

December 20, 2023

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

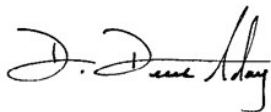
Dear Senator Van Hollen and Representative Sarbanes,

On behalf of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), I write to express our support of legislation that establishes the Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA). VIMS is one of the largest and most-respected coastal and marine research and education centers in the country and the trusted science advisor to the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries are national treasures that provide jobs, recreation, and critical ecosystem services for millions of people on the eastern seaboard. The bipartisan Chesapeake National Recreation Area Act ([H.R. 5045/S. 2620](#)) recognizes the economic and ecological impact the Chesapeake Bay has both locally and nationally. Establishing the CNRA would allow for additional federal investment and improve public access while spurring economic growth and conserving the environment.

VIMS has a three-part mission to conduct research in coastal ocean and estuarine science, educate students and citizens, and provide advisory service to policy makers, industry, and the public. The CNRA Act would align with our efforts by promoting and conserving the Bay, and expanding learning opportunities for the public with the establishment of a visitor center near Fort Monroe.

Thank you for working on this important legislation. VIMS stands ready to be a resource to you as the CNRA advances through Congress.

Sincerely,



Dr. D. Derek Aday
Dean and Director of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

Cc: The Honorable Mark Warner
The Honorable Tim Kaine
The Honorable Bobby Scott
The Honorable Rob Wittman
The Honorable Jen Kiggans