

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 31, 2020

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

The Honorable Russell Vought
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Acting Director Vought and Assistant Secretary James:

We write today to urge you to include funding for the City of Norfolk, Virginia's Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project in the FY 2020 Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) Work Plan. Specifically, we request \$5.4 million in the Work Plan to complete the Preliminary Engineering and Design (PED) phase of the project.

The City of Norfolk, Virginia is a highly urbanized area with most of the City falling below an elevation of 15 feet. The low elevation places Norfolk at risk from flooding due to high tides, nor'easters, and hurricanes. In August 2011, Hurricane Irene caused debilitating floods in the region resulting in millions of dollars in damages and the displacement of thousands of families. This flooding, because of the concentration of globally valuable military and economic assets located in Norfolk, poses great risk to key national assets.

The City hosts Naval Station Norfolk, the largest naval base in the world with a capital replacement value of over \$4 billion. Norfolk is home to the United States Fleet Forces Command, including the former U.S. Atlantic Fleet and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allied Command Transformation, the only NATO command headquartered in North America. The City also hosts Norfolk International Terminals, which is the largest terminal of the Virginia Port Authority—the third busiest port on the eastern seaboard.

Sea level rise combined with land subsidence exacerbates storm flooding. The frequency, extent, and duration of flooding has increased in recent years in the region and is projected to rise in the future. Norfolk is one of the cities with the highest rate of relative sea-level rise (combined sea level and subsidence) among Atlantic coastal communities, as documented in the "Evidence of Sea Level Acceleration at U.S. and Canadian Tide Stations, Atlantic Coast, North America," and the U.S. Geological Survey Report, "National Assessment of Coastal Vulnerability to Sea Level

Rise.” Recent storms that flooded major portions of Norfolk were Hurricane Isabel in 2003, the November 2009 nor’easter, Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, and Hurricane Sandy in 2012. For these reasons, the Army Corps identified Norfolk as one of the nine areas of high risk by the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS).

The purposes of the City of Norfolk, Virginia Coastal Storm Risk Management project are to provide structural and/or non-structural solution sets for mitigating the impacts of flooding and to assist the City of Norfolk in making prudent decisions regarding their water resource needs.

Extreme weather events will always be a concern in this region. Each additional year it takes to complete Norfolk’s flood risk management project is another opportunity for the next hurricane to devastate this low-lying coastal area. By mitigating future risks, the government can save money on cleanup costs, while providing area families and communities an assurance of safety in the event of catastrophic weather.

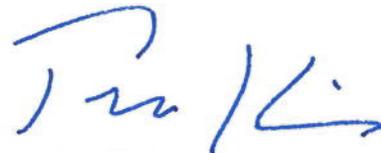
The City of Norfolk’s flood risk management project is a major priority for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and we encourage you to consider this request for inclusion in the FY 2020 Work Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress