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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2002

April 22, 2015

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment and Related Agencies  
B-208 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

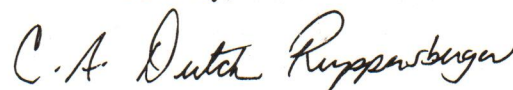
The purpose of this letter is to request support for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Chesapeake Bay Programs as you begin the process of crafting the Fiscal Year 2016 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. Thank you for taking the time to consider the funding for these critically important programs.

As one of the only members of the House Appropriations Committee with a regional tie to the Chesapeake Bay area, I strongly support the efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay watershed. As you may know, 11 million people in the region get their drinking water directly from the rivers and streams that flow through the watershed. In addition, the Chesapeake Bay significantly impacts our regional economy by bringing billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of jobs to our fishing, boating, and tourism industries, just to name a few.

Unfortunately, the President's Fiscal Year 2016 budget cuts the EPA Chesapeake Bay program from \$73 million to \$70 million. Even more significant is the proposed 50 percent cut to the Small Watershed Grants and the Nutrient and Sediment Removal grants which fall under the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Budget. These grant programs play a critical role in assisting local communities in meeting the federal requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load. With the progress and investment we already have made, now is not the time to cut these critically important programs. As the leaders of the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, you are asked to make many critically important funding decisions. I urge you to prioritize the restoration of the funding for these vital programs.

As a former Baltimore County Councilman, Baltimore County Executive, and a current Representative for the State of Maryland, I cannot stress enough the importance of these programs. The Chesapeake Bay is the life blood of not just Maryland, but of Virginia, West Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. I urge you to restore the funding to the EPA Chesapeake Bay Programs, and I look forward to working with you to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,



C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress