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CARDIN, MIKULSKI PRAISE SENATE OVERRIDE OF FARM BILL VETO

Bill Provides Unprecedented Funding For Chesapeake Bay

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD), today praised the Senate’s overwhelming, 82-13 vote to override the President’s veto of the Farm Bill, which will provide \$438 million and an unprecedented guarantee of funding for environmental programs that help protect the Chesapeake Bay, America’s largest estuary. Senators Mikulski and Cardin had long urged their colleagues to pass this vital legislation that helps restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay area with major funding for cleanup and conservation.

“The Chesapeake Bay is one of our nation’s greatest natural resources and an essential element of Maryland’s economy and environment. It’s essential that we provide local farmers a broad array of tools they need to protect the Chesapeake and maintain their viability,” **said Senator Cardin**. “This is a farm bill that is good for American agriculture, good for American farmers, and good for all of us who go to the grocery store every week.”

“I am proud that Congress has rejected the President’s misguided veto. This bill represents a major victory for the farmers and families who rely on the Bay - for the first time, the Bay is receiving a mandatory federal investment,” **said Senator Mikulski**. “The Chesapeake Bay is not only Maryland’s greatest natural resource, it’s part of who we are as Marylanders – our heritage and our culture. I will continue to do everything I can to stand up for the Chesapeake Bay.”

In addition to \$438 million over 10 years to restore the Chesapeake Bay, the Farm Bill provides record funding levels of more than \$10 billion for key nutritional programs including \$1.25 billion for food banks and increased funding for the school lunch and Women’s Infant and Children (WIC) programs. The bill also contains a major increase in the Food Stamp Program, the nation’s largest anti-hunger program. Currently, more than 317,000 Maryland families depend on food stamps, and the farm bill will fund \$5.4 billion over 10 years for the program, providing 131,000 Marylanders with additional benefits.

Maryland’s 12,100 farms cover more than 2 million acres and produce \$1.3 billion of agricultural products annually. The farm bill provides support for Maryland’s growing number of organic farmers and adds benefits to small farmers, including family farms across Maryland.

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