



January 29, 2026

Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Opposition to HB 92**

Dear Delegate Schindler and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of the Beer Institute, the nation's oldest trade association representing the interests of brewers, beer importers, suppliers and the 2.42 million employees who have found a career in the \$471 billion beer industry, I write to you regarding our concerns with HB 92, which would require the connectors used for the cans and bottles that our members produce to be made of 100% biodegradable materials.

While we understand and share the desire for sustainable, environmentally friendly materials in our products and packaging, this legislation poses a significant threat to Maryland's vital beer industry by mandating a packaging change that won't improve environmental outcomes.

Maryland's beer industry is a cornerstone of our state's economy. It supports over 35,000 jobs in brewing, distribution, agriculture, and manufacturing, generates a massive \$6.1 billion in economic impact, and contributes \$1.1 billion in tax revenue that funds our essential state services. By mandating biodegradable multipack ring connectors, this bill would directly put these jobs and this economic engine at risk. Every brewer would be forced to implement drastic cost-cutting measures, while raising prices on their products to absorb the costs of adopting new ring connectors and the necessary manufacturing equipment changes. This legislation, if adopted, could threaten the livelihoods of tens of thousands of our citizens and penalize consumers of our products.


It is important to note that the vast majority of beer packaging is aluminum, glass, and cardboard. Aluminum and glass are infinitely recyclable, and cardboard is recyclable and compostable. While biodegradable multipack rings sound attractive, the reality is they are not compatible with high-speed packaging equipment, cannot survive real-world distribution conditions, and in many cases rely on composting systems that most consumers do not have access to, or include additives that can contribute to microplastic pollution. In short, these biodegradable multipack rings do not support better environmental outcomes. Biodegradable

multipack rings also possess a higher carbon footprint and cost more than ring carriers made from post-consumer recycled (PCR) content. The supply chain for these products is not mature and adopting them at scale would require brewers and beverage manufacturers to make significant capital investments in equipment changes while delivering dubious environmental benefits for the surrounding communities.

On behalf of the Beer Institute and the 35,000 Marylanders who have found a career in beer, I respectfully urge you to reject HB 92. While we appreciate the intent of the legislation, we urge the Assembly to support legislation that protects the Maryland beer industry and promotes the sustainable and infinitely recyclable packaging that already dominates the industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Crawford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being more prominent than the last name "Crawford".

Brian Crawford

President & CEO