



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

House Bill 92

Environment - Beverage Containers Connected With Plastic Rings - Restriction on Sale

Position: Informational
Committee: Environment and Transportation
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From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) offers the following **LETTER OF INFORMATION** for HB 92.

Bill Summary

House Bill 92 would prohibit a person from selling, offering for sale, or distributing beverage containers that are connected to other beverage containers with a plastic ring connector unless the plastic ring connector is made of a biodegradable material.

Key Points

MDE generally supports efforts to modernize the state's solid waste management strategy. By eliminating these types of fasteners, the volume of persistent litter entering the waste stream can be reduced, helping protect local ecosystems from plastic pollution.

To ensure effective implementation of this legislation, MDE recommends modifications that align the bill with existing environmental frameworks. MDE suggests incorporating language similar to § 9-1711 to explicitly designate local governments as the primary enforcement entities, mirroring a structure similar to requiring property owners or managers to provide access to recycling. This alignment would prevent MDE from requiring additional resources for the Resource Management Program that would otherwise require a diversion of efforts from initiatives such as standing up the Packaging and Paper Products and Paint Stewardship Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs.

Furthermore, shifting the bill's focus toward compostable or recyclable ring connectors rather than "biodegradable" materials, would be beneficial, as there is a significant technical distinction between the two. To maintain consistency with the Packaging and Paper Products Extended Producer Responsibility law enacted in 2025, the legislation should specifically require that ring connectors be composed of either certified compostable packaging, as defined in Section § 9-2102, or a fiber-based material that is recyclable in at least 90% of the state's counties.

MDE hopes this **INFORMATIONAL** testimony regarding HB 92 is helpful. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

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