



POSITION STATEMENT

Bill: SB342/ HB331 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program

Position: Informational

Date: February 10, 2026

Contact: Debra Borden, General Counsel
Jordan Baucum Colbert, Senior Government Affairs Analyst

Dear Chair Brian Feldman,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“M-NCPPC” or the “Commission”) has not voted on this bill yet. However, staff have drafted an informational statement.

What this Bill Does. The bill aims to reduce litter in parks and waterways, helping counties meet trash-reduction requirements and improve water quality. It also anticipates lowering cleanup and waste-management costs for local governments.

This would reduce the amount of litter in our parks. "The Bottle Bill" would create a statewide bottle-deposit program that will meaningfully cut litter and boosts recycling. It also puts the responsibility on beverage producers to fund and manage the system through a stewardship organization, with strong redemption targets of 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2033.

The bill expands convenient ways for people to return containers, including reverse-vending machines and community drop-off sites. It also offers grants to help grow recycling and reuse systems, along with more public water-refill stations.

Commingled Materials in Montgomery Parks. Montgomery Parks (Parks) staff and volunteers picked up 9.4 tons of bottles from our county’s parks and waterways. Parks recycled 16,760lbs (8.38 tons) of commingled materials. Park Clean ups bags of recycling are tracked and all are bottles. 836 Bags were collected of just bottles. The universal measurement currently for clean

ups is 25lbs per bag and that estimate would be 20,900lbs. Therefore, park clean ups alone in Montgomery County would reduce by 9.4 tons and the data that we track of Co-mingled bottles would also be reduced from .38 tons.

This bill could reduce litter in our streams and rivers, helping counties meet trash-reduction requirements and improve water quality. Over time, it may also lower cleanup needs and waste-management costs for local governments.