From the director

In April, Maryland PIRG achieved one of the greatest accomplishments of its 33 year history with passage of the Healthy Air Act—which now stands as the nation’s toughest pollution law for power plants. Also within the past few years, Maryland PIRG was a leading force behind victories on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Then, in May, we launched Environment Maryland as a separate organization to do the environmental work that had been done as part of Maryland PIRG. Our objective is to have a bigger impact on policy debates—and a better chance to win real results for Maryland.

On the heels of success of the Healthy Air Act, this separation begs the question: Why mess with something when it’s working?

It’s not that our approach will be different. We are using the same time-tested tools of research, coalition-building, grassroots outreach, and direct advocacy to protect Maryland’s air, water and open spaces.

But we are confident that with a clear name and a single-minded focus, Environment Maryland will be able to win the support of more pro-environment Marylanders, giving us added resources and clout. Our staff will specialize more, and dig deeper into a few core issues.

It’s always a struggle to avoid the temptation to work on every important issue. Bills get introduced that need support. People call with innovative solutions that are worth working on. If you’re not careful, there isn’t enough time to give your top priorities the attention they need.

Now that we have narrowed our focus to environmental issues, we expect to be able to put more effort behind our lead campaigns.

At the same time, we hope to watch Maryland PIRG thrive with its renewed focus on public health, ethics reform, and consumer fairness. With staff dedicated exclusively to those issues, we expect they will achieve real results for Maryland.

Thank you for sticking with us as we expand. I’m looking forward to even better times ahead.

Sincerely,

Brad Heavner
Director, Environment Maryland
Advocating clean energy and global warming solutions

During the 2006 legislative session, Environment Maryland guided several important clean energy bills into law.

The Solar Energy Grant Program is the state’s best tool to promote solar power, providing grants to install solar energy units in homes and businesses. Yet this program has been drastically underfunded, providing grants for just 22 homeowners last year.

Environment Maryland brought together an alliance of environmental, energy and business interests to expand support for the program. Working with our partners, we convinced the governor to allocate $2.5 million for solar power.

Though the Office of Legislative Analysis recommended cutting all but $500,000, Environment Maryland was able to convince the General Assembly to retain $1.5 million in funding.

We also helped pass a bill to create more generous terms for connecting a building with solar panels to the electricity grid. Surplus energy they generate over the course of a month will now be counted as a credit on the following month’s energy bill. In addition, we successfully advocated legislation committing the state to reduce energy consumption by 10 percent.

Global warming solutions

Maryland took its first major step forward to address global warming in 2006 with passage of the Healthy Air Act, described on the following pages.

Environment Maryland released three reports on global warming this year. One report discovered that Maryland could reduce global warming emissions from power plants 15 percent by 2018 with cost-effective strategies. Another report presented evidence that spring is beginning earlier, seriously impacting local ecological cycles. The third report found that global warming pollution in Maryland jumped 55 percent between 1960 and 2001, despite advancements in clean energy technology.

On the federal level, we helped craft legislation that will set the bar for action on global warming. The Safe Climate Act would commit to reductions in global warming pollution of 15 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, the levels that scientists say are necessary to meet if we are to avoid the worst effects of global warming.
This year, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Healthy Air Act, thanks to the advocacy of Environment Maryland staff and allies.

This new measure will require the six dirtiest power plants in Maryland to reduce the pollution that causes smog, soot, global warming, the dead zone in the bay, and mercury contamination of fish. It will require reductions of 75 percent in nitrogen oxide emissions, 85 percent in sulfur dioxide, 90 percent in mercury and 10 percent in carbon dioxide.

The bill is the strongest legislation limiting power plant emissions ever passed by any state in the country. Environment Maryland worked to pass this bill for four years—through our former home within Maryland PIRG.

Hard work pays off
Staff and advocates of Environment Maryland arranged panels of experts to testify at hearings and released seven research reports on the issue. We were on the scene throughout each legislative session to meet with lawmakers, respond to misinformation from the bill’s opponents, and work with reporters to ensure accurate coverage.

Environment Maryland also knocked on tens of thousands of doors throughout the state to engage the public on the campaign.

We helped build a coalition of 45 organizations that included health care associations, religious groups and unions, in addition to environmental organizations.

The new law closes a loophole in the federal Clean Air Act that power companies have exploited for decades. The loophole allowed companies to avoid installing modern pollution controls on their oldest power plants.

