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February 18, 2010

Appropriations Committee  
Taylor Office Building, Room 121  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: HB 150, Opposes cuts to the 2010 Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund, Bay Restoration Fund, Climate Change Programs, and supports funding for MDE staff to implement critical programs and enforce laws.**

Dear Chairman Conway and Members of the Committee:

Protecting the environment is a good investment in our economy and our future. Marylanders consider the health of the Bay and addressing climate change to be first-order priorities.

Recognizing that you have to make difficult choices, we respectfully urge you to choose to invest in our environment to build our economy. For example, the Bay Restoration Fund could be used utilized to fund local contractors to replace failing septic systems and hire construction crews to upgrade wastewater treatment plants. These programs are critical to Maryland's ability to meet our two-year milestones under the Chesapeake Bay Agreement.

Due to your leadership in passing legislation such as the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act, Maryland is a national leader in the fight to curb global warming pollution. The Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) climate programs not only encourage energy independence, create jobs and reduce pollution, but they save Marylanders' money on their energy bills.

We respectfully urge you to favorably report HB 150 and ensure that it does not disproportionately cut the above programs. The budget needs to provide MDE with adequate staff to enforce the environmental laws passed by you and your colleagues.

Sincerely,

Cindy Schwartz  
Executive Director

*For more than 30 years, the Maryland League of Conservation Voters has been the independent political voice for the environment in our state. Maryland LCV is dedicated to making environmental protection and restoration a top priority for Maryland's elected officials, appointed leaders, candidates and voters. The Maryland League of Conservation Voters advocates for sound conservation policies, works to get pro-environment candidates elected, and holds elected officials accountable for their votes and actions.*