

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 3, 2007

Dear Friends of the Environment:

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the nation and the world today. A few weeks ago, the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee, on which I serve, held a hearing on the effects of climate change on the Chesapeake Bay.

Scientists outlined the facts:

- The scientific community agrees that global warming is real and that man is responsible for part of the rise in temperatures,
- Warming trends have accelerated over the past thirty years,
- Sea levels in the Chesapeake Bay have risen by one foot over the past 100 years,
- Rising sea levels combined with tidal action are rapidly eroding our Bay islands and shorelines.

More than 12 percent of Maryland's land is designated under the National Flood Insurance Program as a Special Flood Hazard Area. An estimated 68,000 homes and buildings are located within the floodplain, representing nearly \$8 billion in assessed value.

The threat is real and growing, but the situation is not hopeless. Around the country local governments and states are taking the lead in slashing their emissions.

Several cities, including Chestertown, Baltimore, Annapolis, Rockville, and Gaithersburg, are participating in the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which commits them to voluntarily implement Kyoto agreement within their municipalities.

Maryland is a full partner in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a cooperative effort by several Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by stabilizing emissions at current levels from 2009 to 2015, and then cutting them 10 percent by 2019.

I applaud these efforts, and will use these good grassroots example to prod my colleagues in the Senate to have the Federal government take a leadership role in this vital effort.

The Chesapeake Bay, the Eastern Shore, the nation, and the world await our action. Thank you for your commitment to finding answers.

Sincerely,

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator