



Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region

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February 8, 2006

The Honorable John H. Chichester, Chairman
Committee on Finance
Senate of Virginia
P.O. Box 396
Richmond, VA 23218

The Honorable Harry J. Parrish, Chairman
Committee on Finance
Virginia House of Delegates
General Assembly Building
P.O. Box 406
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Senator Chichester and Delegate Parrish:

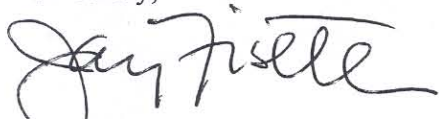
I am writing on behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to indicate our strong support for the Governor's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal providing an additional \$200 million to the Water Quality Improvement Fund to help pay for upgrades at municipal wastewater plants within the state's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. For our local streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay to make a full recovery from serious declines in water quality, we must continue to make substantial investments in wastewater plant and other advanced pollution management technology. Considering the multi-billion dollar cost of this effort, we believe significant increases in state clean water appropriations are essential.

We also are writing to let you know of our support for efforts to provide a fair and reliable revenue source for the Water Quality Improvement Fund. As you know, revenue in the fund has fluctuated in response to the overall budget situation, and in some years no new funds have been provided. Several legislators have introduced bills in this year's session with proposals for a dedicated funding mechanism. While we have not taken a specific position endorsing any of these bills, we are urging the General Assembly to put the fund on a firm fiscal footing.

At the local level, the Metropolitan Washington region has led efforts to reduce pollution entering local waters and the Chesapeake Bay. These efforts have included investing hundreds of millions of local dollars to upgrade all of the major wastewater treatment plants in the region with advanced treatment, and through implementing some of the most innovative urban stormwater programs in the nation. Yet, the only way we will be able to continue making progress in reducing water pollution is through a shared commitment to provide adequate clean water funding at the local, state, and federal levels.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you and other members of the Virginia General Assembly to insure that the clean water needs of the Metropolitan Washington region and the Chesapeake Bay are met.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Fisetle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jay" being more prominent than the last name "Fisetle".

Jay Fisetle, Chair
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Board of Directors

cc Virginia General Assembly members from the Washington metropolitan region