



Committee: Environment & Transportation and Economic Matters
Testimony: HB 331 Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Organization: Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD
Submitting: Laura Salganik, Chair
Position: FAVORABLE
Hearing Date: February 11, 2026

Dear Chairs Korman and Valderrama, Vice Chairs Guyton and Charkoudian, and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council is submitting this testimony in strong support for the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act. This bill creates a refundable deposit on certain containers, and we believe this "Bottle Bill" is a vital step toward protecting our natural landscapes and public health.

Every day, plastic, metal, and glass beverage bottles are left to accumulate on our roadsides and in our waterways. Plastic bottles pose a particularly severe threat as they break down into small fragments that are ingested by wildlife, endangering fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. By creating a refundable deposit on these containers, we can provide a meaningful incentive for Marylanders to return them for recycling, ensuring they stay out of our forests, waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

The environmental impact of container waste is also dangerous to human health. As plastics break down in our environment, they enter the food chain and our water supply. Scientists have raised the alarm that humans may now be ingesting significant amounts of microplastics every week. This bill addresses the problem at the source by encouraging reuse of these materials that are often discarded.

Ten states have already passed similar laws and found that they work. By charging a small deposit on bottles, these states have seen dramatic increase in recycling of bottles rather than adding them to the landfill.

We join the Sierra Club, Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, Howard County Conservancy and many others in respectfully urging a **favorable report** on HB331.