

August 14, 2019

Dear Judge Hidalgo and County Commissioners,

As we approach the **two-year anniversary of Hurricane Harvey**, our neighborhoods deserve action and to know that we are doing everything we can to build towards a stronger and better Harris County for all. We applaud your efforts to improve communication to the public about flooding risks, examine the feasibility of accelerating work, ramp up staff to implement projects, open the doors of government to hear from impacted communities and think about flooding implications when it comes to freeway expansion projects and infrastructure investments.

Harris County needs a roadmap for the type of County we want to live in today and tomorrow – this means doing away with “business as usual” to pave a new path for our future. The \$2.5 billion bond passed by voters on the one-year anniversary presents unique possibilities for our region, but we have many more opportunities in front of us! **Harris County can be a national model of equitable flood protection.** But this won't happen by accident or on its own – we must be intentional and develop a strategic vision.

The Coalition for Environment, Equity and Resilience (CEER) and the H.O.M.E. Coalition back the **#HarrisStrong Resolution**, a package of ideas and actions Harris County can take to minimize flooding impacts to infrastructure and all families. The resolution is a set of steps to bring an innovative approach to solving our flooding issues and minimize flooding impacts to infrastructure and families. Some ideas are already underway and some will take several years or decades to fully implement.

While these issues may get bogged down in politics, what we really care about is that every family is safe. Our **neighbors all around Houston should be given the same opportunity to live securely** and be afforded that opportunity by a County that demonstrates it cares for them no matter who they are or where they live. On August 27th, two years after Harvey and in the middle of Hurricane Season 2019, we ask Harris County to **take action** and demonstrate their commitment to this vision and new way forward.

Please commit to vote **yes to the Harris Strong Resolution** on August 27th and demonstrate that you support a Harris County where we value safety, health, fairness and resilience.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at iris@ceerhouston.org or chrishelle@thehomecoalition.org any time.

Iris Gonzalez
Coalition Director
CEER
(713) 331-9913

www.ceerhouston.org



Chrishelle Palay
Executive Director
H.O.M.E. Coalition
(281) 901-0229

www.thehomecoalition.org



#Harris Strong Resolution

A vision for a better tomorrow

- Find ways to **properly invest in flood protection** over the long term. The \$2.5 billion bond is a start but we must bring up all of Harris County to an equal level of flood service and storm protection. This will require more resources.
- Adopt a **policy and a prioritization framework that reflects our shared values** of safety, health, fairness, and resilience.
- Implement a **broad and holistic approach** that acknowledges that flooding is a complex issue that does not happen in a vacuum. The best solutions will address multiple problems.
- Prioritize actions that **work with nature, not against it**.
- Share timely and critical information with the public to **communicate flooding risks and impacts to health** through two key websites: readyharris.com and harristhrives.com.
- **Collaborate with the community** when it comes to immediate recovery efforts and deployment of volunteers.
- **Break down silos** between County departments to make sure government is working hard for the families of Harris County.
- Leverage every dollar to the maximum benefit through **deep collaboration and coordination of resources** like bond dollars, disaster recovery dollars, and funding from federal, state, regional and city entities.
- **Use the latest technology** to predict weather-related risks in order to be better prepared for any shocks and stressors.
- Implement recently adopted detention regulations that **incentivize green infrastructure, low impact development and land use that protects people and the environment**.
- Reimagine a **Harris County Flood Control District Community Taskforce that represents the full community** and identifies and helps solve the challenges facing our community.
- Prioritize **investments based on need and human impact** as well as impact to infrastructure.