionally, a bottle deposit program should be established and managed by industry, allowing for accountability and flexibility on the design and implementation of the programs, and include ambitious but achievable requirements and performance targets that covers the quantity of recovered material.
- Glass containers are an ideal material for meeting that need, and we support the inclusion of explicit infrastructure funds dedicated to building out the washing and sterilization facilities.

I have referenced quality and yield issues throughout my testimony, so I would like to call attention to pictures and graphics that I have included with my testimony.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on the central role a container deposit program can provide the State of Maryland in creating a higher quality and effective glass recycling system. We look forward to answering your questions about glass and glass recycling and are committed to working with the Committee constructively to enhance glass recovery and recycling in Maryland. Please do not hesitate to call on us should you have any additional glass or glass recycling questions.

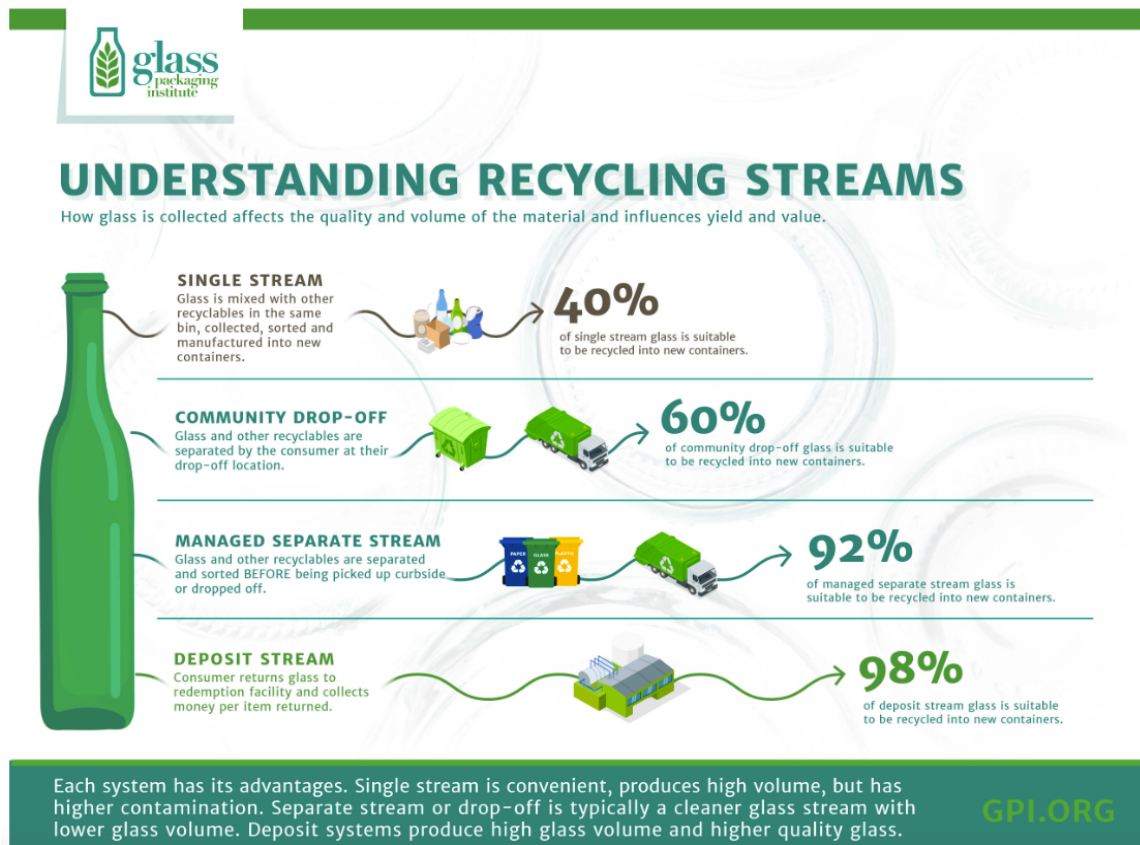
Sincerely,



Scott DeFife
President
Glass Packaging Institute
sdefife@gpi.org

Addendum:

Infographic on Efficiency and Yield-Loss from different glass collection streams



Picture of a Commingled Single Stream Recycled "Glass" - as delivered from a Materials Recovery Facility. Requires intensive sorting and cleaning prior to meeting furnace-ready specifications.



