

February 10, 2026

**SB 342- 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. I submit this testimony in favor of SB 342.

Representing major businesses, developers, and restaurateurs 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 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 twelve 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 almost 3 million plastic

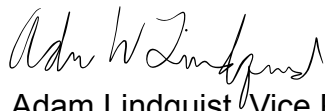
bottles. This is only the tiniest fraction of the 4 billion beverage containers produced in Maryland yearly that end up as trash or litter.

Waterfront Partnership spends millions of dollars each year cleaning the water and land in our district when 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 dollars by reducing municipal costs for litter removal and waste disposal as only 23% of recyclable material ultimately end up being recycled. The rest is burned, buried, or littered with taxpayers footing the bill for unnecessary clean-up costs. This bill would simultaneously save businesses money on disposal costs and increase revenue around the Harbor because a Harbor that is clean and healthy is one that people want to visit.

Container deposit laws have been beneficial in other ways like reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing our reliance on foreign oil and creating new jobs in the recycling sector.

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 request a favorable report on SB 342. Thank you for your time.



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Bottle Bill Events Hosted By Waterfront Partnership (pictured below)

Dumpster Dive

On Saturday, November 15, 2025, Waterfront Partnership hosted a “Dumpster Dive” event in support of the Maryland Bottle Bill. 150 volunteers sorted and counted every beverage collected by Baltimore’s Mr. Trash Wheel in a single dumpster (Baltimore’s Mr. Trash Wheel family collects around 250 dumpsters of floating litter and debris annually).

To date, Baltimore’s Mr. Trash Wheel family has collected 2.7 million beverage containers from just four streams that empty into the Baltimore Harbor.

Media:

- Chesapeake Bay Magazine: Mr. Trash Wheel’s Dumpster Dive Gathers Pollution Data, Evidence For a Bottle Trade-In Program
 - <https://www.chesapeakebaymagazine.com/mr-trash-wheels-dumpster-dive-gathers-pollution-data-evidence-for-a-bottle-trade-in-program/>

Cash For Trash

On Saturday, January 31, 2026, Waterfront Partnership hosted “Cash For Trash: A Bottle Bill Demonstration Event.” The goal of the event was to educate the public and demonstrate how a beverage container program would function in Maryland. The public was able to bring clean and empty containers to Peabody Heights Brewery (a small business supportive of this legislation) and redeem them for ten cents.

Despite freezing temperatures and snow covered roads, 160 people attended the three-hour event and redeemed 25,563 containers.

Media:

- WMAR: Baltimore Group Demonstrates Bottle Bill Benefits with Cash-For-Trash Event:
 - <https://www.wmar2news.com/news/region/baltimore-city/baltimore-group-demonstrates-bottle-bill-benefits-with-cash-for-trash-event>



