



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION  
*Saving a National Treasure*

July 6, 2023

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The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senate  
730 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Sarbanes  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2370 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: *Chesapeake National Recreation Area*

Dear Senator Van Hollen and Representative Sarbanes:

On behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to restore and protect the ecological health of the Chesapeake Bay, I am writing to thank you for your leadership to create the Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA), a new unit of the National Park System in the Chesapeake watershed.

Promoting and expanding opportunities to experience the Bay and learn about its history have been long-standing priorities for CBF. As the nation's largest estuary and home to abundant wildlife and cultural diversity, the Chesapeake Bay watershed is without question nationally significant. The Bay holds a special place in our hearts as well as our region's unique history. The designation of the CNRA, along with the permanent authorization of the Chesapeake Gateways program, are necessary for elevating the stories of the Bay's ecosystem and restoration efforts, history, and cultural diversity.

CBF has focused on reaching all communities across the watershed, recognizing the systemic barriers in accessing waterfront recreation and the associated benefits including public health and quality of life. With the watershed spanning 64,000 square miles and boasting more than 11,000 miles of shoreline, all residents and visitors should have the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful resource and all the recreation opportunities it provides. We support the creation of the CNRA, as it would increase both the quantity and quality of public access sites around the Bay, supporting the connections between the people and the waterway and wildlife.

CBF supports all partners in the watershed, residents, and those who rely on Bay resources; thus, we appreciate that the CNRA allows for the voluntary transfer of land for property owners wishing to participate in this effort. We also support the explicit



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requirement that commercial and recreational fisheries as well as states' authority to manage fish and wildlife species will not be impacted by this effort.

Thank you once again for leading this important initiative. We look forward to working with you to ensure swift passage of this bill and the establishment of this new national recreation area in the Chesapeake.

Sincerely,  
Keisha Sedlacek  
Federal Director  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Cc: The Honorable Ben Cardin  
The Honorable Mark Warner  
The Honorable Tim Kaine  
The Honorable Bobby Scott