Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515
March 25, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Majority Leader
House of Representatives
1705 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, Chairman DeFazio, and Chairman Pallone:

We write to express our strong support for House Leadership to pursue a broad-reaching, sustainable infrastructure plan that includes bold policies to address climate change. As a caucus focused on sustainable energy and environmental policy, the members of SEEC believe we need to act immediately to stem the impacts of climate change. The needs of our nation's surface transportation infrastructure are widely and rightfully recognized; however, our constituents require a comprehensive infrastructure package that goes beyond roads and bridges, including ports, water systems, grid modernization, and broadband. In each of these areas, significant work can be done to reduce climate pollution. Infrastructure designed to improve climate resilience while supporting clean energy technologies will promote public health, safety, and economic development, and protect taxpayers' investments.

The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that we have barely more than a decade to take serious action on climate change if we are to prevent its most catastrophic impacts. While climate adaptation is critical, these problems will continue to persist and worsen without mitigation measures. Experts advise that improvements in energy efficiency, policies that support electrification, and investments to modernize our grid to encourage the deployment of more clean energy resources are necessary to prevent a global temperature increase that threatens all communities. All of this can be included under an energy title of a smart, sustainable infrastructure plan. In addition to helping prevent an untenable climate crisis, these policies will spur job growth and establish American global leadership in the new clean energy economy.

Recent natural disasters prove that Americans are already experiencing the consequences of climate change. Many communities across the country are in the process of rebuilding from

extreme weather events. These tragedies serve as a reminder that mitigation alone will not be enough. Any infrastructure package must also enhance infrastructure resilience in ways that prioritize the health, well-being, and physical safety of local communities. New infrastructure programs should prioritize investments that result in a reduction of climate pollution. To do so, we encourage a broad definition of infrastructure that includes the preservation and utilization of natural infrastructure— ecosystems that will help better protect communities from drought, extreme storms, and flooding while also serving as carbon sinks to remove greenhouse gas pollution from the atmosphere. We encourage federal agencies to coordinate the development of tools and guidance for climate smart infrastructure investment. We also encourage polices that will prioritize built infrastructure designed to withstand higher floods, stronger storms, and other hazards of extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change.

With this letter we have included an outline of policy areas we believe are critical components of proactive climate-focused infrastructure legislation. This is by no means a comprehensive list. We also encourage review of SEEC's Sustainable Infrastructure Proposal, which lays out ideas and foundational principles for a sustainable plan, and specific policy proposals across many infrastructure categories. Finally, we urge consultation with relevant committees in drafting any infrastructure bill.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue. We look forward to working with you on the development of an ambitious infrastructure package this year.

Sincerely,

Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress

David E. Price
Member of Congress

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui
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Lloyd Doggett
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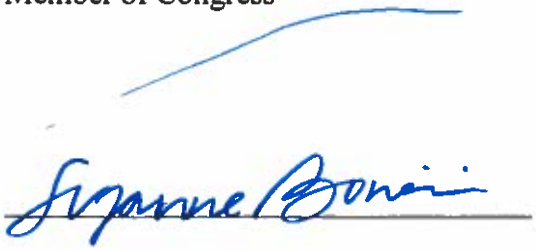

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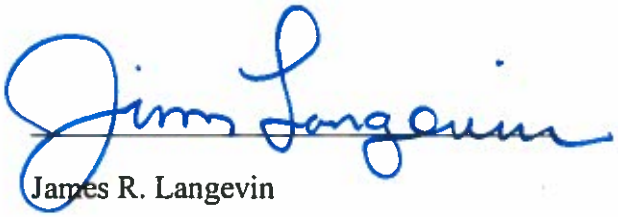

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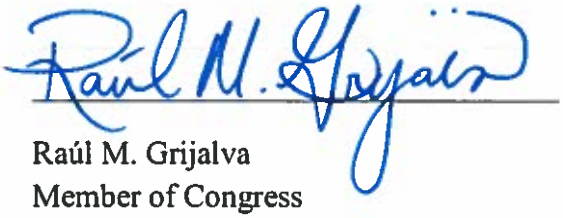

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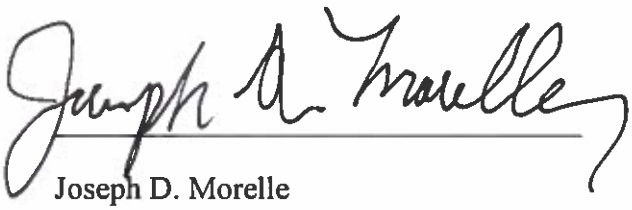

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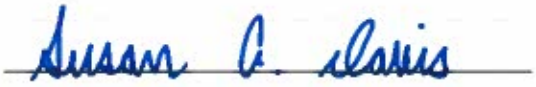

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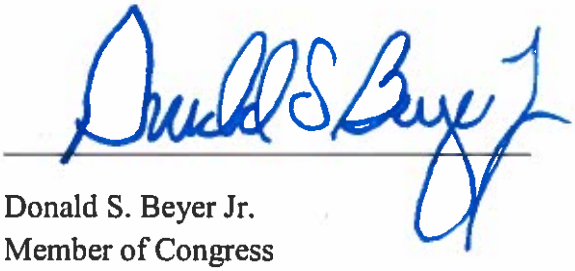

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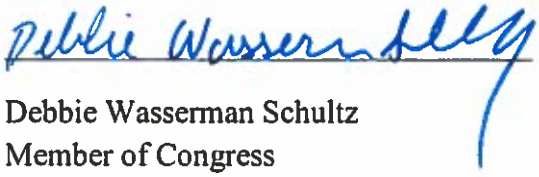

