



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

The Honorable Ben Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

September 14, 2020

Dear Senators Cardin and Senator Van Hollen:

I write to you in support of Maryland's natural resources, and our national treasure, the Chesapeake Bay. The Bay is a powerful economic driver for our State and region, with activities, industries and tourism contributing millions of dollars to our economy each year. The Chesapeake continues to be an important part of our economy, heritage and way of life. Today, we are united in the effort to enhance, protect and restore this resource so that future generations can enjoy both the beauty and bounty of the Bay.

As I have stated previously, I support the creation of a Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area, and I encourage you to continue the work of building partnerships and engaging stakeholders, including anglers, business owners, conservationists, and property owners, and craft consensus-based legislation that would establish a National Park Service unit on state property that celebrates and preserves our rich Chesapeake culture, natural resources-based industries, and protects community and state interests.

The National Park System currently includes 419 units of varying designations, including battlefields, monuments, parks and recreation areas. Maryland is fortunate to have several exceptional units located here, like Antietam National Battlefield, Assateague Island National Seashore, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, and the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, but there is no one unit devoted solely to the Bay. I believe the Chesapeake Bay is as grand as the Grand Canyon and as great as the Great Smokies, and should be included in a new federal-state partnership.

A Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area would provide an incredible opportunity to showcase Maryland's significant cultural, environmental, historical and natural resources, and provide an international platform for the State of Maryland and the broader Chesapeake Bay watershed. I also believe that the State's outdoor recreation and tourism-based economy would greatly benefit from this designation. As such, my administration would be pleased to continue working with you and others to provide guidance, insight and recommendations for potential locations in and around the region.

I urge you to continue holding discussions with partners and stakeholders, and I hope you consider crafting legislation that would establish a Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area. My administration stands ready to assist you in this noble effort.

Sincerely,

Larry Hogan
Governor

cc: Maryland Congressional Delegation