

**Resolution 2017 -1: In Support of the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership**

Whereas, the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership began in 1983 with the signing of the first Chesapeake Bay Agreement by Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Chesapeake Bay Commission; and

Whereas, the partnership has steadily grown over more than three decades to include the states of Delaware, New York and West Virginia as well as numerous public and private institutions, organizations and agencies; and

Whereas, the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership affirmed its commitment to Chesapeake Bay restoration as recently as 2014 with the signing of the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement; and

Whereas, the science, policy and budgetary actions promoted by the partnership has provided a solid foundation for improvements in water quality, habitat, fisheries and a range of critical restoration issues; and

Whereas, the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership has promoted, funded and implemented shared responses to bay issues by local, state and federal institutions and agencies and the private sector; and

Whereas, a peer-reviewed study estimated that the economic benefits of a restored Chesapeake Bay to the region's economy could reach \$129.7 billion annually; and

Whereas, the partnership has been recognized as a state-led, federally supported restoration effort and a successful example of cooperative federalism; and

Whereas, the independent volunteer advisors of the Citizens, Local Government, and Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees support the critical and unique role of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership and have encouraged us to advocate for continued federal support; and...

Whereas, Section 117 of the Clean Water Act calls specifically for the signatories of the various Chesapeake Bay Agreement to “achieve and maintain... the water quality requirements necessary to restore living resources”; and

Whereas, the EPA is mandated to have an office that supports the states and the district through “implementing and coordinating science, research, modeling, support services, monitoring, data collection and other activities”; and

Whereas, federal agencies, including the EPA, the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, Defense, Commerce and others, have contributed significantly in both money and actions, to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay; and

Whereas, the partnership is at the mid-point of a fifteen year-long plan to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment loadings to the Chesapeake Bay, known as the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL); and

Whereas, the scientific, technical and financial support from EPA and other federal agencies are important contributors to the success of the TMDL and the benefits that will accrue from improved water quality; and

Whereas, the partnership is at an important milestone as it approaches the midpoint assessment of the TMDL this year with a goal to have all actions in place by 2025; and

Whereas, in 2016 water quality in the Bay continued a trend of improvement, including record acres of bay grasses, fewer “dead zones” without oxygen and decreased loads of nutrients and sediment from most tributaries; and

Whereas, continued progress is based on maintaining and accelerating the scientific, policy and funding partnership that the Chesapeake Bay Program represents;

Now, therefore, be it resolved,

That the Chesapeake Executive Council calls on the President and the United States Congress to continue the current level of support for the Chesapeake Bay Program and the participating jurisdictions;

Now be it further resolved, that science, monitoring, modeling and restoration continue to be undertaken with the full participation of local, state and federal agencies;

Now be it finally resolved, that the Chesapeake Executive Council will distribute this resolution to the President of the United States, members of Congress and other supporters of this federal, state and local partnership so they may have the sense of the Council on this important matter.

Signed:

Governor of Virginia

Governor of Maryland

Governor of Pennsylvania

Governor of Delaware

Governor of New York

Governor of West Virginia

Mayor of the District of Columbia

Chairman of the Chesapeake Bay Commission