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November 8, 2017

The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen, Jr.
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

We write to offer our support for the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act of 2017.

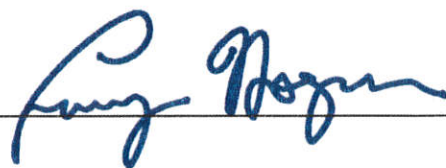

Our farmers have been critical to the recent improvements in Chesapeake Bay water quality. Both dissolved oxygen and clarity of the waters is the best we have seen in decades. Programs offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) provide critical financial and technical assistance to the agricultural community and are vital to our efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Given the constructive feedback we have received from stakeholders, we believe the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) would benefit from some adjustments that would improve funding availability, build new partnerships and provide for adequate technical assistance. On behalf of the members of the Chesapeake Executive Council, we support your efforts and those of your cosponsors to improve the program by introducing the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act of 2017. This legislation would amend RCPP in ways that would support agricultural efforts to implement the state Watershed Implementation Plans, intended to meet the shared water quality goals in the Chesapeake Bay region.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this legislation.

Signed:

For the State of Maryland
(Executive Council Chair)

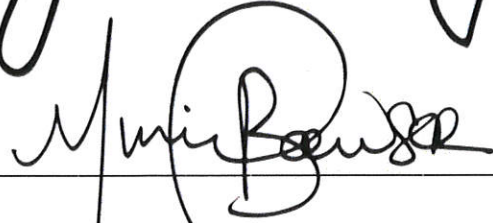



For the Chesapeake Bay Commission

For the State of Delaware

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John C. Carney", written over a horizontal line.

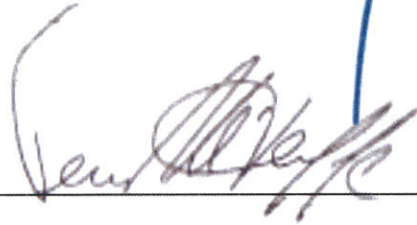
For the District of Columbia

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Muriel Bowser", written over a horizontal line.

For the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Tom Wolf", written over a horizontal line.

For the Commonwealth of Virginia

A handwritten signature in brown ink, reading "Ken Cuccinelli", written over a horizontal line.

For the State of West Virginia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jim Justice", written over a horizontal line.

*One Chesapeake Executive Council member, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator on behalf of the United States, has not signed this letter. Federal law and practice prohibit federal officials from adopting advocacy statements contained herein. The EPA did not participate in the drafting of this letter and its contents do not indicate Agency opposition to, or support for, any of the specific actions outlined in this letter.