



**FOR A STEADY HAND AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL HELM,
GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY EARNS EARLY,
ENTHUSIASTIC ENDORSEMENT
FROM THE MARYLAND LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS**

Efforts to Reduce Global Warming Pollution, Invest in Land Conservation, and Prioritize the Environment in the Budget Lauded.

ANNAPOLIS MD (January 22, 2010) – The Maryland League of Conservation Voters today issued the earliest Gubernatorial endorsement in its 30-year history, announcing its support for the re-election of Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown almost ten months before Election Day, because, in the words of the organization's director, "They've earned it."

O'Malley, who took office in 2006 after a tumultuous four years of marginal to poor environmental stewardship under the previous Governor, has made Maryland a national trendsetter in the efforts to reduce global warming pollution and has appointed superlative managers to shepherd his environmental policies. Further, he kept his promise to fully fund Program Open Space and protected programs like the Bay Trust and other critical environmental programs despite extraordinary budget challenges.

"This was not a hard call," said Cindy Schwartz, Executive Director of the Maryland LCV. "Gov. O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown have made it clear, from the start, that they care about environmental policy and that they want to leave a legacy of superior environmental stewardship. When it came to our endorsement, they've earned it and we won't see anyone better emerge in this race. We want to hit the ground running to maximize our effort to educate Maryland's voters - whether they are Republican, Democrat or Independent, Gov. O'Malley should be their candidate if they care about protecting our air, land and water."

In July 2008, the League gave Gov. O'Malley an "A Minus" -- the first "A" ever awarded -- for his first two years as Governor, and wrote "Governor O'Malley came into office with a state budget deficit and a faltering economy, but even in this difficult fiscal climate he has consistently placed the environment on the forefront of his policy agenda. Governor O'Malley has taken advantage of the public concern about the environment, in particular global warming... and is using it to advance Maryland to its rightful place as a national leader in environmental policy."

Since then -- and despite an economy that has gotten much, much worse -- his conservation efforts have not only continued but been stepped up to an even higher level:

over

- His leadership in the passage of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act, giving Maryland one of the strongest global warming caps in the nation, and the creation of the Commission on Climate Change have cemented our role as a national leader in this area.
- Governor O'Malley's innovative Bay Stat program is a national model for accountability and shows how government can work better to meet specific challenges.
- His ambitious plans to help reverse the long decline in the state's historic role as an oyster mecca and his work across state lines to address the frightening decline in the blue crab population was important and long overdue.
- The public is receiving real financial incentives to embrace renewable energy sources such as solar creating new clean energy job opportunities.
- An environmentally sensitive Purple Line in the Washington D.C. suburbs of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties and the Red Line in Baltimore are on the move to improve transportation, reduce green house gas pollution and encourage smarter growth in Maryland.
- Exceptionally talented managers, including Maryland Department of the Environment Shari Wilson, Department of Natural Resources Secretary John Griffin and Secretary Richard Hall of the Department of Planning have brought new energy, renewed and rewarded the conservation spirit of state officials who have responsibility for the environment.

“In the most trying national economic climate in three generations, Governor Martin O'Malley has not shied away from making the tough choices, and he has done so while standing with the environment every step of the way,” said Frederick H. Hoover, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Maryland League. “Governor Martin O'Malley knows jobs, economic development and the environment are not mutually exclusive, and has created the opportunities for us to prove it.”

The League will launch aggressive efforts to ensure that Maryland voters know the strength of the O'Malley Administration's conservation record. The staff, board and volunteers will also continue efforts to review the records and promises of candidates for other state offices. During elections, the Maryland LCV makes endorsements, educates voters, runs strategic campaigns aimed at electing pro-conservation candidates, mobilizes volunteers and elevates the environment as an electoral issue.

Founded in 1979, Maryland League of Conservation Voters (LCV) is non-partisan, 501 (c)(4) known as the political voice for the environment. We have since grown to a full-time, staffed organization that is governed by a volunteer board of directors. Maryland LCV is best known for our comprehensive yearly scorecard that evaluates the environmental votes of individual state legislators. We also grade the environmental record of the Governor. In addition, we regularly alert the public and the media of key actions of elected officials and closely monitor agencies and executive appointments.

Contact: Pete Johnson, pjohnson@mcvc.org, 410-280-9855 x 204; cell 240-654-7084

###