

Molly Joseph Ward

Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources

Molly Ward is a native of Hampton, Virginia and a graduate of the University of Virginia and William and Mary Law School. She is admitted to both Federal District and state courts and during her career has handled a wide range of matters including cases involving environmental issues, land use and planning.

She lives in her family home on Sunset Creek near the mouth of Hampton Roads and has spent her life on the water fishing, crabbing and enjoying the natural resources of Virginia.

Molly served as the elected treasurer for the city of Hampton from 2002 until 2008, reworking the operations from an ineffective bureaucracy to focus on customer service and measurable results. She eliminated the lines, restored the reputation of the office and increased collection rates by double digits to almost 100%, which transformed the city budget.

She was elected Mayor of the City of Hampton in 2008, and was elected to a second term in 2012. Leading a diverse, historic city with 140,000 residents and representing the interests of the city and the Hampton Roads region at the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission on issues related to water quality, the Chesapeake Bay and historic sea level rise. She also served as Chair of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.

Molly led the bipartisan delegation that persuaded the President to make Fort Monroe a National Monument, the President's first Antiquities Act designation. She has testified in front of Congress and spoken at the Department of the Interior to a nationwide group of conservation leaders on land conservation and the Antiquities Act.

She was appointed to serve on the Virginia Outdoors Foundation by Governor Tim Kaine and was on the board that contributed to the Governor's goal of preserving 400,000 Virginia acres.

She most recently served as a Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House.