

**Virginia Agribusiness Council**  
*We Represent Virginia Agribusiness with a Unified Voice*

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Release: June 11, 2010**

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**VIRGINIA AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL APPLAUDS THE "CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT ACT"**

*Richmond, Virginia-* The Virginia Agribusiness Council applauds the introduction of H.R. 5509, the "Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization and Improvement Act", a bipartisan bill introduced yesterday by Congressmen Tim Holden (D-PA) and Bob Goodlatte (R-VA). The legislation addresses water quality measures to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The bill provides tools and necessary certainty for the agribusiness industry as they implement additional conservation practices on farms and forests throughout the Bay watershed. It also establishes flexibility in meeting regulatory requirements under the Clean Water Act.

As the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began the process for developing the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), the agribusiness industry cited the need for adequate resources and certainty in meeting federal water quality mandates. "Water quality goals should be achieved through reasonable and balanced measures that ensure the continued viability of Virginia's number one industry of agriculture and forestry," stated Council Vice President-Public Affairs Katie Frazier. She went on to add, "Our agribusiness industry also supports a viable regional trading system that will allow for agriculture and other industry sectors to meet reduction goals for the bay without hindering future economic growth. This bill addresses these concerns with a common-sense approach to support our industry and other businesses to help to improve the water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries."

The Council concurred with Congressman Goodlatte when he stated, "Unquestionably the Bay is in need and worthy of our attention and concern and I believe everyone has a role to play in restoring it. Today I am pleased to join with Congressman Holden in introducing legislation which will protect the health of the Bay while also ensuring the strength and vitality of our family farms and local communities within the Bay Watershed."

Frazier noted that through industry-wide coalitions, the agribusiness industry has been seeking reasonable solutions to address clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay, building upon the numerous actions already taken by farmers, foresters, and businesses to improve water quality. "This bill provides clear direction for water quality measures for the bay and its tributaries in a responsible manner that will continue to allow the Commonwealth's economy to thrive. We applaud Representatives Holden and Goodlatte for their introduction of this important measure and are pleased to offer our support."

The Virginia Agribusiness Council represents agricultural and forestry producers, suppliers, marketers, processors and commodity associations in the Commonwealth with a unified voice through its government affairs activities. The Council has a combined membership of over 40,000. For more information on the Virginia Agribusiness Council, visit [www.va-agribusiness.org](http://www.va-agribusiness.org).

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