

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 8, 2021

Scott de la Vega
Acting Secretary
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Acting Director de la Vega:

As the Department of the Interior continues its work on the FY22 Budget, we urge the Department to allocate funds from the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) to address significant deferred maintenance along the historic and vital Colonial Parkway, located within Colonial National Historical Park (COLO). The deferred maintenance backlog at COLO currently stands at \$434 million, the highest of any unit in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Critical maintenance needs along the Colonial Parkway make up a significant portion of COLO's deferred maintenance backlog.

The Colonial Parkway holds significant historical value and plays a vital role for communities in Eastern Virginia. Completed in 1957, the Colonial Parkway is a 23-mile scenic roadway that extends from the York River at Yorktown to the James River at Jamestown. The Parkway connects Virginia's Historic Triangle: Historic Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg, and Yorktown Battlefield – three of the most historically significant sites in our country. Congress passed the GAOA in large part to preserve our historical sites for future generations of Americans. Virginia's Historic Triangle is integral to the story of our nation's founding.

In addition to linking these historic sites, the Parkway has become an important local commuter route in Eastern Virginia. Some sections carry over four million vehicles per year and the Federal Highway Administration predicts a traffic increase of nearly 50 percent over the next 20 years. Repairs to the Colonial Parkway are needed to address significant safety and flooding concerns, preserve and improve access to historical sites like Jamestown and Yorktown Battlefield, and extend the life of the Parkway.

Thank you for your attention to this request. We understand the difficult task the Department has in allocating GAOA funds. We look forward to working with the Department on the implementation of the GAOA to ensure our national parks and public lands have the resources they need to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog and rebuild critical infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/ Elaine G. Luria

Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress