



Choose Clean Water

COALITION

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June 29, 2023

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
U.S. 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

Dear Senator Van Hollen and Congressman Sarbanes:

As the co-chairs of the Choose Clean Water Coalition we thank you both and strongly support your leadership to create a Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA). We are a coalition of more than 285 organizations that advocate for clean rivers and streams in all communities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Promoting and expanding public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries throughout the 64,000 square mile watershed are long-standing priorities for the Coalition, and we support your efforts to bring this to fruition by including the Chesapeake region as a new unit of the National Park Service.

We applaud your efforts to expand opportunities for recreational access to water in underserved communities throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed and to commemorate the rich culture and contributions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) that have lacked recognition throughout history. The Coalition is also a long-time advocate for the Chesapeake Gateways program, and we strongly support your efforts to permanently authorize the Gateways program and to increase its funding as part of this effort.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is a vast and varied landscape with a diverse population of almost 19 million residents. Your legislation will increase diverse public access to the iconic Chesapeake Bay and its many tributaries and will strengthen the culture of stewardship across the region.

We strongly support your efforts to create a CNRA and stand ready to help move this legislation forward. Please contact Peter J. Marx at peter@chooscleanwater.org with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Choose Clean Water Coalition Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Jennifer Mihills
National Wildlife Federation

Laura Bankey
National Aquarium

Molly Parzen
Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania