

**Letter from Faith Leaders to Members of Congress
Chesapeake Bay Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act**

June XX, 2010

Dear Representative/Senator,

We, as leaders from many of Pennsylvania's religious traditions, strongly encourage you to join in an historic opportunity to clean up our rivers and streams and the Chesapeake Bay by supporting the **Chesapeake Bay Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act**.

This groundbreaking legislation will have a dramatic effect on reducing nutrient pollution and helping to restore water quality for the Chesapeake Bay and the thousands of miles of rivers and streams that feed it over a 64,000 square-mile area. This includes the Susquehanna River and all its tributaries, covering half of Pennsylvania's land mass and providing more than half of the freshwater that makes up the Chesapeake Bay.

All of our faith traditions share a common belief that we have a responsibility to protect and preserve our environment and the life it sustains now and for future generations. And while we believe caring for the environment alone is extremely important, clean water is also an economic issue for Pennsylvania. We must make sure that we clean up our water and keep it clean in order to protect the health and safety of all that lives, works, and plays in and around our waters. This is not only good for the environment, but good for the economy—protecting Pennsylvania's fishing and tourism industries and Pennsylvanians who depend on clean, safe water for their livelihoods.

For 25 years, the federal government, the Chesapeake Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia have worked in concert to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution flowing to the Chesapeake Bay in hopes of restoring water quality and the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. With pollution causing everything from oxygen-starved dead zones to economic hardship in industries dependent upon clean water, it is clear that the current effort has fallen well short of the goal of a restored Chesapeake Bay by 2010. This new legislation will begin moving us more quickly toward actual clean up of the Bay and Pennsylvania waterways by:

- Establishing a firm deadline to meet clean up goals;
- Expanding funding for clean up, with specific grants and technical assistance for farmers and local governments;
- Capping the amount of pollution that can be sent downstream;
- Establishing an interstate nutrient trading program; and
- Requiring accountability and evaluation to ensure we are meeting our cleanup goals

We urge you to support the **Chesapeake Bay Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act** now to ensure a healthy future for our environment, our economy, and our families.

Sincerely,