



Maryland Division
The Izaak Walton League of America
707 Conservation Lane
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878-2983

TO: Del. Marc A. Korman, Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Del. Michele J. Guyton, Vice-Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

RE: Support for MD HB 331--Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.

Honorable Delegates of the Maryland General Assembly:

On behalf of the Maryland Division-Izaak Walton League (MD-IWLA), I am asking you to support HB 331--Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. Adopting this bill will not only improve our natural environment and help to keep Maryland beautiful, but will also provide an economic bonus for our state.

Each year in Maryland, over 5.5 billion bottles and cans are sold, but only about one-quarter of those are recycled. The rest are incinerated, buried in landfills, or become litter in our waterways and along our roadways. Ten states in the U.S., covering about 90 million people, have long-standing, successful, and cost-effective beverage container deposit programs with financial incentives to recycle and deter littering by refunding a small deposit for each container returned for recycling.

Our residents and wildlife would greatly benefit from reductions in the 2.6 billion plastic bottles which represent the majority of beverage containers in the State. These containers break up into small pieces that are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. And, scientists have estimated that we humans are ingesting up to a credit card's worth of these small bits of plastic *weekly*.

A modern program requiring a minimum 10-cent deposit on single-use beverage containers would boost Maryland's recycling rate for beverage containers, from 23% to more than 80%; remove about 3 billion beverage containers annually from landfills, incinerators, or the environment; yield substantial cost savings for local governments; and reduce the pollution associated with producing containers.

Chartered in 1945, the MD-IWLA (www.marylandiwla.org) includes over 4,300 avid anglers, hunters, and outdoor sports enthusiasts who are committed to the wise stewardship of our soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife. Since our founding, members have organized and participated in many watershed clean ups, removing tons of litter and much larger illegally dumped materials from along our roads and streams. We urge you to support HB 331 to increase resident awareness about the problem with beverage containers, to reduce roadside litter and overall plastics pollution, and to create an economic benefit while doing so.

Sincerely,

Curt Howard, President
Maryland Division-Izaak Walton League of America