

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 813

Commending the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 24, 2017

Agreed to by the Senate, January 26, 2017

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, a private, nonprofit, multistate organization, opened its first office in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1967 and its Richmond-based office in 1980, with an inspiring, ambitious mission statement to Save the Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's presence has since grown to include offices in Hampton Roads, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C., and 15 education centers in the three primary Chesapeake Bay states and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has from its beginning offered private citizens opportunities to support and participate directly in protection and restoration of its namesake estuary; the foundation's total membership recently surpassed 236,000, including 70,118 members in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, with the support of both private and public funding, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's environmental education program today reaches more than 35,000 students, teachers, administrators, and decision makers each year, providing meaningful on-the-water field trip experiences, teacher training, curriculum materials, restoration programs, and information on real-world issues that have inspired generations of citizens to become lifelong stewards of the Chesapeake Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's unswerving 50-year dedication to science-based public policy that will truly Save the Bay has supported the development of the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's members and staff have advocated effectively for Clean Water Blueprint laws, regulations, and programs at every level of government that have materially reversed the Chesapeake Bay's decline and begun a recovery process; and

WHEREAS, as part of that recovery process, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's members and staff have advocated effectively in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania to support Enhanced Nutrient Removal at wastewater treatment plants, resulting in major water quality gains as those plants have upgraded their processes; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has partnered with both state and federal agricultural and environmental agencies to help farmers implement conservation measures to protect water quality in rivers and streams and enhance the health and productivity of family farms; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has worked with local and state government officials, businesses, developers, and citizens to develop effective and innovative programs to address the complex issue of stormwater runoff pollution; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's fisheries program has contributed materially to conservation and sustainable management of striped bass, blue crabs, oysters, menhaden, and shad, not only in the Bay but also along the Atlantic coast; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has been a leader in oyster restoration in Virginia and Maryland, operating Oyster Restoration Centers in both states that educate and involve citizen volunteers in restoring the native oyster population in the Chesapeake Bay by growing millions of live oysters and transplanting them onto state oyster reefs; and

WHEREAS, Chesapeake Bay Foundation staff, school students, partner organizations, families, and individual volunteers have successfully completed hundreds of conservation projects in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, and Washington, D.C., including restoring wetlands, forested buffers, streams, and underwater grasses; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has won two of the nation's highest environmental honors, the President's Environmental and Conservation Challenge Award in 1992 and the National Geographic Society's Chairman Award in 1993, received Virginia's highest conservation honor, the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award for Special Lifetime Achievement, in 1991, and received the 2015 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has led the efforts to Save the Bay for 50 years and has dedicated itself to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay, a national treasure and the mid-Atlantic region's greatest natural resource; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for its outstanding service to the Chesapeake Bay and the region around it on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution

for presentation to William C. Baker, president of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for the foundation's fine work on behalf of the residents of Virginia and the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed.