

September 23, 2008

Allegheny County

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Bedford County

Bernie Hoffnar, Ph.D.

Bucks County

Richard J. Manfredi

Crawford County

Burt A. Waite

Cumberland County

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Schuylkill County

Bruce M. Tetkoskie

Tioga County

Thaddeus K. Stevens

«Name»

«House_or_Senate»

«DC»

Dear «Salutation»:

Pennsylvania has an aging infrastructure, from our bridges and highways to our water and wastewater treatment plants. Upgrades in all of these areas are necessary to protect public health and safety, and to meet the demands of a growing economy. Establishing adequate funding sources at all levels of government to accomplish and sustain these upgrades should remain a priority. In particular, we seek increased federal financial support for infrastructure upgrades needed for Pennsylvania to meet its obligation to the Chesapeake Bay.


Municipal authorities, treatment plants and their customers should assume their share of the financial responsibility for upgrades. However, it is overly burdensome to expect them to assume the entire cost of achieving compliance with the Bay agreement standards. Pennsylvania's new budget contains a major victory for clean water with the approval of water infrastructure funding, potentially reaching \$1.2 billion in statewide grants and loans. We commend legislative and executive branch leadership in securing this much needed state funding for point source improvements.

The Commonwealth has also assumed a portion of the agricultural sector's cost of meeting its allocation through such initiatives as REAP and Growing Greener. These are valuable initiatives but unfortunately are inadequate to address the magnitude of Pennsylvania's non-point source problem. Increased funding for programs addressing non-point sources is urgent in order for Pennsylvania to meet its obligation to the Chesapeake Bay. In addition, an increased level of accountability for non-point sources would help to ensure that we are getting adequate load reductions from this very significant source.

In addition to local and state funding, the federal government needs to resume an appropriate level of financial support through its Clean Water and Drinking Water programs, to support achievement of federal mandates. Nutrient pollution is a water quality issue across the country, not just in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Estuaries and coastal waters such as Long Island Sound, the Gulf of Mexico, and San Francisco Bay among others are suffering the effects of excess amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus from a variety of sources, including wastewater treatment plants. States in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West, South and West are all facing the need to upgrade their sewage treatment facilities beyond the standard secondary treatment requirements of 20 years ago. Just as the federal government had a significant and appropriate role to play then, so it does today in taking the next step in protecting and improving water quality across the nation.

Establishing adequate funding sources at all levels to achieve these upgrades should remain a priority. We encourage increased financial support through the federal Clean Water and Drinking Water programs, to ensure achievement of federal mandates.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Manfredi
Chairman
Citizens Advisory Council

cc: Governor Rendell
John Hanger, Acting Secretary of DEP
House and Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committees