

## **Water Resources and Development Act “Member Day” Remarks**

Thank you, Subcommittee Chair Napolitano, Ranking Member Rouzer, and my colleagues on the subcommittee for this opportunity. I would like to bring some attention to a few critical issues that impact water infrastructure in my district.

Virginia’s second district is defined by its wetlands, Chesapeake Bay tributaries, and the Norfolk Harbor. My district and the surrounding region require significant water infrastructure and resiliency investments. To understand my district, one must understand that the Port of Virginia is the gateway to transporting goods to so many communities.

Federal facilities and installations make up a significant portion of my district, and the Eastern Shore is also facing serious resiliency threats, particularly from erosion. These three defining factors have impacted my requests for the Water Resources Development Act of Fiscal Year 2022.

### *Federal Facilities Inclusion*

My top request for WRDA 2022 is that the Congress include language to clarify that federal facilities are in fact included in the Coastal Resiliency Feasibility Study for Coastal Virginia. Hampton Roads region is home to 18 military installations, including Norfolk Naval Station, the largest navy base in the world, and Langley Air Force base, the longest continuously active air force base in the world. Currently, there are limitations under existing authorities that restrict the ability to incorporate these installations and facilities into the Civil Works planning and construction processes.

Excluding a large portion of the region from these studies would result in an illogical data gap for the Army Corps. Reducing or removing those challenges and limitations, potentially generates federal cost savings and increased regional climate resilience through military and civil works partnerships on Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) projects.

Lacking the ability to incorporate military installations and other Federal facilities into the civil works project implementation process, will force the Corps to perform work solely on a cost-reimbursable basis in accordance with one of several available reimbursement authorities.

It requires each federal facility to individually carry out the study, which is an enormous financial and logistical burden. For a Coastal Storm Risk Management study of significant size like Coastal Virginia, the coordination process under these authorities would be logistically impracticable.

### *Norfolk Harbor Anchorage F*

The Port of Virginia is one of the Nation's and Commonwealth's most significant economic engines. On an annual basis, the port is responsible for more than 400,000 jobs and \$92 billion in spending across the Commonwealth and generates more than seven and a half percent of Virginia's Gross State Product.

I am grateful that Norfolk Harbor is receiving robust funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and standard appropriations; however further action is needed. Anchorage F at the Norfolk Harbor is used primarily as an emergency swing

anchorage to prepare for inclement wave conditions in the harbor Chesapeake Bay or in situations of unexpected extended vessel wait times prior to calling port.

For vessels to effectively utilize the anchorage, it is imperative for the anchorage to approach depths to match that of the Federal Channel. Norfolk Harbor's Anchorage F is currently designed as a 3,000-foot diameter circle for free-swinging bow anchoring.

The proposed modification includes widening the Anchorage F beyond its currently authorized diameter of 3,620-feet to a diameter of 3,840-feet and deepening the anchorage to 55-feet consistent with the 1986 authorization and the project depth of the Federal Channel.

This modification would provide a deeper and wider anchorage and will permit use by larger vessels calling to the port. I respectfully ask that the Committee authorize the modification in WRDA22.

*Eastern Shore of Virginia Cedar Island Feasibility Study*

Additionally, the Eastern Shore of Virginia has been fervently fighting erosion, sea-level rise, and land subsidence.

Specifically, a barrier island called Cedar Island. Cedar Island is a major Virginia seaside barrier island. Barrier islands enhance back-barrier marsh resilience to sea-level rise.

Both the barrier island and the back island marsh provide storm surge and flood protection of the mainland infrastructure from the Atlantic Ocean. Cedar Island has been undergoing

significant coastal erosion for decades with substantial damage from Superstorm Sandy.

The continuing erosion of Cedar Island will eventually open the seaside marsh and mainland to full ocean impact. We must take a closer look at Cedar Island and how to preserve the marsh. That is why I requested a specific Army Corps feasibility study for this area.

### *Closing*

Again, I would like to thank Chair Napolitano, Ranking Member Rouzer, and my colleagues on the Committee for giving me the chance to speak about these priorities throughout Coastal Virginia.

By making much-needed investments in our water infrastructure, we can set our Coastal communities up for economic success and ensure their resiliency for future generations.