The bill also requires the largest sources of mercury emissions to install the best available technology and requires Maryland to participate in a regional global warming agreement with seven other East Coast states.

This marks the first time that mercury and global warming pollution from power plants will be subject to limits. It will save an estimated 500 lives per year, reduce nitrogen pollution in the Chesapeake Bay, and make fish safer to eat.
Suing polluters

On June 15, Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center, together with the Environmental Integrity Project and other groups, sent Mirant Corporation a notice of our intent to sue the company for violations of pollution permits. The groups documented 14,000 permit violations in a four year period at Mirant’s Chalk Point power plant in Prince George’s County.

Staff at the Maryland Department of the Environment acknowledge the violations, but have not taken enforcement action against Mirant.

Rather than addressing the substance of the intent-to-sue letter, however, the company countered in bankruptcy court to block our actions. A judge in Texas ruled that our legal action was legitimate, after which we moved forward with our lawsuit. The case is now headed toward trial in federal court in Maryland.

Another lawsuit, concerning violations at Mirant’s Dickerson power plant in Montgomery County, became moot after the company backed down from its plans to expand operations there.

Pollution from Maryland power plants

There are many polluters in Maryland, but electricity generation is by far the dirtiest.

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Pollution from power plants

Pollution from other sources

Environment Maryland released a report in January, titled “Plagued by Pollution,” which found that Maryland’s air is among the most polluted in the country.

The Baltimore area ranked ninth nationwide for the worst fine particle, or “soot,” pollution among large metro areas in 2004, up from twelfth in 2003. Maryland as a whole ranked tenth worst nationwide. Fine particle pollution can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems, such as asthma attacks, heart attacks and lung cancer.

Based on a survey done in all 50 states and D.C., the report looks at all of the instances in 2004 when pollution levels exceeded EPA’s air quality standards.

The report was released at a press conference in Annapolis attended by seven coalition groups and two legislators. The release received coverage in five newspapers, on two T.V. stations and on one radio station.

This coverage helped us exceed our goal of generating, or being quoted, in 225 news stories in 2006.
Focus on water quality: cleaning up the bay

Last session, Environment Maryland worked on multiple fronts to help restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Limiting shoreline development
One victory for the Bay was a bill that protects our shoreline from development by reinforcing the authority of the Critical Areas Commission to control development within 1,000 feet of the Bay. Strengthening the authority of the Commission enabled it to deny approval for the proposed development near Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

Nitrogen load standards
This bill would have set a limit for nitrogen pollution in the watershed of the Patuxent River, the longest river in Maryland. It did not pass last year, but Environment Maryland is continuing its advocacy for this, and all, Maryland waterways.

Suburban runoff
This bill would require increased inspections and stricter limits for stormwater runoff from construction and developed sites. If development across the state continues at its current rate, stormwater runoff may become the most significant threat facing the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Stormwater runoff introduces nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment pollution, as well as toxins such as metals and oil. Environment Maryland is working with a coalition including Waterkeepers and other groups to make this bill a top priority for the coming year.

Healthy farms for a healthy bay
Summer after summer the Chesapeake Bay is choked by excess nitrogen and phosphorous, creating a dead zone in one third of the Bay. Agricultural runoff is one of the leading sources of this pollution.

Many farmers would be willing to implement practices to reduce their pollution, but can’t afford them without outside funding. Four out of five farmers who apply for assistance with conservation programs are turned away due to inadequate funding.

Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center reached out to people throughout the state to build support for policies to reduce runoff from farms. In July and August, we coordinated community meetings...
in Frederick, Bel Air, Cambridge and Prince Frederick. These meetings gave farmers and conservation leaders the opportunity to sit down together to work out differences and learn from each other.

Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center staff also participated in five Maryland Agricultural Commission hearings on the long-term viability of farming in Maryland. We provided input for a Commission report that was released in February.

In November, Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center released its own report, “Healthy Farms for a Healthy Bay.” This report documented the experiences of two fishermen and five farmers impacted by nutrient runoff, highlighting the effects of an unhealthy bay on the communities that depend on it.

Agricultural runoff pollution is one of the biggest sources of nitrogen in the bay, but fortunately, farming programs also offer the most cost-effective approaches to restoring the health of the bay.

