

Somerset County
Economic Development Commission

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Daniel K. Thompson
Executive Director

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June 20, 2023

United States Senator Chris Van Hollen
204 Cedar Street
Suite 200C
Cambridge, MD 21613

Re: Chesapeake National Recreation Area

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

As the Executive Director of Somerset County Economic Development (EDC), I would like to submit this letter of support in regards to the Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) bill that is currently under public comment and will soon be introduced into legislation.

Somerset County, located on Maryland's Eastern Shore, is bounded by the Chesapeake Bay to the west and Virginia to the south, and is the state's southernmost county. As a water-oriented County, a lot of our local residents make their living working on the water and rely heavily on the Chesapeake Bay. The Tourism industry here on the shore is essential to the quality of life and the attraction of future economic growth. The Chesapeake National Recreation Area will elevate the Chesapeake Bay by bringing additional local and national recognition to the region and making substantial contribution to the economy.

Somerset County is a true waterman's community and relies heavily on the seafood industry. The seafood industry is how the majority of our residents make their living. The CNRA will highlight the key part the Bay played, and continues to play, in the region's economy and the story of watermen and – woman who are essential to the economic success and health of the Bay region. This will spark environmentally conscious tourism that supports those in the food, lodging, outdoor recreation, etc.

Designating a Chesapeake National Recreation Area will bring national recognition to the importance of the Bay and provide resources to support its natural, cultural, historical, and recreational significance. We certainly appreciate all you do for Somerset County and look forward to a favorable outcome. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel K. Thompson".

Daniel K. Thompson
Executive Director

Cc: Ms. Alyssa Hastings, Eastern Shore Regional Director to U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen



SOMERSET COUNTY