



June 5, 2023

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Cardin, Senator Van Hollen, and Congressman Sarbanes:

I write in support of the creation of a Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area. 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 importance of the Bay to Marylanders identity and way of life lends itself as a prime candidate for the National Park Service to designate it as a new federal-state partnership.

The National Park System (NPS) currently includes 419 units of varying designations, including battlefields, monuments, parks and recreation areas. Maryland is fortunate to have several exceptional units, 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 not one unit devoted solely to the Bay.

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 encourage you to continue the work of building partnerships and engaging stakeholders to craft consensus-based legislation that would establish a NPS unit on state property that celebrates and preserves the Chesapeake Bay.

My Administration has worked to preserve our waterways by funding instrumental programs to help enhance and protect the Chesapeake Bay, while prioritizing environmental justice for the low-income communities and communities of color. Historically, these communities in the Chesapeake region often suffer disproportionate impacts of environmental hazards. A NPS

designation would help reduce these barriers and provide greater access to all the Chesapeake Bay has to offer while coordinating with local communities to support their needs. I look forward to continuing this partnership and working with you to provide guidance, insight, and recommendations for potential locations in and around the region.

I look forward to working together in the effort to enhance, protect and restore this resource so that future generations can enjoy both the beauty and bounty of the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Moore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wes Moore
Governor of Maryland