



February 3, 2016

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By First Class Mail and Electronic Mail

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

As one of seven jurisdictions within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, New York 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 State has a long way to go to ensure that 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 help restore the many local streams, lakes, and other waters that the Department of Environmental Conservation has declared are impaired.

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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 New York is one of only two states going backwards under the Bay TMDL in terms of reducing nitrogen pollution. In fact, beginning in 2009, nitrogen pollution has increased in the state's portion of the Bay watershed at an even higher rate than in Pennsylvania. Although New York contributes only a fraction of the nutrient and sediment pollution to the watershed compared with Pennsylvania, this lack of progress nevertheless continues to degrade the waters of the state's beautiful Southern Tier. New York's plan to implement the Bay TMDL nitrogen reduction goal relies almost entirely on the agriculture sector. With the help of renowned agricultural research specialists at Cornell University, the state is very aware of how to address nutrient pollution. But New York must follow through on these plans, particularly through the proper regulation and enforcement of concentrated animal feeding operations.

We urge you as Governor to take a greater role in overseeing the state'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: Basil Seggos, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation