

8. Finally Guarantee a Healthy Future for the Chesapeake Bay

From oysters and crabs to waterfowl and clipper ships, Maryland has always been identified with the Chesapeake Bay. As the largest estuary in the United States, the Bay is an immeasurable treasure of biodiversity and one of the world's most important and productive bodies of water. But much work remains to return the Chesapeake to good health and preserve its legacy for future generations.

Since the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint was established in 2010, progress has been made, but there have been key failings. Strong partnership and accountability mechanisms are needed between the signatory states, the federal government, and stakeholders to ensure progress.

To reinvigorate the Bay restoration effort, Franchot will work with President Biden's Environmental Protection Agency and the signatory states to the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint to reach agreement to ramp up our efforts to achieve clean air, clean water, and lasting health for the Chesapeake Bay by the end of his first term. This effort will include:

- Adding one billion adult oysters in Maryland's portion of the watershed and work with the Commonwealth of Virginia to secure a similar commitment;
- Reducing oxygen dead zones caused by algae blooms by 75%, and create an international scientific competition for innovative, affordable solutions to solve the problems of pollution in the Bay;
- Increased efforts to conserve land near our waterways reducing urban and suburban stormwater runoff, and strengthening state smart growth regulations that combat urban sprawl and promote dense, transit-oriented development;
- Working with President Biden's EPA and Pennsylvania and New York to ensure accountability to meet upstream pollution reduction targets that will protect the Bay; and
- A statewide effort to preserve Maryland's tree canopy, particularly old growth forests.

