

Lou Mansolillo

From: karen.maule <karen.maule@gmail.com>
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To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: H6207 Written Testimony

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To whom it may concern:

Although research is still ongoing, early data suggests that microplastics could pose risks to human health. Researchers have found that microplastics can carry harmful chemicals, some of which may interfere with hormone function, increase inflammation, or even increase the risk of certain diseases. Children may be more vulnerable to this environmental hazard due to their developing bodies and higher intake of air, food and water relative to their size.

Single-use beverage containers are a massive litter and waste problem. Plastic beverage bottles clog storm drains, float into rivers and streams, and break down into microplastic bits that pollute the Bay. And many beverage containers of all materials never get recycled because there wasn't a convenient option to recycle them or because they were too contaminated from being collected in our mixed curbside program.

Bottle bills work. For over a year, environmental groups, elected officials, and stakeholders studied solutions to beverage bottle waste and pollution. The study commission heard from recycling experts from around the country, examined data from other states, and dove deep into our own Rhode Island recycling and waste systems. It's now clearer than ever that bottle bills work to reduce litter and improve recycling.

Senate Bill 996 by Sen. McKenney and House Bill 6207 by Rep. McEntee reflect the recommendations of the study commission to create a Deposit Return System for beverage containers and a producer responsibility program for other forms of packaging. These systems would be paid for by producers and have no impact on the state budget and create a world-class recycling system that both reduces litter and improves recycling. Please support S996 and H6207.

Sincerely,
Karen

Karen Maule, MD, FAAP (she/her/hers)
East Greenwich Pediatrics
E: karen.maule@gmail.com
P: 401.884.8900