MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

February 2, 2026

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB0092—Environment—Beverage Containers Connected with Plastic Rings—Restriction on Sale

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0092.

Plastics in our world have become ubiquitous. Plastic particles have been found on remote mountain tops, and in the far reaches of Antarctica. Microplastics are now found in foods, and in our very bodies.

Plastics present a serious danger to birds. They can ingest plastics, mistaking them for foods, and have been known to feed plastics to their young. Both cases can lead to malnutrition or even starvation. Plastic beverage rings also present a threat of entanglement to birds. Such entanglements can prevent a bird from flying, or even choke the bird.

A recent, much-cited, study has shown that North America has lost 3 billion birds, 29% of its total population, since the 1970s.[1] This bill will serve to reduce one of the many threats our birds face.

MOS is an approximately 2200-strong member volunteer organization that is dedicated to the study, conservation and enjoyment of birds and their habitat in Maryland and beyond. We were founded in 1945 and are organized into 15 chapters throughout the state. We lead field trips, organize lectures, have an active youth sector, conduct period bird counts, hold an annual convention and own 10 sanctuaries in various parts of state (all of which are open to the public at no charge).

In order to lower the flood of plastics into our environment, and lower the risks they present to birds, MOS urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0092.

Sincerely,

Kurt R. Schwarz,
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society
7329 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD 21046

[1] Rosenberg, et al, Decline of the North American Avifauna, Science, vol 366, issue 6461, pp. 120-124, 4 October 2019, https://science.sciencemag.org/content/366/6461/120