Interfaith Partners for the CHESAPEAKE

Forming Faithful Stewards,
Caring for Sacred Waters

PO Box 6791
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chairman Marc Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 331 – Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program
Position: **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Marc Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC), I write to urge your **support** for the **Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program** bill (House Bill 331).

As a coalition of faith communities committed to environmental stewardship and the restoration of our shared natural resources, we recognize the moral and spiritual imperative to protect our waterways, reduce pollution, and promote sustainable solutions that honor the integrity of creation.

The Chesapeake Bay is one of the most vital and cherished ecosystems in our region, providing habitat for diverse wildlife and supporting the livelihoods of countless communities. Yet, plastic pollution and litter continue to degrade its waters, threatening aquatic life and diminishing the beauty and health of this sacred resource. Every day, thousands of discarded bottles and containers enter our rivers and streams, ultimately making their way into the Bay.

The Maryland Bottle Bill offers a proven, effective solution to reducing plastic waste by incentivizing recycling and shifting consumer behavior. **In states where similar laws have been enacted, beverage container recycling rates have significantly increased, litter has decreased, and municipalities have experienced cost savings in waste management.** By implementing this legislation, Maryland has the opportunity to take meaningful action toward a cleaner environment while fostering a culture of responsibility and sustainability.

For faith communities, environmental action is not just a policy issue—it is a moral obligation. Our scriptures and teachings emphasize the importance of caring for God's creation and protecting the most vulnerable. Pollution disproportionately impacts low-income communities and communities of color, exacerbating existing environmental injustices. By supporting the Maryland Bottle Bill, we stand in solidarity with those affected by pollution and affirm our commitment to environmental justice.

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake urges the General Assembly to pass the Maryland Bottle Bill and take a significant step toward a cleaner, healthier Chesapeake Bay. We believe that stewardship of the environment is an act of faith, and we call on our state leaders to enact policies that reflect our shared responsibility to care for creation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anna Awimbo
Director of Leadership Development