



SIERRA CLUB

Increase recycling and reduce litter: **The Bottle Bill Works!**



"The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth." Pope Francis, 'Laudato si' 2015

We can do something about this –
NOW!
Support [The Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act](#)
(the "Bottle Bill")

The Problem

Only about a quarter of the more than 4 BILLION beverage containers purchased each year in Maryland are recycled. Only 1 billion are recycled and reused. More than 3 BILLION end up in the landfill, incinerated, or littering our waterways, roads, beaches, and parks.

The Solution

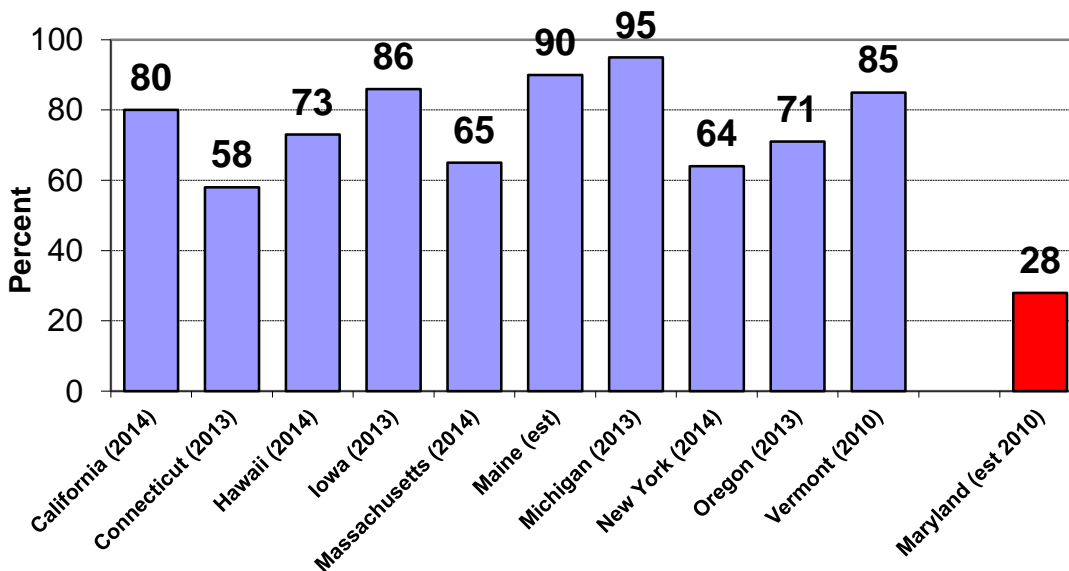
The *Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act* would **encourage recycling, reduce litter, and decrease recyclables in landfills and incinerators** by offering a 5-cent refundable deposit on aluminum, plastic, and glass beverage containers sold in Maryland.

How would it work?

- **Consumers, retailers, and distributors pay a 5-cent deposit on aluminum, plastic, and glass beverage containers.** The deposit is refunded to consumers when the containers are returned to reverse vending machines at retailers for recycling, and subsequently refunded to retailers and distributors.
- **The program would be designed and managed by the Maryland Environmental Service,** a respected, self-supporting, not-for-profit independent State agency, working in most of the counties across Maryland.
- **The program is self-financing from unclaimed deposits and sale of scrap materials from the recycled containers.** It doesn't require public funds and will reduce the costs to local and state governments for litter, trash, and recycling collection, and for landfilling.



The deposit creates an incentive to return beverage containers for recycling, and to discourage littering. *Recycling rates for beverage containers are three times higher, on average, in the 10 states with a refundable deposit!*



* Figures are the redemption rate on containers in states with deposits. MD figure is estimate of recycling for all beverage containers. Source: *Container Recycling Institute*.

Maryland can do better! The Act would.....



Triple Maryland's recycling rate for beverage containers to >70%, removing billions of containers from our roadways, waterways, and landfills annually.



Reduce litter – in the states that have adopted bottle bills, beverage container litter was reduced by 69-84%, and overall litter by as much as two-thirds!



Save energy and reduce greenhouse emissions– recycling glass, plastic, and aluminum uses less energy and produces less greenhouse gases than using raw materials. Reusing aluminum saves **95%** of the energy required to make a can from ore!



Reduce the costs of litter clean up, recycling, and trash collection to counties – the cost of litter clean up in Maryland's 3 largest counties is \$16 million annually. States with deposit programs reduce litter collection costs by 20-30%. With fewer containers in the waste and curbside stream, counties will save costs of collection, recycling, and landfilling. The bill sets aside \$27 million in the first 3 years to compensate counties and municipalities for documented losses to curbside recycling, should they occur.



Create green jobs – increased recycling from the program would directly create 800 new jobs, and indirectly 800 more.



Finance environmental programs – unredeemed deposits not only pay for the program, but can be used to finance the Chesapeake Bay Trust (\$2 million/year), implementation of water quality plans (total maximum daily loads/TMDL, \$15 million), and an environmental grants program managed by MDE (\$21 million).

Let's do this now!

Every year we wait, another 3 billion containers enter the environment!

Get involved: <http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/legislation> **Email:** Legislation@MDSierra.org
 For more information: Container Recycling Institute: <http://www.container-recycling.org> and www.bottlebill.org.