



HB331 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Environment and Transportation Committee
Hearing: February 11, 2026
FAVORABLE

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

The Green Towson Alliance writes in support of HB331 which creates a beverage container recycling program by placing a ten cent deposit on beverage containers made of glass, metal or plastic. This small deposit acts as an incentive to consumers to return containers for recycling. The program has set a high but very achievable goal of a 90% redemption rate. This bill has the potential to 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 for the past 11 years, the Green Towson Alliance has partnered with Baltimore County and Towson University to organize clean-ups of local streams to remove plastic litter and other trash. In 2025, clean-ups at ten sites produced 115 bags of trash and recyclables 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.

The small deposit that is added to the purchase of beverage containers and refundable upon return will act as a much-needed incentive for consumers to return these containers for the 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!

The Green Towson Alliance asks for a favorable report on HB331 as an important step toward the goal of a greener, healthier Maryland for all.

Respectfully,
Kirsten Hoffman
Green Towson Alliance, Executive Committee
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.