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advocacy and collaborative action.  
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**Testimony: HB 331, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program.**

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Hearing Date: February 11, 2026**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Chair, Marc Korman; Vice Chair, Michele Guyton; and Honorable Members of the Committee

Wild Ones Nation's Capital Region, a 250-member chapter of the national organization "Wild Ones" urges your support for this bill. There is a critical need to substantially reduce environmentally damaging litter in natural places, including litter from beverage containers.

In a year when budget issues are paramount, it is important to note that this bill is self-funded. There will be little to no cost to the State budget. Container refund programs, like the one proposed in this bill, have been operating successfully for decades in ten (10) other states, (also Canada, Australia and throughout Europe) and have increased recycling rates substantially.<sup>1</sup>

There is an enormous amount of litter causing harm to ecosystems across Maryland. Litter obstructs natural processes by contaminating soil and ground water, blocking sunlight, and creating death traps for wildlife. Plant and animal growth are harmed by microplastics as the small particles obstruct absorption of nutrients and water.<sup>2</sup> Litter also threatens "marine life, the food chain, human health, and the delicate balance of our planet's aquatic environments."<sup>3</sup>

Since there is no incentive not to litter, some people do it freely and the damage is significant. Providing financial incentives is the only viable remedy. According to a nonpartisan study, when the redemption amount is 10 cents, recycling rates rise to 90% and when it is 5 cents, the rate increases to 75%.<sup>4</sup>

Due to the great need to reduce this damaging litter, please pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Broadman  
Director, Legislative Affairs

Pru Foster  
President

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/benefits-of-bottle-bills/bottle-bills-promote-recycling-and-reduce-waste>

<sup>2</sup> <https://one-more-tree.org/blog/2024/11/01/why-is-litter-in-forests-a-serious-problem-for-the-environment/>, section titled, "Release of microplastics into the environment:".

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unep.org/topics/ocean-seas-and-coasts/ecosystem-degradation-pollution/plastic-pollution-marine-litter>, first paragraph titled, "About".

<sup>4</sup> [https://abell.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CD-Deposit\\_Program\\_Analysis-312.pdf](https://abell.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CD-Deposit_Program_Analysis-312.pdf), page 5, section titled, "The paradox of revenue generation".