

My Name is Albert Tucker. I live at 6063 Pindell Rd, Lothian, MD. I am here to support adding the Patuxent Riverkeeper as a voting member of the Patuxent River Commission. The mission of the Patuxent Riverkeeper is, "To conserve, protect and replenish Maryland's longest and deepest intrastate waterway. Through strategic advocacy, restoration and education, our goal is long-term sustainability for the ecosystem of the entire Patuxent River basin and the people who rely on its future." The Riverkeeper is the only all-inclusive, citizen-based organization that represents the public interest of the entire river from its source to its mouth.

Citizen Commissioners represent a relatively small percentage of the non-affiliated members of the commission, approximately 16%. As a former Commissioner, I can attest to the fact that the majority of the critical issues before the Commission were brought to its attention by citizens through the citizen members of the Commission. My personal observation is that the Commission is dominated by government organizations, be they state or local. In general, they play a passive role when it comes to multi-jurisdictional issues. However, they do have an important function for coordination and for interpreting regulations and local plans.

Citizens, on the other hand, seek out the Riverkeeper because they feel the Riverkeeper will fairly represent their issues unfettered by political pressure. The Patuxent Riverkeeper is publicly known as the only organization that represents all citizens in the Patuxent River watershed. I have personally witnessed the fact the Riverkeeper represents citizens from one end of the river to the other, on issues ranging from social justice to stormwater management to pollution.

Unbiased citizen input to the Patuxent River Commission is vital; citizens recognize the Patuxent Riverkeeper as the organization that will make sure their voices are heard by the Commission.

Therefore, I support the effort to make the Patuxent Riverkeeper a permanent voting Commissioner of the Patuxent River Commission.