Picture of green bottle bill glass delivered from redemption centers to transfer facility.



Councilmember James Kole Letter of Support for the

Uploaded by: Sara Green

Position: FWA



**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL, MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCILMAN JAMES KOLE**

8103 Sandy Spring Road Laurel, Maryland 20707 P: 301-725-5300 Ext. 2121

Website: www.cityoflaurel.org Email: jkole@laurel.md.us

February 11, 2025

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

Re: Letter of Support for HB232 and SB346 - Maryland Bottle Bill

Dear Distinguished Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 232 and Senate Bill 346, collectively known as the Maryland Bottle Bill. As a representative of the City of Laurel and Chairman of the City of Laurel's Environmental Affairs Committee, I believe this legislation represents a critical step forward in our state's commitment to waste reduction and recycling.

The proposed Bottle Bill will establish a comprehensive deposit-refund system for beverage containers, creating a powerful economic incentive for recycling. By implementing a modest deposit on beverage containers, we will:

- Dramatically increase recycling rates across Maryland
- Reduce plastic waste in our natural environments, including the Chesapeake Bay
- Create economic opportunities through improved recycling infrastructure
- Encourage consumer behavior that prioritizes environmental responsibility

Current recycling rates for beverage containers in Maryland are dismally low, with an estimated 70% of these containers ending up in landfills or as litter. This bill will transform that trajectory by providing a clear financial motivation for consumers to return their containers.

The economic model is both simple and effective: consumers pay a small deposit when purchasing beverages, which is fully refundable upon container return. This system has proven successful in numerous states and countries, consistently achieving recycling rates above 90%.

Moreover, the bill includes provisions to support small businesses and ensure the system is equitable and accessible to all Maryland residents. Redemption centers, reverse vending machines, and convenient return options will be established to make recycling easy and convenient.

As a local elected official committed to sustainability, I urge the committee to advance HB232 and SB346 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.



**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL, MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCILMAN JAMES KOLE**

8103 Sandy Spring Road Laurel, Maryland 20707 P: 301-725-5300 Ext. 2121

Website: www.cityoflaurel.org Email: jkole@laurel.md.us

(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.

This legislation represents a pragmatic, market-driven approach to environmental stewardship that will benefit our state for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James K. Kole", is written over the printed name.

James K. Kole
Councilmember - City of Laurel

hb232_346_signed_laurel_support_ltr.pdf

Uploaded by: Sara Green

Position: FWA

CITY COUNCIL

CHRISTINE M. JOHNSON
At-Large

JAMES KOLE
First Ward

ADRIAN G. SIMMONS
First Ward

KYLA CLARK
Second Ward

JEFFREY W. MILLS
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

(301) 725-5300

www.cityoflaurel.org

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.

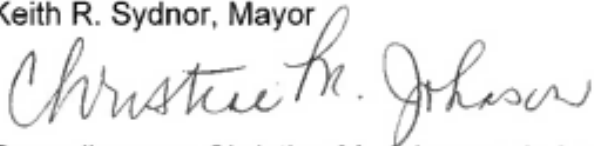
We would appreciate your support in collaboratively working with Senators Brooks, Gile, M. Washington, Kagan, Ellis, Muse, Rosapepe, Smith, Lewis Young, Hettelman, and Benson to move HB 232/SB 346 forward. This legislation represents a crucial step forward in addressing beverage container pollution while 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 Koe
Councilmember , Ward 1



Councilman Jeffrey W. Mills, Ward 2

cc: Councilman James Koe, 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

HB232-2025-MML-SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Tyler Brice

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 14, 2025

Committee: House – Environment and Transportation

Bill: HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Position: *Support with Amendment*

Reason for Position:

On behalf of the Maryland Municipal League (MML), representing 161 local governments across the state, we respectfully submit this testimony in ***support of HB 232 and request that the following amendment be added to the bill.*** We believe that this amendment is critical to ensure that municipalities retain full autonomy over their waste management operations while the state assumes responsibility for locating redemption facilities in a manner that is both transparent and objective and has shared this amendment with the bill sponsor. In particular, we request the inclusion of the following amendment:

Amendment – Section 9-1757.4

- (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.

Cont.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.



