

**HOUSE OF DELEGATES ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS COMMITTEE
HB 1087: Bar and Restaurant Recycling Program**

**March 8, 2013
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President
Glass Packaging Institute (GPI)**

IN FAVOR

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturing industry, I would like to express our support for House Bill 1087, which would develop a recycling program for bar and restaurants for beverage containers sold on-premise. We believe that House Bill 1087 would help to recover these beverage containers, reduce stress on landfills, reduce tipping fees and increase recycling for the state.

Glass beverage containers comprise approximately 80% of all beverage containers sold in Maryland's bars and restaurants. From a statewide perspective, bar and restaurant sales constitute approximately 14% (i.e., 90 million units) of all glass beverage containers sold each year in Maryland.

As a point of reference for the Committee, there are approximately 3.6 billion aluminum, PET and glass beverage containers sold each year in Maryland. You may be surprised to learn that approximately 2.7 billion of these beverage containers are either land filled or end up as waterway or roadway litter every year. No one disagrees that this is a serious challenge which should be addressed.

While House Bill 1087 will not, on its own, solve this problem, it does present an opportunity to address one element of the issue and, importantly, demonstrate Maryland's commitment to finding solutions to its serious landfill and litter challenges...

To talk a bit more about glass packaging and our industry's commitment to recycling, I'll note that:

Glass is an endlessly and 100% recyclable material.

Our member companies continuously seek out quality "cullet" (industry term for recycled glass) for use in all of the country's glass plants and the cullet market is very robust. Collectively, the country's glass container manufacturers operate eight facilities in the Southeast region and they all want more cullet to use in their manufacturing process (and there's strong competition for cullet from Pennsylvania and New Jersey glass plants too) ... but it's not currently available in the quantities and at the quality level we need.

As another point of reference for the Committee, I'll note that much of the recycled glass melted in these furnaces now comes from well outside of that region ... typically from one or more of the current bottle bill states. This legislation would strengthen not only the supply of recycled glass, but help to improve the quality of recycled glass collected in Maryland.

Glass companies are ready to partner with haulers, processors and others in the recycling stream in and around Maryland to ensure the success of a bar/restaurant recycling program. We would certainly support such efforts should a bar and restaurant recycling program begin in Maryland.

For example, as the now very successful North Carolina bar and restaurant program was in its early

implementation stage, GPI convened stakeholder meetings and sponsored workshops to both educate and coordinate resources needed for the program. In North Carolina, the agency administering the program estimates that 15 new businesses were created or expanded operations since the state program began, to provide assistance in hauling and recycling the newly collected containers

It is also important to know that for every 10% of recycled glass utilized in the manufacturing process, emissions (including greenhouse gases) are reduced anywhere from 4%-10% and energy costs are lowered in the range of 2%-3%. This is due to the fact that recycled glass melts at much lower temperatures than raw materials, allowing glass companies to reduce furnace temperatures and use less energy.

GPI and its member companies are focusing on a variety of collection programs to get glass containers back to our plants, including those served at bars and restaurants. As we all know, improving collection and recycling recovery rates is a significant issue for communities and states across the nation and certainly here in Maryland as the challenges and limitations associated with single stream curbside recycling become ever more obvious ... especially with respect to contamination and sorting techniques / technologies.

A key element that all of the programs GPI is evaluating / supporting is the importance of separation of the recyclables collected, which our industry has found greatly reduces the likelihood of contamination and increases the opportunities for their recovery and reuse, particularly with respect to beverage containers. House Bill 1087 would not only help to keep these valued beverage containers out of landfills, but also provide an excellent opportunity for these containers to be purchased by manufacturers for reuse in a new product.

This legislation also recognizes the challenges faced by bars and restaurants in more rural areas of the state. By excluding bars and restaurants in counties with populations of 150,000 or less, the state recognizes the need for flexibility within the program. That being said, we estimate that this exemption will likely result in a reduction of the recovery of bar and restaurant beverage containers by as much as 15–20%

Please consider the GPI and our member companies a resource and advocate for effective recycling practices. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.