



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

May 14, 2019

Senator Anne M. Gobi
Chair, Joint Committee on Environment,
Natural Resources & Agriculture
State House, Room 513
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Smitty Pignatelli
Chair, Joint Committee on Environment,
Natural Resources & Agriculture
State House, Room 473F
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairwoman Gobi, Chairman Pignatelli, and Members of the Committee:

Today, I write in strong support of S.433/H.825, *An Act establishing the commission for a Climate-Ready Commonwealth*, filed by Senator William Brownsberger and Representative Adrian Madaro, which proposes the creation of a statewide commission to determine which entity should lead major coastal and inland resiliency project, how such projects might be funded, and how those projects should be prioritized.

Boston is not alone in facing the threat of climate change, and communities throughout the Commonwealth are experiencing the reality of extreme heat, snow, rain, and flooding. As the impacts increase and intensify, it is more important now than ever before to coordinate investments to adapt infrastructure and our natural and built environment to future climate conditions.

Moakley Park is a low-lying, 60-acre waterfront park in South Boston. Recently the City of Boston created a vision plan for the future of the park to protect it and several Boston neighborhoods from future flood events. The project required coordination across nearly half a dozen local and state agencies including Boston Parks and Recreation, Boston Housing Authority, the Department for Conservation and Recreation, the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to identify resiliency measures in a cohesive design. As implementation of the design begins, these stakeholders will need to continue to work together to align plans and investments.

The City will soon complete a resilience plan for each coastal neighborhood in Boston, offering solutions to protect residents, businesses, critical infrastructure, and community landmarks. Throughout planning these projects, it was clear that district-level solutions at an even larger scale are needed to combat the growing threat of climate change. Record snowstorms, more frequent flooding, hotter summers – climate impacts are here with more to come in the future, placing people, our economy, and critical services at risk.

Boston is a leader on climate resilience, putting forth plans and actions before the next big storm. Resilient Boston Harbor is a vision plan to protect and enhance Boston's 47-mile shoreline from coastal flooding through new and revitalized open space. Boston cannot create a resilient future in isolation, nor can any single community. As the impacts of climate change worsen, it will become more necessary for governance beyond the local level. The State already demonstrates strong leadership in supporting climate-ready communities and this proposed commission will build on that.

I respectfully request your support of this bill and thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or you may contact Yissel Guerrero or Alyssa Ring in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-4616 or (617) 635-1994.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. J. Walsh', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston