

Castle Announces Series of Environmental Initiatives as he tours brand new Center for Inland Bays -- June 23, 2006

Rehoboth Beach, DE -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today announced a series of environmental initiatives to help ensure the longevity of Delaware's Inland Bays and other Delaware natural resources, including increased funding for the National Estuary Program, curbing Global Warming, and protecting the Clean Water Act. Following this announcement, Castle toured the brand new facilities of the Center for Inland Bays, which had its grand opening on June 3, 2006.

"I am pleased to be able to announce in person the increased funding through the FY07 Interior Appropriations Bill passed in the House for the National Estuary Program (NEP) which directly corresponds to an increase in funding for the Delaware Bay Estuary. Rapid development and intensive agriculture in a growing coastal-resort area pose great challenges to Delaware's inland Bays -- Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay, and Little Assawoman Bay. As we all work toward the goal of ensuring that we can fish and swim in our bays, I think it is important to highlight some of my environmental priorities in Washington, such as this funding for the National Estuary Program, curbing global warming pollution, and strengthening clean water act protections," Castle said.

Information on Rep. Castle's Environmental Initiatives is listed below:

Funding for National Estuary Program: The Delaware Bay is one of two estuaries in DE to benefit from this program. It would receive \$500,000 as would the other 27 programs throughout the United States. The NEP in total was funded at \$24.4 million for 2007. Congressman Castle was a leader in the effort to increase this funding by signing a bipartisan letter to the appropriators responsible for funding the NEP.

Climate Change and Air Pollution and their impact on estuaries: The risk of storm damage, coastal erosion, declining lake levels, increased droughts, water supply problems and possible animal human health risks cannot be lost on the American people or the U.S. Congress. Congressman Castle is a cosponsor of the Climate Stewardship Act, which sets a nationwide standard for the heat-trapping pollution responsible for global warming. It also creates a market-based system encouraging maximum technological innovation and profitable opportunities for companies to cut emissions.

Clean Water Act protections: It is Congressman Castle's belief that the Clean Water Act is a landmark of our environmental laws. He believes that excluding waters from the Clean Water Act will only lead to unregulated discharges of pollution into streams, ponds, and wetlands as the pollution flows downstream which means greater pollution for lakes, rivers and coastal waters. The House Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill which recently passed, contained an amendment that would prohibit the EPA from spending its funding on their current policy that says isolated, intrastate bodies of water are not necessarily subject to environmental regulations under the Clean Water Act.