October 28, 2014

The Honorable Kathryn Sullivan
Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Dr. Sullivan:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

Resiliency touches cross-cutting sectors such as commercial and residential buildings, transportation infrastructure, water infrastructure, air and water quality, and federal facilities. Governance of these sectors is distributed among federal agencies, Virginia state agencies, the Virginia General Assembly, Hampton Roads regional planning bodies, local governments, and the federal facilities that rely on resilient municipal infrastructure.

The Hampton Roads region has aimed to be vigilant in emergency preparedness, proactive in seeking federal support for resilient infrastructure, and cognizant of the impacts of flooding on federal facilities. This summer, Old Dominion University (ODU), in Norfolk, unveiled a Hampton Roads sea level rise adaptation pilot project to coordinate these efforts via a "whole of government" approach. The pilot is a two-year effort to bring together a team of federal, state, regional, and local agencies – with representatives of key private sector industries – to develop a menu of sea level rise adaptation policies. These policies will aim to remove barriers to interagency cooperation, enhance regional planning, and identify support that federal agencies can provide. While the project centers on the Hampton Roads region, its value is intended to stem in part from its potential for use in other regions.

Shortly after the announcement of this project, three bipartisan congressional colleagues and I hosted a public symposium at ODU entitled Rising to the Challenge: Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding in Hampton Roads. We were privileged to be joined by panelists from the National Security Council, Department of Defense, Navy, Army Corps of Engineers, and local, state, and regional bodies. We listened to discussions and asked questions about how to prepare
for the infrastructure challenges that exist now and that scientific models tell us will intensify in coming years.

I encourage your department to support the ODU pilot project, and I request that you issue formal written correspondence to the applicable divisions and subagencies within your department that authorize them to participate in and cooperate with this pilot project, as appropriate. Old Dominion University will also be reaching out to your staff with requests to discuss this project further in person. For more information, please feel free to contact CAPT (USN, Ret.) Ray Toll, Director of Coastal Resilience Research at ODU, at rtoll@odu.edu or 757-635-0831.

If successful, this project will marshal the excellent work already underway in a coordinated, systematic effort to strengthen the infrastructure and preparedness of a low-lying coastal region and to prepare it for the sea level rise and flooding challenges it faces today and moving forward.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

CC:
The Honorable Chuck Hagel, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense
The Honorable Ernest Moniz, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
The Honorable Jeh Johnson, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Julian Castro, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
The Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
The Honorable Craig Fugate, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency
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Mr. Mike Boots, Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality
COL Paul Olsen, Norfolk District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
The Honorable Molly Ward, Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia
The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessions, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Charles F. Bolden, Jr.
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NASA Headquarters, 300 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear Administrator Bolden:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessoms, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Julian Castro  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street SW, Room 10120  
Washington, D.C. 20410-1000

Dear Secretary Castro:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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The Honorable Molly Ward, Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia
The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessoms, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessions, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

October 28, 2014

The Honorable Craig Fugate  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW, Room #8  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1300 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Hagel:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 6242  
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Secretary Jewell:

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October 28, 2014

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street SW, Mail Stop 0501
Washington, D.C. 20528-0150

Dear Secretary Johnson:

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If successful, this project will marshal the excellent work already underway in a coordinated, systematic effort to strengthen the infrastructure and preparedness of a low-lying coastal region and to prepare it for the sea level rise and flooding challenges it faces today and moving forward.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

CC:
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The Honorable Ernest Moniz, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
The Honorable Jeh Johnson, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Julian Castro, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
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Mr. Mike Boots, Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality
COL Paul Olsen, Norfolk District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
The Honorable Molly Ward, Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia
The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessoms, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 3426 ARN
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

Resiliency touches cross-cutting sectors such as commercial and residential buildings, transportation infrastructure, water infrastructure, air and water quality, and federal facilities. Governance of these sectors is distributed among federal agencies, Virginia state agencies, the Virginia General Assembly, Hampton Roads regional planning bodies, local governments, and the federal facilities that rely on resilient municipal infrastructure.

The Hampton Roads region has aimed to be vigilant in emergency preparedness, proactive in seeking federal support for resilient infrastructure, and cognizant of the impacts of flooding on federal facilities. This summer, Old Dominion University (ODU), in Norfolk, unveiled a Hampton Roads sea level rise adaptation pilot project to coordinate these efforts via a “whole of government” approach. The pilot is a two-year effort to bring together a team of federal, state, regional, and local agencies – with representatives of key private sector industries – to develop a menu of sea level rise adaptation policies. These policies will aim to remove barriers to interagency cooperation, enhance regional planning, and identify support that federal agencies can provide. While the project centers on the Hampton Roads region, its value is intended to stem in part from its potential for use in other regions.

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The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Novem, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
The Honorable Ernest Moniz  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585-0800

Dear Secretary Moniz:

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As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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The Honorable Paul Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk
The Honorable Will Sessions, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach
Mr. Randy Keaton, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
October 28, 2014

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

I write to request your official support for a pilot project underway in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to coordinate the region’s response to sea level rise and recurrent flooding.

As you know, Hampton Roads comprises some 1.6 million people in 14 counties and independent cities and a regional economy based heavily on military assets, including the largest naval installation in the world. It is also a low-lying coastal region where sea level rise, land subsidence, and extreme weather vulnerability converge to create major flooding challenges.

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