



Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Testimony on: HB0841 - Plastic Bottle Waste Reduction - Water Bottle Filling Stations and Reporting
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Dave Arndt, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 26, 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB0841. The Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of nearly 30 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB0841.

The bill would require that a water bottle filling station be installed in new construction for which a drinking water fountain is required under the current version of the international plumbing code or state or local law or regulation. It also would require the Department of the Environment (MDE) to gather data and identify alternative methods for providing drinking water. Furthermore, this bill requires the MDE to research and discover alternative solutions to our plastic water bottle usage issue and publish the findings, thus not only raising awareness, but actively providing solutions.

In Maryland, it is estimated that only 3% of all plastic bottles are recycled. They are treated as throwaways. The other 97% of plastic bottles end up in our landfills, incinerators or dumped into the environment. There are numerous other negative effects of plastic water bottles, from energy use in manufacturing to being a source of harmful chemicals such as PFAS and BPAs.

Many plastic water bottle users would prefer an alternative; however, many buildings don't provide any. Therefore, using your own water bottle may not be dependable or a convenient solution. This bill would make not only new buildings install water fillers, it would help set the expectation that all buildings should have this convenient and reliable source of water.

We recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee for HB0841.

350MoCo
Adat Shalom Climate Action
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry
Chesapeake Earth Holders
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Climate Parents of Prince George's
Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition
Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
Echotopia
Elders Climate Action
Fix Maryland Rail
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
HoCoClimateAction
IndivisibleHoCoMD
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Mobilize Frederick
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Mountain Maryland Movement
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
Progressive Maryland
Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
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