

Joint Resolution 4

(Senate Joint Resolution 8)

A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

**Chesapeake Bay Restoration – Federal Budget Blueprint Funding Reductions –
Rescission Request**

FOR the purpose of expressing the opposition of the General Assembly to the drastic cuts to the funding of the Chesapeake Bay Program and certain other federal programs proposed by the President of the United States in a certain budget blueprint; urging the Governor to publicly oppose the drastic cuts proposed by the President of the United States to the funding of the Chesapeake Bay Program and other federal programs supporting efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; requiring certain committees of the General Assembly to monitor and make recommendations regarding federal budget proposals and actions affecting the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and generally relating to the federal budget and funding of Chesapeake Bay restoration programs.

WHEREAS, The Chesapeake Bay is the nation's largest estuary, approximately 200 miles long and varying in width from 3.4 miles across at its narrowest point to 35 miles across at its widest point; and

WHEREAS, The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries provide a wide variety of economic and environmental benefits, employment opportunities, recreational opportunities, and ecological, cultural, and historic resources for regional residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Federal, State, and local governments have made substantial investments in restoring the Chesapeake Bay to increase economic benefits, provide clean water, and reduce health risks to residents of the region; and

WHEREAS, The value of Chesapeake Bay restoration to Maryland has been estimated to be approximately \$20,400,000,000; and

WHEREAS, The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983 and is critical to ongoing restoration efforts; and

WHEREAS, Partners in the Chesapeake Bay Program include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, West Virginia, Virginia, the District of Columbia, local governments, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, academic institutions, citizen advisory groups, and various other entities; and

WHEREAS, Through the Chesapeake Bay Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has provided essential federal coordination, support, and oversight that

has advanced and accelerated State and local efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, The budget blueprint for fiscal year 2018 proposed by the President of the United States reduces the funding of the Chesapeake Bay Program from \$73,000,000 to \$0, eliminating the program and jeopardizing the recent progress made in restoring the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, The proposed federal budget cuts could result in significant setbacks to Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts and a reversal of the progress that has been made in reducing pollution, improving water quality, restoring the oyster population, and maintaining other fisheries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General Assembly of Maryland opposes the drastic cuts to the funding of the Chesapeake Bay Program and other federal programs proposed by the President of the United States in the budget blueprint for fiscal year 2018, which reflect the abdication of federal engagement, support, and oversight and will jeopardize the progress made in restoring the Chesapeake Bay; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland urges the Governor of Maryland to publicly oppose the drastic cuts proposed by the President of the United States to the funding of the Chesapeake Bay Program and other federal programs supporting efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Environment and Transportation Committee shall monitor and make recommendations regarding federal budget proposals and actions affecting the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland, and the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and Representatives Andrew P. Harris, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, III, John P. Sarbanes, Anthony G. Brown, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, John Delaney, Elijah E. Cummings, and Jamie Raskin, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Signed by the President and the Speaker, May 25, 2017.