



# Protecting the Green Infrastructure Budget

## *Environmental Challenge*

The environmental community has worked diligently for over 10 years to establish funding sources to fuel the Bay recovery, clean our air and waters, promote energy efficiency & reductions in greenhouse gases and protect our most valuable lands. Specifically, there is the Bay Restoration Fund to address pollution from sewage treatment plants and septic systems, the Bay Trust Fund to address urban and agricultural runoff, funding from the Regional Green House Gas Initiative (RGGI) which helps address air pollution and we have always supported full funding for Program Open Space to help conserve our land. These are legacy funds that enable critical investments in our environmental future.

## *Bill Framework*

Revenues continue to be down, so in turn will funding for these programs. Cutting them further will undermine the efforts of the state, our counties and communities, farmers, watermen, and the local organizations doing such valuable work restoring local streams, rivers, and bays. While the environmental community understands the economic condition of the state, we are gravely concerned about the disproportionate cuts to the environmental agencies and programs. The agencies have absorbed significant reductions over the past several years. More and even deeper cuts will affect the ability of the environmental agencies to protect the environment and sustain the programs mentioned above. If you consider the four primary environmental agencies (DNR, MDA, MDP and MDE), the average general fund reduction is 2.74% while the average reduction across all agencies is .89%. In short, the environmental agencies are being asked to absorb roughly three times the average reductions of the other agencies. We believe any further reductions in general or special funds and personnel may well reflect a breaking point for many programs in these agencies.

Among those programs that we are most concerned with are:

- ***Program Open Space***
- ***Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund***
- ***Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Programs***
- ***Bay Restoration Fund***
- ***Heritage Structure Tax Credit (Historic Tax Credit)***
- ***Funding for MDE, DNR, MDA, MDP***

**For more information, please contact:**

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