



September 7, 2017

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than 230 member groups of the Choose Clean Water Coalition, we strongly urge you to oppose an amendment Congressman Bob Goodlatte plans to offer on the Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill. The amendment undermines the successful cooperative federalism demonstrated by the Chesapeake Bay clean up and would severely hamper progress being made to restore and protect local waters.

The Chesapeake Bay is North America's largest estuary and its vast watershed covers portions of six states - Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia - and the District of Columbia (DC). The Bay is a national treasure and an economic engine for the region. After decades of unsuccessful attempts to restore the Chesapeake Bay, the six Chesapeake Bay states and DC agreed to a geographically-tailored clean up process – and it is working.

Each state has drafted and is following its own Watershed Implementation Plan reflecting the state's needs and detailing how it plans to reduce water pollution in the region. All of these plans have been approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and incorporate an adaptive management approach to let each state respond to lessons learned throughout the restoration effort.

The clean up is working and there have been clear results in the Bay watershed. The current process has given the states more control than ever in seeking solutions to the degraded waters of the region, while utilizing federal resources to help the states meet their commitments. While the effort has been challenged, including in Federal Court, it has been upheld by the United States Court of Appeals and retains widespread support throughout the watershed.

The Goodlatte Amendment is an attempt to stop a federal-state-local cooperative restoration program that is working. The Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions have no desire to end their coordinated efforts and significant investments in their clean up plans. In 2014, the governors of the Bay states and the mayor of DC all reaffirmed their commitment to the restoration effort by signing a new Chesapeake Bay Agreement, and confirmed their continued support when they met this past June.

Two and a half years ago, Congress passed the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act by a unanimous vote of 416-0 in the House. This program is being successfully implemented by EPA and the states, and we believe that accountability is a critical element of keeping the Chesapeake Bay cleanup effort on track. This amendment would hinder the restoration effort by undermining accountability when we need it most and reverting to the failed policies of the past.

For these reasons, we urge you to protect the investments and commitments made by each of the Bay watershed states and vote "NO" on the Goodlatte Amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Mihills".

Jennifer Mihills
National Wildlife Federation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angie Rosser".

Angie Rosser
*West Virginia Rivers
Coalition*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karla Raettig".

Karla Raettig
*Maryland League of
Conservation Voters*