

A RESOLUTION OF THE HARRIS COUNTY MAYORS' AND COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION SUPPORTING A COASTAL BARRIER SYSTEM TO PROTECT THE HOUSTON/GALVESTON REGION FROM STORM SURGE AND SUB-TROPICAL RAIN EVENTS; AND REQUESTING FUNDING FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS TO PROVIDE FOR COMPREHENSIVE STUDIES TO DETERMINE THE MOST EFFECTIVE COASTAL BARRIER SYSTEM TO SAFEGUARD THE REGION; AND PROVIDING FOR DELIVERY OF SUCH RESOLUTION TO THOSE STATE LEGISLATORS WHO REPRESENT THE HOUSTON/GALVESTON REGION.

WHEREAS, the Houston/Galveston region is home to the largest and most important concentration of petroleum refining and petrochemical processing plants in the United States, and the Port of Houston is the second-busiest port in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the region is hit by a major hurricane about every 15 years, and the Perryman Report estimates that a "Katrina-like" storm would cause aggregate losses to the Texas economy of \$73 billion in gross product, \$61.3 billion in income and 863,000 jobs while causing an enormous amount of damage to the economy of the United States; and

WHEREAS, storm surge entering Galveston Bay as a result of a hurricane or other significant storm event tends to increase in height as it moves further up into the Bay and the Houston Ship Channel, endangering human life, destroying property, and damaging sensitive ecosystems, and

WHEREAS, a coastal barrier system, using manmade sand dunes (revetments covered with sand and natural grasses) along the length of the coast connecting to the existing Galveston Seawall as well as large moveable flood gates, is essential to protect the industries, citizens, and communities in the Houston/Galveston region and to preserve the region's coastal ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, such a coastal barrier system currently under serious study is based on a proven concept directly modeled from other technologies successfully installed around the world – including in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, St. Petersburg, Russia, along the Thames River in London, England, and in New Orleans, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, such a coastal barrier system is technically feasible, economically sound, environmentally friendly and socially equitable, and justifies funding from the State of Texas to conduct comprehensive studies to determine the most effective coastal barrier system to safeguard the entire Houston/Galveston region to include the coastal barrier system currently under study modeled from proven technologies used in the Netherlands and elsewhere;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Harris County Mayors' and Councils' Association fully endorses and supports state funding for studies to advance the continued development of a coastal barrier system which would provide comprehensive protection to the people, industries, businesses, schools, government facilities, residences and associated infrastructure within the Houston/Galveston region.

Joan Johnson, President
Harris County Mayors' and Councils' Association

September 18, 2014
Date