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March 16, 2010

Senate Education, Health and Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **Support SB 859 “Commercial Feed-Arsenic Prohibition”**

Dear Chair Carter Conway and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters urges your support of SB 859, which will prohibit a person from using, selling, or distributing poultry feed that contains roxarsone or any other additive that contains arsenic.

Arsenic is a carcinogen that has been linked to heart disease, diabetes, and declines in brain function. **It is unacceptable that this toxin is legally added to chicken feed in Maryland. About 95% of the arsenic passes through the bird and is excreted in the litter. Then, the toxic arsenic leaches into our groundwater.**

Maryland’s leading poultry companies Purdue and Tyson claim they do not add arsenic to their chicken feed, but they could start again at any point. This legislation would hold them to that commitment.

We wish to thank Senator Pinsky for his leadership on this issue and the committee for its consideration of this important matter. We respectfully urge a favorable report of SB 859.

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.