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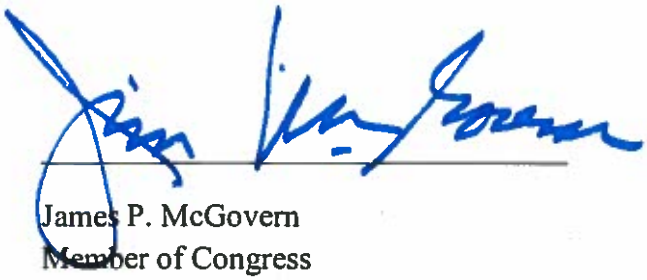

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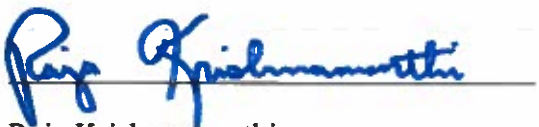

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Climate Infrastructure Policies

Require Planning for Climate Impacts

- Infrastructure projects often have multi-decade lifespans. Proper consideration of climate projections is necessary in order to reduce future disaster costs and protect taxpayers' investments. It is critical that vulnerable communities, coastal and otherwise, have continued access to current climate projections and technologies to mitigate potential risk.

- Climate risk assessments should influence project design, construction, and long-term maintenance decisions. This may include projects' location, elevation, use of construction materials, repurposing of existing infrastructure, and inclusion of natural infrastructure and stormwater management features. Federal agencies should establish an interagency council for developing, recommending, and coordinating actions, guidelines, and tools for incorporating climate risk into its processes for infrastructure investments.

- Infrastructure projects seeking federal funding should be required to develop a greenhouse gas emissions "score" that estimates the downstream and upstream emissions that will result or change due to the proposed project. Proposals that are more adaptable to future climate conditions and result in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions should be prioritized.

Protect Communities through Resilience

- Invest in the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems that provide vital barriers against the extreme weather brought on by climate change.

- Require natural resource agencies to coordinate support for state, tribal, and local government plans and tools for conserving and protecting natural resources in the face of climate risk.

- Promote and preserve green spaces, such as public parks, to make communities more resilient to floods and extreme heat brought on by climate change. This can also help address long-standing injustices in access to green spaces when proactively planned in low-income and underserved communities.

- Redouble efforts to fortify brownfield and Superfund sites against extreme weather, and clean up toxic sites as immediately as possible so that they no longer pose a hazard and can be used by communities for more productive purposes.

- In addition to addressing the National Parks infrastructure backlog, provide funding to the managers of federal parks and public lands to deal with adaptation measures required due to climate change impacts.

- Support investments in drinking and waste water systems to revitalize aging, critical infrastructure while protecting public health. Federal investments in wastewater should seek to promote low-impact development techniques like permeable pavements, vegetated roadside swales, and rain gardens that can reduce stormwater pollution while lowering management costs, along with other green development projects.

- Advance adaptable sea-level rise infrastructure projects that seek to better prepare coastal communities to face the growing threat of non-storm related damages and encroachment from the sea.

- Analysis has shown that grid failures are primarily due to disruptions in the distribution and transmission systems. Incentives to harden these systems are the most cost effective approach to improving grid resilience.

Modernize the Electric Grid

- Investments in the electric grid will be necessary to achieve a cleaner, smarter, more flexible, and resilient system. Support for a modernized, smart grid can facilitate achievement of other decarbonization goals: improved energy efficiency, increased integration of renewable energy resources, and more robust adoption of zero-emissions vehicles.

- Deploy advanced meters and other "smart" technologies to make the system more responsive and capable of supporting distributed energy resources.

- A sustained commitment to R&D funding, coupled with investment incentives, will increase the performance, affordability, and deployment of energy storage systems, which will enhance grid flexibility and reliability, and support the transition to an electricity generation mix with more intermittent, renewable energy resources.

- Assist local and regional governments to develop "Smart City" projects that utilize advanced technologies, sensors, and data to promote public safety, community resilience, civic services, clean energy deployment, and energy efficiency.

Promote Clean Transportation

- Revise and extend the electric vehicle (EV) tax credit to promote EV deployment by eliminating the manufacturer cap.

- Support efforts already underway in communities across the country to transition publicly-owned vehicles to zero-emission fleets, including electric buses and other alternative fuel vehicles.

- Support broader investments in clean public transportation of all kinds, including improving mass transit systems, the addition of bike lanes to existing roads, and the deployment of a network of publicly accessible charging stations for electric vehicles.

Reducing Emissions through Efficiency, Clean Energy, and Electrification

- In addition to incorporating many policy proposals outlined in the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act, make investments that will support highly efficient public housing, incentivize non-profits to invest in efficiency, promote adoption of clean technologies in manufacturing, and support states and local communities in jumpstarting energy efficiency retrofits in municipal buildings, hospitals, schools, and similar buildings.

- Support DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program to promote the energy efficiency, while improving health and safety, of low-income households.

- Set a national goal of achieving aggressive performance improvements in 100% of public sector buildings.

- Provide investments to increase installation of distributed and community-scale renewable energy resources in low-income and underserved communities.

- Incorporate polices that will expand the nation's transmission system's capacity to connect clean energy resources with demand centers.

- Support programs that help homeowners shift from gas-powered water heaters, heat pumps, stoves, and other appliance to electric power.

- The federal government has a responsibility to lead by example by supporting sustainable, resilient buildings and should seek to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions into procurement decisions. This should include promoting efficiency and clean energy power purchase agreements to decarbonize federal building's energy use, and support and protect policies that phase out fossil fuel use in federal buildings.