

THE COMMON GOOD



Richard Lippenholz

As the 2014 chair of the Chesapeake Executive Council for my third and final term, I had the honor of hosting Bay Program partners in Annapolis for the landmark signing of a new *Chesapeake Watershed Agreement* in June. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, Delaware Governor Jack Markell, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe and Washington, D.C. Mayor Vincent Gray were among the program partners who joined me in committing to a new set of goals that

will advance restoration and protection of the Bay, its tributaries and surrounding lands.

It was a momentous occasion that resulted in the most inclusive, collaborative, goal-oriented Agreement the Chesapeake Bay Watershed has ever seen. The new Agreement not only addresses our continuing water quality and land use challenges, it also confronts critical emerging issues, including environmental literacy. Perhaps most importantly, it builds upon the strength of our diverse citizenry — including our youngest stewards — calling to action the nearly 18 million people that call our watershed home.

Comprised of 10 interrelated goals and aligned with strategies developed by federal agencies in response to President Obama's Executive Order on Bay protection and restoration, the Agreement is both a consensus and a commitment. As we march together toward a common goal, we will be that much stronger and more effective in achieving a restored, healthy and economically vibrant Chesapeake.

Developed through an extensive collaborative process over many months, citizen, technical and local government stakeholders were all crucial in creating the Agreement. Indeed, thousands of citizens from across the region provided input

that directly influenced the Agreement's content, resulting in the addition of key issues like toxic contaminants and climate change. It also marks the first time that the Bay's headwater states of New York, West Virginia and Delaware have pledged to work toward restoration goals that reach beyond water quality.

Maryland has exceeded its milestone goals for stormwater and septic improvements by completing wastewater treatment plant upgrades in each of the past two tracking periods and increasing cover crop plantings by 200% since 2006. Advances supporting this work include: development of *BayStat*, an online tool used by managers and citizens to track and target restoration; creation of the *Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund*, which has directed \$256 million to support local restoration projects that reduce non-point source pollution from entering the Bay; passage of first of its kind no-net loss of forest legislation; adoption of a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 25% by 2020.

Together with the citizens of this great watershed — farmers, students, conservationists, business and community leaders and faith-based organizations — we are taking the steps needed to turn our words to deeds to convert this new Agreement to an improved Chesapeake Bay. And I believe we are in the best position yet to move the Chesapeake Bay to a tipping point — the point where the tide of restoration will finally have been turned.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Martin O'Malley'.

Martin O'Malley
Governor