



choose **clean** water

December , 2009

RE: The Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act (S.1816/H.R.3852)

Dear Virginia Congressmen:

Many family farms throughout the Commonwealth have made significant progress on their land to address their impact on local streams and rivers. Farmers have spent a great deal of time and money, sometimes with federal or state assistance, to be good stewards. A wide variety of conservation practices have been implemented and tailored to particular needs and problems – farm by farm, and there is still much work to be done.

The Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act, legislation recently introduced by Senator Ben Cardin and Congressman Elijah Cummings of Maryland, establishes for the first time a firm deadline for implementing Bay restoration activities. Notably there are significant benefits to Virginia farmers.

Importantly, the legislation provides the funding and the guidance to reach the 2025 goal. The bill significantly expands the amount of Federal support available for restoration activities throughout the region, specifically targeting grants and technical assistance for both farmers and local governments.

In addition to efforts by farmers, local governments and homeowners have made commendable progress toward cleaning up. Many local governments have installed state-of-the-art technology at their sewage treatment facilities, and these costs are borne by citizens. And many homeowners throughout the Commonwealth have implemented low impact development practices on their properties to reduce stormwater pollution that devastates local streams. The bill makes a strong effort to enable, encourage, and enforce expanded efforts to improve water quality from all sectors including federal facilities, new development and existing pollution sources.

All of these efforts on behalf of clean water in the Chesapeake region should be applauded and rewarded. Passage of the bill goes a step further by making good sound practices commonplace on the land and in our communities.

Through the Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act, we have a real opportunity to clean up degraded waters and protect healthy waters throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and ultimately save the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Stella Koch, Audubon Naturalist Society  
Ann Jennings, Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Stewart Schwartz, Coalition for Smarter Growth  
J.R. Tolbert, Environment Virginia  
Don Sims, Float Fisherman of Virginia  
Jane Pratt, Friends of the Blue Ridge  
Bill Tanger, Friends of the Rivers of Virginia  
Karen Forget, Lynnhaven River NOW  
Sheila Sheppard, Partnership for Smarter Growth  
Chris Miller, Piedmont Environmental Council  
Chris Lyons, Restore America's Estuaries  
Kate Wofford, Shenandoah Valley Network  
Nathan Lott, Virginia Conservation Network  
Lisa Guthrie, Virginia League of Conservation Voters  
David Hannah, Wild Virginia