



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

DEC - 3 2021

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Steven J. Tambini
Executive Director
Delaware River Basin Commission
25 Cosey Road
P.O. Box 7360
West Trenton, New Jersey 08628

Dear Mr. Tambini:

On behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I would like to congratulate the Delaware River Basin Commission for achieving 60 years of success and commitment in managing, improving and protecting the cherished water resources of the Delaware River Basin, on which 13.3 million people rely for drinking water.

The 1961 signing of the Delaware River Basin Commission compact by President John F. Kennedy and the governors of the four basin states marked the first time that the federal government and a group of states joined together as equal partners to oversee a unified approach to managing a river system without regard to political boundaries. While predating the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, the commission has continued to serve as an effective forum for adaptively managing the basin's interstate water resources.

The commission has accomplished much through partnerships, including with the EPA. The Clean Water Act brought with it a statutory framework to help address the pollution and long-standing water-quality issues facing the estuary, river and major tributaries. The Delaware River Basin Commission's regulations have helped to dramatically improve dissolved oxygen levels in the estuary, allowing resident and migratory fish populations to thrive again. With the passage of Resolution 2017-4, the Delaware River Basin Commission has laid out a comprehensive strategy for upgrading the aquatic-life designated use and associated water-quality criteria for dissolved oxygen and nutrients in the urban zones of the Delaware Estuary. Once finalized, the new use will acknowledge – and the new criteria will protect – the resurgence in fish propagation that has occurred in the estuary during the past two decades. The EPA looks forward to continued collaboration and is fully committed to helping the commission achieve its objectives.

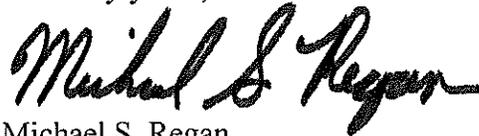
The EPA appreciates the commission's ongoing collaboration and support for the development of polychlorinated biphenyl total maximum daily loads for the Delaware Estuary. The implementation of 'Stage 1' TMDLs, established in 2003 and 2006, has resulted in significant load reductions of PCBs to the estuary, particularly among top-tier dischargers. Thanks to the

commission's technical support, a new set of TMDLs is currently under development that are designed to achieve more recent upgrades to the commission's water-quality criteria for PCBs. These 'Stage 2' TMDLs will build upon the successes that have already been realized through an adaptive, iterative approach to TMDL implementation that is geared towards continuous water-quality improvement.

While there has been much success during the past 60 years, the Delaware River Basin Commission's policies and programs will need to continue to adapt and evolve to meet the challenges of tomorrow. From climate change impacts, microplastic pollution and ongoing efforts to fully meet the "fishable/swimmable" goals of the Clean Water Act to emerging contaminants such as perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, the EPA looks forward to tackling these challenges together.

I wish you, your colleagues and the commission continued success for many more years to come and look forward to our ongoing collaboration as we strive to protect and improve the water resources throughout the Delaware River Basin.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "M".

Michael S. Regan