Maryland Municipal League

The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

This amendment is essential because it clarifies that the state, through the Department of the Environment, will be solely responsible for the strategic placement of redemption facilities using clear, objective criteria. It expressly ensures that municipalities are not burdened with hosting or operating these facilities, thereby protecting local resources and allowing municipal governments to continue focusing on their existing waste collection and recycling programs. We strongly believe that this balanced approach will enhance the effectiveness of the beverage container redemption program while safeguarding the operational integrity and financial viability of municipal recycling efforts. For further inquiries or additional information, please contact Tyler Alexis Brice, Manager of Advocacy and Public Affairs, at tylerb@mdmunicipal.org or 254-652-8110.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to continued collaboration in advancing Maryland's environmental priorities.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.

47 State Circle, Suite 403 Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(410) 295-9100 www.mdmunicipal.org

HB232_PG Chamber of Commerce_UNF

Uploaded by: Alexander Austin

Position: UNF

Subject: Urgent Concerns Regarding HB 232 - Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program - Impact on Prince George's County Retail Businesses

Dear Members of the Prince George's County House and Senate Delegations

The Prince George's Chamber of Commerce writes to you today with serious concerns regarding House Bill 232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. We believe this legislation, in its current form, will have a significant and detrimental impact on retail businesses within Prince George's County.

Our members, representing a diverse range of retail establishments, have expressed deep reservations about the proposed implementation of a mandatory beverage container deposit and return program. We are particularly concerned about the following issues:

Increased Operational Costs: The implementation of a deposit and return system will impose substantial new operational costs on retailers. These costs include the need for dedicated storage space, the purchase and maintenance of reverse vending machines or manual collection systems, and the hiring of additional staff to manage the program. These costs will disproportionately affect smaller businesses with limited resources.

Logistical Challenges: Retailers, especially those in densely populated areas of Prince George's County, face significant logistical challenges in managing the storage and handling of returned beverage containers. The increased volume of containers will create storage and sanitation issues, potentially impacting the overall customer experience.

Competitive Disadvantage: Retailers located near county borders may face a competitive disadvantage as consumers may choose to purchase beverages in neighboring jurisdictions without deposit requirements. This could lead to a loss of sales and revenue for Prince George's County businesses.

Unfunded Mandates: The bill places a significant financial burden on retailers without providing adequate funding or support for implementation. This constitutes an unfunded mandate that will negatively impact the profitability and sustainability of local businesses.

Impact on Consumer Pricing: It is highly likely that the cost of implementing this program will be passed on to consumers, leading to increased prices for beverages. This could disproportionately affect low-income residents of Prince George's County.

Potential for fraud: The potential for fraudulent redemption of containers brought in from out of state is a serious concern.

We recognize the importance of addressing litter and promoting recycling. However, we believe that HB 232, as currently drafted, places an undue burden on retail businesses and fails to consider the unique challenges faced by our community.

Therefore, the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges you to:

Oppose HB 232 in its current form.

Consider alternative recycling initiatives that are less burdensome on businesses and more effective in achieving environmental goals, such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

Ensure any recycling program is properly funded, and does not create unfunded mandates.

Consider the impact to small businesses especially.

We are committed to working with you to find solutions that balance environmental sustainability with the economic well-being of our community. We request the opportunity to discuss these concerns further with you and your staff.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Alexander K. Austin

Alexander K. Austin
President & CEO
Prince George's Chamber of Commerce

MRN25HB232AWrittendocx.pdf

Uploaded by: Chaz Miller

Position: UNF



February 14, 2025

To: Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
Re: HB232 Beverage Container Deposits
Oppose

Maryland Recycling Network's members are county and municipal government recycling managers, private sector recyclers, non-profit recyclers and citizens who support recycling. We have direct experience operating recycling and composting programs at the county and municipal government level. We know the ins and outs of recycling in Maryland. Our experience informs our comments.

We strongly support more recycling in our state. We agree that litter is a serious problem and that beverage containers are a highly visible form of litter. Container deposits will decrease that litter source and increase beverage container recycling. However, as written, it will impose collateral damage on Maryland's Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs – the facilities that process curbside recyclables) causing a loss of revenue and higher operating costs. Local governments that depend on both public and private MRFs to process their recyclables will bear the burden of these higher costs.

