

WHEREAS, It is now time to determine if changes need to be made so as to make the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program more effective in the protection of water quality and habitat of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, It is also time to assess whether changes are needed to address the special characteristics and needs of the individual counties and municipalities having land within the critical areas while at the same time keeping within the spirit and intent of the original criteria; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That-- the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Natural Resources

8-1808.

(d) (1) The Commission shall promulgate by regulation on or before December 1, 1985, criteria for program development and approval, which are necessary or appropriate to achieve the standards stated in subsection (b) of this section. Prior to developing its criteria and also prior to adopting its criteria, the Commission shall hold at least 6 regional public hearings, one in each of the following areas:

(i) Harford, Cecil, and Kent counties;

counties;

(ii) Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Caroline

counties;

(iii) Dorchester, Somerset, and Wicomico

(iv) Baltimore City and Baltimore County;

and

(v) Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's counties;

(vi) Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties.

During the hearing process, the Commission shall consult with each affected local jurisdiction.

(2) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall appoint 5 senators and 5 delegates respectively to serve as the Joint Committee on Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas. The Joint Committee shall be staffed by the Department of Legislative Reference. The Commission shall meet with the Joint Committee on Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas periodically as the Committee requests to review development and implementation of the criteria for program development.