



## **HB0099 - Beverage Container Deposit Program - Establishment and Advisory Commission**

### **Testimony before Environment and Transportation Committee**

**February 9, 2021**

**Position: Favorable**

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Ruth Auerbach, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony in ***support of HB0099*** to establish a beverage container deposit program. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members).

Trash and recycling are an increasing problem in Maryland, which would be helped by a beverage container deposit program. Deposit programs have a strong track record for substantially improving the recycling rate and reducing litter. The Ocean Conservancy reports that plastic beverage bottles and plastic beverage caps are the third and fourth most common items found in their international coastal clean-ups. I can attest from personal experience that beverage containers are plentiful on roadsides and in the woods of Howard County. As a bicyclist, broken glass bottles are an especially common road hazard.

Our current single-stream recycling programs are more expensive due to the sorting required. A beverage deposit program would reduce the sorting needed. The Northeast Recycling Council reports that scrap collected from deposit programs can be more profitable. For instance, it reports that curbside glass collection costs \$20/ton, while glass from deposit programs has a \$20/ton value.

Additionally, recycling beverage containers reduces greenhouse-gas emissions. First, increasing recycled resources reduces emissions from mining for new product. Second, the law reduces plastic in the environment where it produces methane.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Ruth Auerbach  
Columbia, MD 21046