We appreciate the language which recognizes this damage and attempts to address it (see section 9-1748). We believe that it does not accurately reflect the negative impact removing valuable recyclables currently being processed at both public and private MRFs on behalf of local governments. While these containers represent about 5 percent of the overall recyclables processed by publicly and privately owned MRFs, they represent an invaluable revenue stream which can supply one-third or more of MRF revenue (see, for instance, a study on the contribution of aluminum beverage cans to recycling programs (see, for instance, from the Can Manufacturers Institute "Aluminum Beverage Can: Driver of the U.S. Recycling System" June, 2020).

We would also note that while this section attempts to offset lost revenues and higher costs for local government programs, including Maryland's four publicly-owned MRFs, it makes no attempt to do the same for the three privately-owned MRFs in our state. Their processing costs will go up and their revenue will go down with no relief. This includes a new MRF, costing over \$50 million to build, opening soon in Howard County. This is unfair and will harm the local governments who rely on them.

In light of these concerns, we cannot support HB232 at this time. We hope to work with the bill's authors to resolve these concerns.

The Maryland Recycling Network is a resource for legislators and others interested in recycling and waste reduction. Please do not hesitate to contact us via email phoustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO

Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding our comments.

Chaz Miller
Chair, MRN Legislative Committee

Maryland Recycling Network
c/o Mariner Management • PO Box 1640 • Columbia, MD 21044 Phone:
(443) 741-8740 • www.MarylandRecyclingNetwork.org

HB0232_UNF_NWRA_MD Beverage Container Recycling Re

Uploaded by: Drew Vetter

Position: UNF



House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 14, 2025

House Bill 232 – *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*

POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association (NWRA-MD) is a trade association representing the private solid waste industry in Maryland. Its membership includes hauling and collection companies, processing and recycling facilities, transfer stations, and disposal facilities. NWRA-MD and its members oppose House Bill 232.

House Bill 232 proposes to establish a statewide beverage container recycling refund and litter reduction program. While we appreciate the sponsor's intent to increase the percentage of beverage containers recycled in the State and reduce litter, the unintended negative impacts of such a program on Maryland's existing recycling infrastructure outweigh any potential benefit.

Bottle bill expansions present an economic and disruptive burden to both recycling markets and local taxpayers. Requiring consumers to transport and deposit their recyclables at collection facilities removes up to 50 percent of plastics and aluminum from recycling streams. Reducing these valuable commodities increases curbside recycling costs for customers and municipalities. It may also threaten public and private recycling facilities, forcing them to cut jobs or shut down due to revenue loss.

Passing a bottle bill in Maryland will create duplication in the State's recycling process. Recycling technologies have advanced significantly since bottle bills were first adopted around the United States. Under a bottle bill, there would be two redundant recycling systems: a bottle bill system that recovers a limited percentage of the recycling stream and material recovery facilities (MRFs) that recover all other recyclables. Materials considered under the bottle bill expansion are already being recycled by MRFs. Solutions are needed for hard-to-recycle materials MRFs cannot process (i.e. film plastic, flexible pouches, toys, carpets, tires, textiles, mattresses, solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, and appliances).

Maryland residents would pay for two recycling systems under this proposal: a per-container fee under the expanded bottle bill system and a residential curbside or drop-off service for solid waste and recycling. They will also be directly impacted by additional costs: an upfront container deposit and potentially higher prices for consumer goods as producers pass along their handling costs. States initially adopted bottle bills as litter abatement programs before curbside recycling was commonplace. They are used by just ten states as jurisdictions have adopted curbside recycling as a more effective method of managing and promoting recycling.

We note that while the bill recognizes that local government recycling programs will lose revenue as materials are diverted and attempts to provide an offset for that revenue loss. There is not a similar offset for Maryland's three privately owned MRFs, which will experience the same revenue loss and will harm the local governments that rely on them.

Implementing a bottle bill in Maryland will harm recycling because the containers targeted for the expansion are currently being managed effectively in local recycling programs. They are key items in the recycling bin that have a positive commodity value. The value of those containers helps underwrite the

cost of delivering everyone's recycling services. Without these valuable recyclable containers in the general recyclables stream, the cost to municipalities, and ultimately Maryland resident taxpayers, to continue their recycling programs will assuredly go up. For these reasons, we respectfully request an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 232.

