

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 76

Requesting the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to study strategies for adaptation to prevent recurrent flooding in Tidewater and Eastern Shore Virginia localities. Report.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 28, 2012

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2012

WHEREAS, relative sea-level rise has been identified as a threat to coastal Virginia, and relative sea level measured at Sewells Point, Norfolk, has risen by 14.5 inches since 1930; and

WHEREAS, scientists predict an additional 2.3 to 5.2 feet of relative sea-level rise in the Chesapeake Bay region by 2100; and

WHEREAS, the Norfolk-Virginia Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area ranks tenth globally in the value of assets exposed to increased flooding from sea-level rise; and

WHEREAS, many areas of Hampton Roads already experience extreme flooding from routine weather events, causing extensive damage to private property and public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Hampton Roads is a major driver of the regional and state economy, and must be protected; and

WHEREAS, Naval Station Norfolk and Hampton Roads' other military bases are vital to our national security, and their operational capabilities must not be limited by increased flooding; and

WHEREAS, the costs of adapting to relative sea-level rise far exceed the capacity of local governments and residents to bear alone; and

WHEREAS, there are many local, regional, state, and federal partners who have a stake in coordinating their efforts to address the problems associated with relative sea-level rise; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia Institute of Marine Science be requested to study strategies for adaptation to prevent recurrent flooding in Tidewater and Eastern Shore Virginia localities.

In conducting its study, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science shall (i) review and develop a comprehensive list of ideas and examples of strategies used in similar settings around the United States and the world; (ii) convene a stakeholder advisory panel for the purpose of discussing and assessing the feasibility of employing these strategies in Tidewater and Eastern Shore Virginia; and (iii) offer specific recommendations for the detailed investigation of preferred options for adapting to relative sea-level rise.

The study shall include the participation of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and its member localities and Old Dominion University. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science for this study, upon request.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2012, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2013 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.