

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1

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(PRE-FILED)

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By: **Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee (By Request  
– Departmental – Planning)**

Requested: October 5, 2015

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2016

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Patuxent River Watershed – Amendment of Patuxent River Policy Plan**

3 FOR the purpose of approving a certain amendment to the Patuxent River Policy Plan;  
4 resolving that a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative  
5 Services to certain individuals; and generally relating to the amendment of the  
6 Patuxent River Policy Plan.

7 WHEREAS, Section 5–812 of the State Finance and Procurement Article establishes  
8 the Patuxent River Commission; and

9 WHEREAS, As referenced in § 5–801(c) of the State Finance and Procurement  
10 Article, the Commission, the local governments represented on the Commission, and the  
11 Maryland General Assembly approved the original Patuxent River Policy Plan in 1984 in  
12 order to serve as a policy guide for the Commission, State agencies, and local governments  
13 in carrying out programs in the Patuxent River watershed; and

14 WHEREAS, Sections 5–805 and 5–806 of the State Finance and Procurement Article  
15 provide that the Commission and the Maryland Department of Planning shall periodically  
16 review and evaluate pertinent information, trends, and issues regarding the Patuxent  
17 River watershed in light of the Plan and the Commission’s activities; and

18 WHEREAS, Sections 5–805 and 5–806 of the State Finance and Procurement Article  
19 also provide procedures for updating the Plan by amendment and require that both the  
20 Commission and at least 6 of the 8 local jurisdictions with voting representation on the  
21 Commission must approve any amendments to the Plan before submission of the  
22 amendments to the General Assembly for approval; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1997, the Commission, the local governments represented on the  
24 Commission, and the Maryland General Assembly approved certain amendments updating  
25 the Plan; and



1 WHEREAS, According to the University of Maryland Center for Environmental  
2 Service's Chesapeake Bay Report Card, the ecosystem health of the Patuxent River is in  
3 poor condition; and

4 WHEREAS, In spite of the river's water quality challenges, the Patuxent River  
5 remains an important piece of Maryland's natural heritage, providing a variety of habitats  
6 from cold-water trout streams to tidal wetlands and supporting more than 100 species of  
7 fish and shellfish, including oysters, blue crabs, striped bass, catfish, chain pickerel, and  
8 bluefish; and

9 WHEREAS, The Patuxent River holds the promise for increased abundance and  
10 diversity of living resources, along with clean, swimmable waters, which would support  
11 increased tourism, recreation, fisheries, quality of life, and economic development in  
12 Maryland; and

13 WHEREAS, The Plan's role is to guide local jurisdictions and the State in preserving  
14 and restoring the Patuxent River, raising awareness of Patuxent River ecology through  
15 advocacy, and creating excitement among the citizenry about the opportunities for  
16 interaction with the Patuxent River; and

17 WHEREAS, Approval of the 2015 Patuxent River Policy Plan Update, as an  
18 amendment to the Plan, will invigorate local and State river restoration efforts; and

19 WHEREAS, In May 2014, the Commission approved the 2015 Patuxent River Policy  
20 Plan Update as an amendment to the Plan; and

21 WHEREAS, The 8 local jurisdictions with voting representation on the Commission  
22 have approved the 2015 Patuxent River Policy Plan Update in accordance with § 5-805(c)  
23 of the State Finance and Procurement Article as an amendment to the Plan; and

24 WHEREAS, The General Assembly agrees with and approves of the 2015 Patuxent  
25 River Policy Plan Update as an amendment to the Plan; and

26 WHEREAS, On approval by the General Assembly, the Plan, as amended by the  
27 2015 Patuxent River Policy Plan Update, is to serve as a policy guide for the Commission,  
28 State agencies, and local governments in enhancing restoration and protection of the  
29 Patuxent River watershed; now, therefore, be it

30 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That, effective  
31 immediately on approval of this Joint Resolution, the General Assembly hereby approves  
32 the 2015 Patuxent River Policy Plan update as an amendment to the Patuxent River Policy  
33 Plan; and be it further

34 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
35 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the  
36 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable

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1 Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates; David R. Craig, Secretary of  
2 Planning; and Michael Leszcz, Chair of the Patuxent River Commission.