For more information:

Andrew G. Vetter

J. Steven Wise

Danna L. Kauffman

410-244-7000

Opposition to HB0232.pdf

Uploaded by: Greg BURTON

Position: UNF

Opposition to HB0232: Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB0232, the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. While the bill aims to address important environmental issues, I believe it presents several challenges that outweigh its potential benefits.

1. **Economic Burden on Consumers and Businesses:** The bill mandates that producers register with the Department of the Environment, pay a fee, and be part of a stewardship organization. These additional costs will likely be passed on to consumers, increasing the price of beverages. Small businesses, in particular, may struggle to absorb these costs, potentially leading to reduced competitiveness and job losses.
2. **Administrative Complexity:** The implementation of the program requires significant administrative oversight, including the establishment of a separate account within the State Recycling Trust Fund and the creation of a beverage container stewardship organization. This complexity may lead to inefficiencies and increased government spending, diverting resources from other critical environmental initiatives.
3. **Limited Impact on Litter Reduction:** While the bill aims to reduce litter, it may not effectively address the root causes of littering behavior. Public education and community engagement programs may be more effective in changing behavior and reducing litter in the long term.
4. **Potential for Fraud and Abuse:** The redemption framework outlined in the bill could be susceptible to fraud and abuse, with individuals potentially exploiting the system for financial gain. This could undermine the program's effectiveness and lead to increased costs for the state.
5. **Alternative Solutions:** There are alternative approaches to achieving the bill's goals that may be more effective and less burdensome. For example, expanding existing recycling programs, increasing public awareness campaigns, and incentivizing the use of reusable containers could achieve similar outcomes without the drawbacks associated with HB0232.

In conclusion, while the goals of HB0232 are commendable, the bill's potential economic burden, administrative complexity, limited impact on litter reduction, and potential for fraud and abuse make it an impractical solution. I urge the Maryland General Assembly to consider alternative approaches that can achieve the desired environmental outcomes more effectively and efficiently.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Burton

HB 232 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Kirk McCauley

Position: UNF



WMDA/CAR Service Station
and Automotive Repair Association

Chair: Marc Korman, Vice Chair Regina T. Boyce, and member of Environment and Transportation Committee

RE: HB 232

Position: Unfavorable

My name is Kirk McCauley, my employer is WMDA/CAR, we represent service stations convenience stores and repair facilities across the state as a non- profit trade group.

We have county recycling centers now and I would think by enhancing what we already have, would a cost effective way to accomplish recycling goal.

Currently consumers and small business are struggling, and state is not doing very well in financial department. Now is not the time to add cost of a massive start up program that will now only be expensive but invite consumers to carry bags of mostly empty products into stores for employees to sort. This creates problems and unsanitary conditions.

Raise the cost of products if you must but find a better way to recover.

We ask for unfavorable vote.

Any questions can be addressed to Kirk McCauley, 301-775-0221 or kmccauley@wmda.net

HB232_RestaurantAssoc_Thompson_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Melvin Thompson

Position: UNF



HOUSE BILL 232

Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

February 14, 2025

Position: Unfavorable

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

The Restaurant Association of Maryland opposes HB 232. This legislation would require beverage distributors to include a redeemable beverage container refund value as part of the wholesale price of beverage containers sold to restaurants, bars, and other retailers. The legislation prohibits restaurants, bars and other “on-premises sellers” from including the refund value of redeemable beverage containers in the retail price when sold to customers.

Despite language in the bill that allows on-premises sellers to arrange for pickup of empty redeemable beverage containers (with refunds and materials handling fee paid) by a beverage container stewardship organization or via bag drops, many questions remain about the related logistics for on-premises sellers. Convenient redemption options for on-premises sellers located in less-populated areas of the state could be limited. Moreover, restaurants and bars in locations with limited outside storage space (such as downtown/city areas) or in properties with shared disposal facilities (e.g., shopping centers, malls, sports/entertainment venues, the airport, etc.) would face challenges separately storing their beverage containers for pickup and ensuring that the correct on-premises seller receives the refunds.

In 2023, the General Assembly enacted legislation (SB 222) that requires the Maryland Department of Environment to hire a consultant to conduct a statewide recycling needs assessment. This law also established an advisory council to study and make recommendations for implementing a producer responsibility program for packaging materials. We are still awaiting the release of these reports. We believe it would be prudent for the General Assembly to wait until after the release of these reports before giving serious consideration to any other recycling-related policy.

