



Citizens Advisory Committee

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October 5, 2018

Secretary Ben Grumbles
Maryland Department of the Environment
Chair, Principals' Staff Committee
1800 Washington Blvd
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Dear Secretary Grumbles,

On behalf of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) please accept our strong support for the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative (CMC). We believe this partnership has the potential to advance the importance and utility of citizen science, improve understanding of the health of local waterways, and promote environmental education and stewardship. The Principals' Staff Committee's recognition of volunteer and nontraditional monitoring further enhances the critical connection of local assessments and community engagement in restoration and protection. To this end, we encourage the partnership to interpret the data within the CMC and communicate its findings to help educate the public about the health of local streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

Over time, we have witnessed the vulnerability of environmental monitoring programs in federal and state budget cycles. We view this MOU as acknowledgement of the importance of citizen monitoring efforts, often conducted with volunteers, within the overall effort to monitor and assess the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. We also see this as an opportunity to foster environmental education, jobs skills training and workforce development in the growing field of green careers by introducing students and volunteers to how land use impacts water quality. We look forward to learning and advising on how the PSC and the CMC will advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the volunteer and nontraditional monitoring base.

As your citizen advisors, we congratulate the Principals' Staff Committee on this progressive and collaborative approach to meeting the needs of the Chesapeake Bay Partners and the many volunteers across the watershed who invest in the care of their local waterways.

Sincerely,

Paula Jasinski
Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee

cc: Principals' Staff Committee Members

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