January 21, 2015

The Honorable Larry Hogan, Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1925

RE: The PMT Regulations

Dear Governor Hogan:

The Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc., is a non-profit organization (501(C) 3), and is an Affiliated Foundation with the University of Maryland, College Park. Created in 1999 to promote and support the economic viability and environmental sustainability of Maryland’s farms and forests, the Center funds research and uses the research to effect management and policy decisions and to educate and reach out to various stakeholders who have an interest in the Mission of the Center. A 27 member Board of Directors not only reflects the geographic diversity of farming and forestry interests across the State but also includes the legislative, environmental, business and academic sectors as well.

Over the past two years, the Center has closely followed the development of the regulations for the Phosphorus Management Tool and has on several occasions held meetings involving several of its Board members as well as other interests in providing comments on the various proposed drafts. In fact, the Center funded the research of Drs. Josh McGrath and Frank Coale on the PMT.

At the Board of Directors meeting held on January 12, 2015, the members listened to a presentation on the research of Dr. Memo Diriker and the PMT regulations proposed by MDA from Mr. Royden Powell, Assistant Secretary for Resource Conservation at the Maryland Department of Agriculture. After his explanation of the regulations and a healthy discussion of the issues that require additional attention, the Board voted to inform you that they support the implementation of the 6 year phased in Phosphorus Management Tool regulations. The Board also recognizes that the implementation of the regulations is a dynamic process that will need close observation and adjustment over the 6 year time frame to improve effectiveness and to retain the economic viability of the State’s farming community. The Board also voted to specifically request that funds be placed in the budget to implement the regulations.

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We congratulate you on your election as Governor and look forward to working with you and your Cabinet Secretaries. And on behalf of the Board, I extend an invitation to you to meet with us to discuss your vision for farming and forestry as well as the enhancement of the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Harry R. Hughes, President

cc: Joe Bartenfelder, Secretary Designee (MDA)
    Ben Grumbles, Secretary Designee (MDE)