For these reasons, we oppose HB 232 and request an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melvin R. Thompson".

Melvin R. Thompson
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs and Public Policy

HB232_UNF_MBWA

Uploaded by: Nicholas G. Manis

Position: UNF



February 14, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Re: **OPPOSE** – **HB 232** – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Beer Wholesalers Association (MBWA) we are writing in opposition to **HB 232** which requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish a beverage container deposit program.

The MBWA consists of 22 Maryland businesses employing over 1,400 Maryland citizens that are majority owned and operated generational family businesses. Our members are committed to recycling and reducing litter in Maryland. The policy discussions around recycling and solid waste disposal are important ones and are taking place here and around the country. We recognize the importance of the issue and are proud of the steps we have taken to recycle all the material in our warehouse and business and encourage our customers to do the same.

There is a better way to recycle and reduce litter than implementing a program that costs consumers more at the cash register, historically is plagued with fraud, and most notably, imposes significant operational changes and costs to MBWA members and our retail customers.

We look forward to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) Needs Assessment report and we are committed to working with you and other stakeholders to develop a recycling system that addresses all recyclable materials. 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. MBWA would welcome participation in an anti-litter campaign should the Maryland Department of Transportation and/or MDE establish a stakeholder group to develop and execute such a program.

Sincerely,

Nicholas G. Manis
Executive Director

CC: John Favazza

HB0232_UNF_MSLBA_MD Beverage Container Recycling R

Uploaded by: Steve Wise

Position: UNF



**MARYLAND STATE
LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION**

150 E Main Street, Suite 104, Westminster, MD 21157

House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 14, 2025

House Bill 232 – *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program*

POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA), which consists of approximately 850 Maryland businesses holding alcoholic beverage licenses (restaurants, bars, taverns and package stores), opposes House Bill 232.

This legislation would require retailers, such as package stores, to accept redeemable beverage containers at their place of business, either by establishing a “dedicated area” to store the returned containers or acquiring a reverse vending machine. In addition, they must pay the person redeeming the container in cash in some cases.

The package stores owned by our members are typically 3,000 to 5,000 square feet in size. The majority of this square footage is dedicated to shelving, sales and consumer transactions, coolers, walk-in boxes, and storage area for product that has yet to be put on the shelf. House Bill 232 would require each retailer to set aside either dedicated storage space or an area for a reverse vending machine. These stores are simply not equipped to accommodate storage of redeemable containers, and the space needed to do so would be substantial, considering that a retailer must accept any containers that are brought in, unless they are rejected due to their condition.

Furthermore, Chapter 465 of 2023 required that the Maryland Department of the Environment conduct a recycling needs assessment before July of 2024. This assessment has still not been finalized. It would seem prudent to allow that study to be completed and considered before the General Assembly moves forward with legislation implementing a beverage container recycling plan.

For these reasons, MSLBA respectfully requests that the Committee give this legislation an unfavorable report.

For more information call:

J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Andrew G. Vetter
410-244-7000

HB 232 Deposits.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna Sublett

Position: INFO



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.

MDE HB232 INFO.pdf

Uploaded by: Jeremy D Baker

Position: INFO



The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

HB 232
Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Position: Informational

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Date: February 14, 2025

From: Leslie Gray, Government Relations Officer

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) offers the following **INFORMATIONAL** testimony on House Bill 232.

HB 232 would establish a Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to address the collection and redemption of beverage containers sold in the state. MDE would be required to oversee the program and enforce seller and distributor registration requirements and container disposal prohibitions.

MDE appreciates the intent of the bill to divert beverage containers from the waste stream but believes in a comprehensive solution through the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility Program (EPR). The majority of states with successful bottle deposit programs have had them in place for decades, before using Producer Responsibility Organizations (PRO) became the preferred method for EPR. Maryland is currently pursuing an EPR framework based on the work of the Producer Responsibility Advisory Council, which would align with national best practices and allow MDE to focus its efforts on program oversight.

MDE hopes that the information regarding HB 232 is helpful, and is available for questions.

Contact: Leslie Gray, Government Relations Officer
Email: leslie.gray@maryland.gov