



**Glass Packaging Institute (GPI)**  
**Testimony to Maryland House Bill 1115**  
*March 2, 2012*

On behalf of the Glass Packaging Institute (GPI), I am pleased to provide the following testimony and support for House Bill 1115, which would require the Maryland Department of the Environment to recommend a beverage container refund program and related requirements for the state.

GPI is the North American trade association for the glass container manufacturers, glass recyclers, and suppliers of materials, equipment and transport to the industry.

GPI's members recognize the importance of supporting sustainability initiatives including conserving energy, saving raw materials, reducing air emissions (including NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM and greenhouse gases such as CO<sub>2</sub>) and being fully committed to "Reduce / Reuse" in all aspects of plant operations e.g. water, cardboard, lubricants, electricity, etc.

Based on the forgoing, it should come as no surprise that GPI member companies are strongly impacted by the outputs of the municipal solid waste and recycling streams. A top priority for GPI is to divert and recycle glass containers currently in the Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) stream, and to ensure that as many containers as possible are re-melted in the production of new glass containers.

When our glass plants can increase the levels of recycled glass as part of the overall batch mix, they can reduce furnace temperatures, resulting in reduced energy use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. This is also true of other packaging and manufacturing industries.

GPI has established a 50% recycled content goal for the manufacture of new glass containers. Success in achieving that goal is largely dependent on the strength of the recovery systems that generate recycled materials used by our industry. GPI estimates that roughly 80% of recycled glass comes from 10 states with beverage container refund programs. Accordingly, GPI members are vigorously engaged at the local, state and federal levels to improve collection systems, improve the usability of quality of recyclables for manufacturers and better link collection systems with end markets.

While the glass container industry does not have a glass plant located in the state, the industry does have three plants in New Jersey along with several plants in Pennsylvania. By increasing the amount of recycled glass utilized in the manufacturing process at these facilities, emissions levels are reduced significantly, decreasing emissions that may be sent downwind to Maryland.

GPI and its member companies are focusing on a variety of collection programs to get glass containers back to our plants. A key element that all of these programs share is the separation of the recyclables collected, which our industry has found greatly increasing the opportunities for their eventual reuse in the manufacturing process.

According to the recently released “Impact Analysis of a Beverage Container Deposit Program in Maryland” report, issued by the University of Maryland, adoption of a beverage container refund program would have an impact on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption. The report also cites a significant increase in the recycling rates for the materials and beverage containers covered in the program.

This Report also looks at curbside recycling programs, and notes that while they may be effective at addressing residential recyclables, they often do not capture the containers most likely to end up as litter – those used at work, school, or on the road.

Unlike beverage container refund programs, curbside and drop-off programs do not have a demonstrated ability to reduce litter from public areas. However, curbside and drop-off programs can collect a broader spectrum of materials, and therefore work in conjunction with beverage container refund programs to achieve a greater overall improvement in recycling.

GPI strongly agrees with the report’s recommendation that there should not be reliance placed on unredeemed deposits for unrelated programs. The unredeemed deposits may provide an opportunity to cover recycling and related program costs. We also think the Report’s suggestion that industry retain a significant portion of the unclaimed deposit revenue is worthy of consideration, as redemption and increased recycling rates for materials are met.

We also agree with the Report’s recommendation that a beverage container refund program include several container types. The Report also explains that many states have a difficult time expanding a program once it is established, and that Maryland should consider being as comprehensive as possible as to which beverage containers are included in a deposit program.

The most successful and robust beverage container refund programs not only provide environmental and energy related benefits, but may also contribute to increased employment in the greater recycling industry. A recently issued report by the Container Recycling Institute (CRI) found that, depending on system parameters, these programs create 11-38 times more jobs than a curbside recycling system for beverage containers. (*Morawski and Morris, Returning to Work: Understanding the Domestic Jobs Impacts from Different Methods of Recycling Beverage Containers, December 2011*)

Additionally, the CRI report finds that, ton for ton, beverage container refund programs create at least five times more jobs in container collection, sorting and transport than in garbage collecting, hauling and landfilling.

Most importantly, the CRI Report concluded that the principal reason beverage container refund programs create more jobs is that they recover more of the “target” material. On average, states with these programs recover three times more beverage containers, than states without these programs (76% vs. 24%.)

GPI would like to thank the Committee for including the glass container industry as part of this important discussion. Please consider GPI and its member companies a resource and advocate for recycling related issues.