



February 3, 2016

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By First Class Mail and Electronic Mail

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser,

As one of seven jurisdictions within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the District of Columbia has an important role to play in restoring the Chesapeake Bay. We are approaching the midpoint of the groundbreaking 16-year plan to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment loads to the Bay and the District has some more work to do to ensure that each of the ultimate goals are met. The recent water crises in Flint, Toledo, Des Moines, and many other communities around the country are calls to action, reminders of the costs of ignoring our nation's many impaired waterways. Meeting your commitments under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL) will also help restore the District's local waterways.

The Center for Progressive Reform (www.progressivereform.org), a non-partisan network of working academics at graduate schools across the country who specialize in the design and implementation of programs to protect public health, worker and consumer safety, and the environment, has just released the report *Countdown to 2017: Five Years In, Chesapeake Bay TMDL at Risk Without EPA Enforcement*. The report concludes that without substantial improvement in the performance of the seven Bay states, this latest effort to restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay will fail. The report is based on the most recent data from the Chesapeake Bay Program's watershed model, which is released each year to track progress made by each state and each pollution source sector.

Specifically, the report shows that, like Virginia and Maryland, the District of Columbia will meet their nitrogen reduction goals through significant investments in wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The District's strategy for implementing the Bay TMDL was relatively straightforward, involving the upgrade of the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant, which single-handedly takes care of its nitrogen reduction commitment. Unfortunately, the upgrade of Blue Plains has not and cannot resolve the issue of sediment pollution, which can only be controlled by addressing the problem of stormwater runoff. The nation's capital has established several very important programs and funding sources to become a national leader in the creation of urban green infrastructure through investments in things like green roofs, expansion of the urban tree canopy, and retrofits of sidewalks and other paved areas to reduce impervious surfaces. We hope that the District remains committed to fully funding and implementing these programs..

We urge you as Mayor to take an active role in overseeing the District's efforts to meet its obligations under the Bay TMDL. Only when all seven jurisdictions share equally in the responsibility for restoring their local waters can the Chesapeake Bay be restored. We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Rena Steinzor
Past President and Member Scholar, Center for
Progressive Reform



Evan Isaacson
Chesapeake Bay Policy Analyst
Center for Progressive Reform

cc: Tommy Wells, Director of the Department of Energy and Environment