

The Virginian-Pilot

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A plan for the Bay

RE 'CHESAPEAKE BAY is better, but not enough,' editorial, April 12: The Virginian-Pilot is absolutely right. Curbing runoff pollution to protect the Bay and its rivers is politically difficult and potentially expensive. And, yes, it will require some mechanism to encourage the necessary changes and to enforce them. However, it is possible for us to have a cleaner Bay.

At Lynnhaven River NOW, we thought waiting for passage of federal legislation was problematic, and we plowed ahead. In 2003, the city of Virginia Beach made cleaning up the Lynnhaven River a priority.

With the work of Lynnhaven River NOW, the citizens of Virginia Beach, our City Council and partner organizations like the Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, we have made significant progress toward our goal of a clean and healthy river. Today, we are leading the way but still have many hurdles ahead of us.

Fortunately, one part of the solution is at hand, the Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act now before Congress. It would establish clean water standards, then hold Virginia and the other Bay states accountable for meeting them in two-year increments over the next 15 years. It also would provide opportunities for localities, like Virginia Beach, to receive help to reduce storm-water runoff and all the pollutants it carries.

Virginia's members of Congress need to support the Chesapeake Clean Water Act and work hard for its passage.

Andrew Fine and Harry Lester
Virginia Beach