 Nitrogen enters waterways from rivers and streams throughout the state, which bring the pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and the coastal bays.
Program Open Space is Maryland’s leading land conservation program. Since 1969, every time a Marylander has purchased a home he or she has paid a real estate transfer tax to fund land conservation programs.

The program has helped to protect 464,000 acres of farmland and wilderness and has helped create 4,350 local and state parks.

From 2003 to 2005, however, $480 million was diverted from this important program. In response, Environment Maryland joined with other leading organizations to create a coalition known as Partners for Open Space to educate Marylanders about the program.

Environment Maryland focused on expanding the coalition and getting member groups more involved. The coalition now includes more than 140 organizations and has educated countless individuals across Maryland about the importance of land preservation.

This year the coalition had one main goal—no diversion of funds from Program Open Space. And in next year’s budget, the state did not divert any of the record $361 million generated by the program.

Environment Maryland held a series of eight press conferences around the state last summer to raise awareness about the importance of Program Open Space and collect pledges from candidates for state office not to divert funding from the program.

At each conference we were joined by state and local conservation groups, private citizens and local press. After extensive media coverage, all candidates for governor took the pledge.

In legislative races, 126 candidates for the House and Senate, including candidates in 42 of 47 districts and from each political party, pledged not to raid Program Open Space funding. More than one-third of all legislators in the coming session have taken the pledge.

It is more important than ever to make sure that our elected officials guard the money set aside for conservation funding from future raids. Given the rapidly escalating cost of land, increasing development pressures, and the severe cuts this program has already suffered, Maryland can’t afford to lose any of the dedicated funding in the years to come.
New development rules

Environment Maryland supported the Land Use and Local Government Planning Bill (HB 1141), which makes several important changes to how Maryland can plan for and manage development. The bill requires thorough planning to prepare for future development to protect the environment from overdevelopment.

The bill also requires that counties and cities include impacts on water quality and water supplies in their comprehensive plans. It prohibits them from making zoning changes unless developers can demonstrate a sustainable water supply.

Rampant growth is one of the most important environmental issues facing the state. We can grow in ways that protect our open spaces and preserve the Bay, and Environment Maryland will continue to advocate smarter growth.

With $361 million in the land preservation fund this year, many valuable areas will be put off limits from development.
Mercury, a known neurotoxin, has long been a target for environmental and public health advocates. This year, Environment Maryland helped pass two bills that will reduce mercury pollution in Maryland. In addition to the Healthy Air Act, the General Assembly passed a bill to ban the sale and manufacture of thermostats that contain mercury. When disposed of improperly, mercury thermostats are often incinerated, contributing to the state’s mercury pollution.

We brought public health researchers, disability advocates and technical experts to Annapolis to support this legislation.

Environment Maryland also supported a bill to reclaim mercury from automobiles when they are scrapped. Mercury is still used in car switches, even though mercury-free alternatives exist. That bill passed the Senate but stalled in the House.

Mercury contamination documented

We released a report in December to evaluate two key questions: just how bad are the threats to children’s environmental health, and how much has the state done in response.

We found that Maryland has adopted only a few of the available methods to reduce toxic exposure. The state has taken some important steps in the right direction, but still has a long way to go toward protecting children’s environmental health. Overall, the state earned a grade of C- for their efforts.

At the beginning of fishing season in April, Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center released another report examining all fish testing data from the past several years. It was the first time multiple databases from different state agencies were combined to get a more complete picture of mercury contamination across the state.

The report found that 59 percent of fish caught and tested in Maryland contained more than 30 parts per billion of mercury, the EPA’s and FDA’s recommended limit.

Power plants are the biggest source of mercury in Maryland, followed by municipal waste incinerators, paper production, medical waste incinerators and cement manufacturing.
Environment Maryland supporters

Citizen support is the cornerstone of Environment Maryland and the Environment Maryland Research and Policy Center. Thousands of Maryland citizens supported Environment Maryland (and Maryland PIRG before our launch) by making membership contributions in fiscal year 2006. The members listed below were particularly generous in backing the organization’s research and advocacy. Names that appear in italics denote our monthly supporters. These members provide stability to the organization’s resources through our monthly giving program.

Development committee
Development Committee members supported the organization with contributions of $500 or more.

Stephen Baldwin • Stephen Brown • Oscar Camp • Mary Cooper • Jack Heyman • Marc Kahn • Patrick Malone • Jeremy Nathans • Douglas H. Phelps • Peter Simpson • Kathryn Wolford

Patrons
Patrons supported the organization with contributions of $300 to $499.

