

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 9, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Director Donovan and Assistant Secretary Darcy,

As Members of Congress from the State of Texas, we write to urge you to prioritize the study of coastal barriers to protect communities and commerce along the Texas Gulf Coast. If another hurricane strikes our state, the lack of adequate coastal protection infrastructure could prove catastrophic for our constituents and our nation's economy.

On September 13, 2008, Hurricane Ike, a Category 4 storm, made landfall in Galveston, Texas and ripped through several Texas counties as it moved through the Houston region. It caused a total of \$37.5 billion in damage nationwide, making it the third costliest hurricane in U.S. history. The storm caused over 100 fatalities, washed away homes, flooded communities, and shut down much of the region's energy production. Even though Hurricane Ike did extensive damage to our state, we know it could have been much worse.

It has been seven years since Hurricane Ike, and we still have no comprehensive federal and state strategy to strengthen our coastal protection infrastructure. Thankfully, our communities have learned many important lessons, and are working hard to prepare for the next storm. Even though we are doing everything we can, we know that more protection against storm surge and flooding is required.

This effort is important not just to our state, but to the entire nation. Texas has five of the top 20 commercial seaports in America, which include multiple DoD-designated strategic seaports, and the majority of our nation's strategic petroleum reserves. Additionally, our communities contain a significant amount of the nation's fuel refining capacity. The impacts of another major storm on the Texas coast will be felt in every Congressional district across the nation. For example, according to reports published immediately after Hurricane Ike made landfall, gas prices spiked between 30 and 60 cents per gallon across the country, hitting record highs in some states.

We strongly support the study and development of a comprehensive coastal barrier protection system that will significantly mitigate the damage and loss of life caused by flooding and storm

surge. We are pleased that the Texas General Land Office has partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a study of coastal protection measures in Texas, which was originally authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. This study aims to produce project plans that would protect our vulnerable coastal communities, energy infrastructure, maritime industries and metropolitan areas. Its cost will be equally split between the State of Texas and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and is estimated to take five and a half years to complete. Progress on this study is long overdue and a timeline of over five years is disappointing. We urge you to work with Congress and our state to expedite the completion of this important study.

We acknowledge the hard work and dedication already invested by numerous individuals and public and private organizations to investigate the construction of coastal barriers in the Houston-Galveston region of Texas. We are united behind the comprehensive study of our coast that will generate the projects necessary to sufficiently protect our constituents. This must be done in a timely and cost effective manner.

This study and subsequent projects will require financial and political commitments from many partners. We urge you to support our communities by fully funding all necessary studies and projects. This is a significant undertaking which must be a national priority, and we look forward to working with you throughout this process. Thank you for your service to our great nation.

Sincerely,



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Randy Weber (TX-14)  
Member of Congress



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Ted Poe (TX-2)  
Member of Congress



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Gene Green (TX-29)  
Member of Congress



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Pete Olson (TX-22)  
Member of Congress



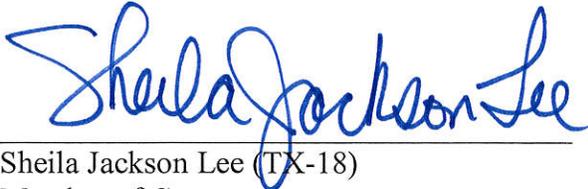
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Brian Babin (TX-36)  
Member of Congress



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Al Green (TX-9)  
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18)  
Member of Congress



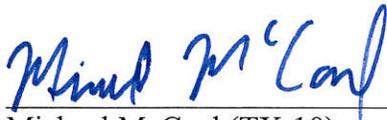
John Culberson (TX-7)  
Member of Congress



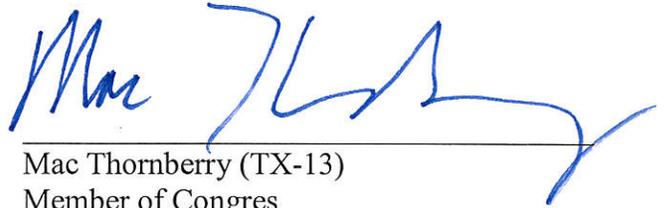
Blake Farenthold (TX-27)  
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela (TX-34)  
Member of Congress



Michael McCaul (TX-10)  
Member of Congress



Mac Thornberry (TX-13)  
Member of Congress



John Carter (TX-31)  
Member of Congress



Randy Neugebauer (TX-19)  
Member of Congress



Joe Barton (TX-6)  
Member of Congress



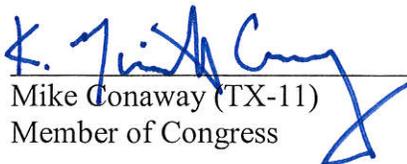
Lamar Smith (TX-21)  
Member of Congress



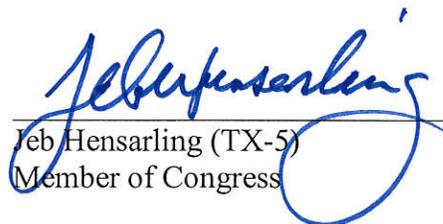
Henry Cuellar (TX-28)  
Member of Congress



Kay Granger (TX-12)  
Member of Congress



Mike Conaway (TX-11)  
Member of Congress



Jeb Hensarling (TX-5)  
Member of Congress



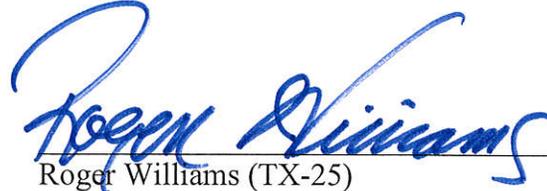
Louie Gohmert (TX-1)  
Member of Congress



Beto O'Rourke (TX-16)  
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions (TX-32)  
Member of Congress



Roger Williams (TX-25)  
Member of Congress



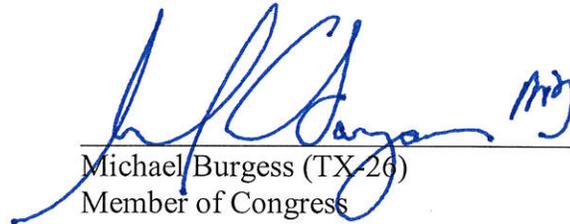
Will Hurd (TX-23)  
Member of Congress



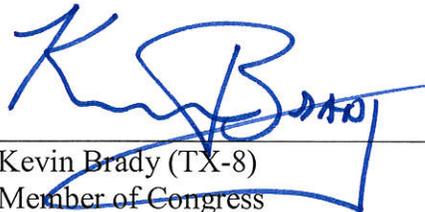
Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30)  
Member of Congress



Bill Flores (TX-17)  
Member of Congress



Michael Burgess (TX-26)  
Member of Congress



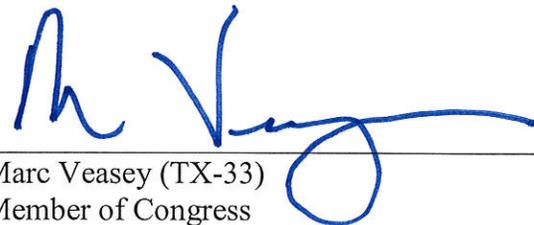
Kevin Brady (TX-8)  
Member of Congress



Sam Johnson (TX-3)  
Member of Congress



John Ratcliffe (TX-4)  
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey (TX-33)  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor  
The Honorable George P. Bush, Commissioner, Texas General Land Office  
The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations  
The Honorable Bill Shuster, Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure