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Ellen Moyer
Mayor of Annapolis, Maryland's Capital City.

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Congressman Wayne Gilchrist
Sub-Committee on Fisheries Conservation,
Wildlife and Oceans

Good morning. My name is Ellen Moyer, Mayor of Annapolis, Maryland's Capital City.

I commend your commitment to restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. However, I believe that current Federal funding levels for Bay restoration are wholly inadequate and that the limited funds available are not adequately directed to the people and places where they can have most impact – local governments and community groups.

Quite frankly, I do not believe the Bay will survive as a national treasure of enormous environmental, economic and cultural significance without the full engagement of local government. Therefore, I recommend that a more effective approach to Chesapeake Bay restoration would be to authorize and appropriate funds for a "Community-Base Chesapeake Bay Restoration Initiative". Such an initiative would greatly expand the current "Small Watershed Grants" program of the Chesapeake Bay Program. It would provide grants to local governments and community groups to undertake a broad range of preservation, conservation and restoration activities.

Of the ten Keystone commitments under C2K, five require significant local government involvement:

- Watershed management planning
- Forest conservation along streams and shorelines
- Nutrient/sediment reduction
- Land conservation
- Harmful sprawl

How can we expect to make advances in these areas without the engagement of local towns and counties? Much of the work of Bay restoration can only be accomplished by local communities. Sound land use, watershed management plans, new and improved infrastructures for stormwater and sewage treatment are under the jurisdiction of local government.

Local governments are expected to pay billions of dollars of improvements to correct nutrient and sediment related problems. As already noted by the Chesapeake Bay Commission, there exists a significant funding gap. Local governments have the lowest ability to raise the money to meet this challenge. They are unable to pay for their share of Bay cleanup. So just exactly how is increased enforcement going to be successfully employed as a change agent?

Local communities receive only 10-15% of the Chesapeake Bay Program's annual budget, an amount approximately \$3 Million dollars. If each of the 1,600 local governments in the Bay corridor received an equal share it would amount to \$1,875 a year.

Despite the expenditure of billions of dollars over 20 years, Bay restoration seems elusive. A case can be made that by sidestepping local government, the top down driven effort has contributed to the failure of the Bay cleanup program.

The extent of Federal investment in the Bay has been relatively small compared to the efforts to restore

other national treasures. For instance, \$200 Million annually is appropriated for the Everglades (compared to \$20 Million for the Bay). Cost sharing for San Francisco Bay Delta is 50% compared to 6% for the Chesapeake Bay. In the Pacific Northwest the annual Federal grant program to local government and community groups for Pacific Salmon Recovery is 90-110 Million dollars.

Little understood (and generally ignored) is the effect of air quality on the Bay. There is evidence that pollutants in the air as nitrogen do find their way into the watershed and cannot be ignored in efforts to restore the Bay.

Additionally, polls show that 95% of citizens in the Bay watershed support Bay restoration efforts. Caring and committed citizens volunteer to plant trees, plant oysters, design rain gardens and so much more. There is a wealth of people experience and a willingness to share successful programs with communities that are not engaged. The Bay Partners program, Best Practices web sites, peer matching, circuit riders, the engagement of local government representatives are low cost programs that can enhance citizen involvement in water shed, land preservation and forestry programs. These low cost efforts result in environmental gains well above the costs. Yet, defying common sense, these programs to engage a wider population are always in jeopardy.

The Chesapeake Bay Program needs to be restructured to achieve the goals established in C2K. The Small Watershed Grants should be expanded in scope and scale. But most importantly, a larger portion of the Bay funds should be directed to local governments and community groups for on-the-ground activities in new program designed for "Community-Based Chesapeake Bay Restoration Initiative".

Now is the time to increase assistance and to advance local government efforts and community organizations that implement activities and programs that will improve water quality in the Bay and its tributaries. To save our national treasure requires new thinking and new ways of work. This is of critical importance to the success of the Chesapeake Bay restoration.