

November 9, 2009

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin  
Chairman, Water and Wildlife Subcommittee  
U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Mike Crapo  
Ranking Member, Water and Wildlife Subcommittee  
U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senators Cardin and Crapo,

We write today in regards to S. 1816 and the efforts to expand and reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program. We ask that these comments be entered into Congressional record as part of the November 9, 2009 hearing on “Great Body Water Legislation” before the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife.

Across the Chesapeake Bay watershed and nation, our agricultural producers and organization members are very concerned about the implications of S. 1816 and believe it does not soundly or efficiently achieve the goal of improved water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. In effect, the legislation places a cap on the watershed’s economic growth – impacting jobs, development, and food production. This bill will impose severe economic hardship to our industry and further increase pressure to the Chesapeake Bay’s most effective and efficient land use, production agriculture, to move out of the watershed.

Through codifying executive and regulatory authorities, S. 1816 will hamper innovative solutions in areas such as nutrient trading, economic growth, farm adaptive management and overall water quality restoration. Without adequate time and science to effectively work through processes such as the drafting of the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), S. 1816 will impose burdensome regulations and penalties before defining procedures and practices that are proven to efficiently achieve desired water quality goals. This accelerated course of action is expensive and damaging to the watershed’s economy, viability of our agriculture sector, and overall water quality objectives.

We ask the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee to reauthorize the existing Chesapeake Bay Program without dramatically expanding federal authorities. We believe adequate time should be given to develop creative ways for economic recovery and growth to partner with water quality goals, as well as to refine the science and modeling in the watershed. Our organizations look forward to continuing discussions with you regarding this critical issue and thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Senators Cardin and Crapo

November 9, 2009

Page 2

Sincerely,

Agri-Mark, Inc.

American Farm Bureau Federation

Association of Virginia Potato & Vegetable Growers

Central Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association

Cooperative Milk Producers Association

Dairy Farmers of America, Northeast Council

Dairylea Cooperative Inc.

Delaware Maryland Agribusiness Association

Delmarva Poultry Industries, Inc.

Maryland Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Maryland Cattlemen's Association

Maryland Farm Bureau Federation

Maryland Grain Producers Association

Maryland Pork Producers Association

Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association

National Association of Wheat Growers

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

National Chicken Council

National Corn Growers Association

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Milk Producers Federation

National Turkey Federation

New York Corn Growers Association

PennAg Industries Association

Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association

Pennsylvania Center for Beef Excellence

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

Pennsylvania Pork Producers Association

South East Dairy Farmers Association

Southwest Virginia Agricultural Association

St. Albans Cooperative Creamery

The Fertilizer Institute

United Egg Producers

United States Poultry and Egg Association

Upstate-Niagara Cooperative

Virginia Agribusiness Council

Virginia Cattlemen's Association

Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association

Virginia Cotton Growers Association

Virginia Crop Production Association

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation

Virginia Forage & Grasslands Council

Virginia Forest Products Association

Senators Cardin and Crapo

November 9, 2009

Page 3

Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

Virginia Grain Producers Association

Virginia Green Industry Council

Virginia Horse Council

Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association

Virginia Peanut Growers Association

Virginia Pork Industry Association

Virginia Poultry Federation

Virginia Sheep Producers Association

Virginia Soybean Association

Virginia State Dairymen's Association

Virginia State Horticultural Society

Virginia Turfgrass Council

Virginia Wineries Association

West Virginia Poultry Federation