Helen Averill • Edward Bernard • Steven Berson • Kristen Burger • Deborah Callard • Benjamin Cash • Deborah Dawson • John Fritts • Howard T. Heintz • Charles Holmes • William Mascioli • Margaret McLaughlin • Joseph Murphy • Marjorie Roswell • C. E. Rowley • Robin Semas • Joan Smyth • Janet Svirsky • Gerald Thrasher • Hege & Paul Wade • Mary Wasik • Kathleen Yu

Sponsors
Sponsors supported the group with contributions of $200 to $299.

Gus & Holly Alivizatus • Anne Ambler • Virginia Anthony • Robert Armenti • Nasser Asi • Mike & Diane Baltz • Rene Barnes • Anna Baumgartner • William Becker • Trudi Bick • Bonnie Birkel • Nancy Bliss • Troy Bradley • Daniel Bruckner • Fredric Buch • Brian Callahan • Cheryl Carouge • Robert Cerbone • John Clemson • Joseph Costa • Becky Crole • Peter Curtin • Lloyd Knowles & Elizabeth Bobo • A.J. Emerson • Alison Fiasconaro • Daniel Fischer • Jim Fleming • Charles Foster • Dana Frank • Simeone Frost • Liz Garraway • Judy Gebhardt • A. L. Giannopoulos • Arlene Gjioa • Erich Goode • Harvey Greenberg • Nancy Greenspan • Mary Beth Hastings • Nana Henderson • Janice Herschman • Constance Hickey • Linda Hutchins • Michael Jenkins • Lashae Jones • Martha Kiger • William & Susan Kirby • Bob Knouss • Jean A. S. Kouwenhoven • John Kovach • Cartan Kraft • Christina Kahn • Steven Lann • John Latting • Tom McIntosh • Jeffery Marqusee • Margaret McCarthy • Marc McPherson • Patrick McCaslin • George McConnell • John Metz • Robert Montgomery • Dan Morrow • Donna Mortimer • Mary Ann Mosier • John Murphy III • Kikuko Murray • Lynne Nemeth • James Olin • Pamela Pagnotta • Giovanni Parmigiani • Kenneth Parr • Laura Parrish • Rosemarie Paull • Benjamin Peery • Christopher Peters • Kevin Pettee • Lauren Pollin • Bo Razak • Colleen Reft • Robert A. Resnik • Ilana Restrepo • Diane Rhoades • Jane Robbins • Echo Rummel • Kevin Ryan • Scot Ryder • Donald Schwartz • Walter Scott • Paul Segel • Peter Shaprio • Steve Sharar • Ruth Simons • Bobbie Sobwick • Martha Spieth • Edward Steinhouse • Steve Stoltz • Gary Temple • Gary L. Thomas • Darlene Townsend • Sara Turk • Debra Waggoner • Suzanne & David Waters • Richard Wear • Tom & Sandy Whartenby • Brian Wilbur • Jeff Williams • Sarah Wilton • Elizabeth Winstead • Elizabeth A. K. Young

Foundation support
The Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center, a 501(c)(3) organization, conducts research and public education on emerging public interest issues. Contributions to the Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center are tax-deductible.

The following foundations supported the Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center’s work in 2006. To find out more, call Brad Heavner at (410) 467-0439.

• Aaron & Lillie Straus Foundation
• Abell Foundation
• Clayton Baker Trust
• Clear the Air
• Energy Foundation
• Fund for Change
• Jacob & Hilda Blaustein Foundation
• Janelia Foundation
• Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment
• Philanthropic Collaborative
• Rauch Foundation
• State Environmental Leadership Program
• Town Creek Foundation
• Zanvyl & Isabelle Krieger Fund

Financial information
The following financial information reflects the combined financial resources for Maryland PIRG and the Maryland PIRG Foundation for the first ten months of the fiscal year, plus Environment Maryland and the Environment Maryland Research and Policy Center for the remainder of the fiscal year.

FY06 Income

- Citizen Contributions 71%
- Grants 22%
- Students 6%
- Other 1%

FY06 Expenses

- Program 57%
- Fundraising 17%
- Administrative 6%

FY06 Program Expenses

- Clean Air 38%
- Clean Water 30%
- Open Space Preservation 22%
- Clean Energy & Other 10%
Environment Maryland Staff
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