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March 10, 2010

Environmental Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

RE: Support HB 999, “Watershed Protection and Restoration Act”

Dear Chairman McIntosh and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters (LCV) is pleased to join with the environmental community in urging your support of one of our top priority bills, HB 999 “Watershed Protection and Restoration Act.”

In order to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, each city and county throughout the region needs funding to invest in its community to reduce the polluted runoff poisoning our waterways.

Current estimates from municipalities across Maryland set the backlog of necessary polluted runoff related infrastructure repairs at over \$20 billion statewide. **A perfect example of this need is the recent water main break in Baltimore County. The broken water main is located under a stream bed and rapid water flows – from untreated stormwater runoff – likely accelerated the water main’s deterioration.** Investments in infrastructure, before a rupture occurs, create ongoing construction, design, and engineering jobs.

This legislation will give these local jurisdictions a dedicated funding source by assessing a surcharge on impervious surfaces to clean up their rivers and the Bay, create jobs, and leverage additional dollars from the state and federal government for watershed protection and restoration.

We wish to thank Delegates Hucker and Cardin for their leadership on this issue and the committee for its consideration of this important matter.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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.