

Metropolitan Boston Climate Preparedness Commitment

- a) WHEREAS, the metro Boston region is a dense coastal area that is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and is already experiencing its effects, including sea-level rise, more frequent and intense storms, and rising temperatures;
- b) WHEREAS, the impacts of climate change are expected to damage the region's natural environment and pose threats to, among others, public health, safety, economy and quality of life;
- c) WHEREAS, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville and Winthrop, herein the fourteen municipalities that constitute the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, are geographically connected, with more than 1.3 million residents and nearly 940,000 jobs, and share a common culture, economy, natural resources, and infrastructure;
- d) WHEREAS, cities and towns of the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition share risks and vulnerabilities because of the region's shared resources and many forms of transboundary infrastructure and systems that provide critical services, such as, transportation, energy, food, telecommunications, clean water, health and safety protections, as well as systems to control such infrastructure threats as flooding, and improper release or disposal of wastewater, solid waste, and hazardous materials;
- e) WHEREAS, Metro Boston's critical infrastructure and their operations are overseen by a complex array of public and private entities;
- f) WHEREAS, it is a regional priority to work fairly, equitably, and inclusively to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to protective measures and adaptive capacity in the face of climate change;
- g) WHEREAS, the region's vulnerabilities need to be addressed through both short-term and long-term actions, and preparedness measures ought to be integrated into all planning and investments throughout the region;
- h) WHEREAS, a regional platform is needed to make smart decisions in a collaborative manner, to ensure coordination and complementarity of existing and planned mitigation and resiliency work by all government entities active in metro Boston, and to advocate for investment and implementation of projects and programs that protect the region's hard and soft infrastructure, natural environments, property, food access, and basic quality of life;
- i) WHEREAS, in recognition of the need for urgent, coordinated and visionary action that integrates resiliency planning and implementation with mitigation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in order to optimize the outcomes of both efforts;
- j) WHEREAS, all levels of government have a vital role in this regional effort: the Federal Government, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its regional actors, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Metropolitan Mayors Coalition (MMC) municipalities and other nearby municipalities;
- k) WHEREAS, in accordance with the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts "convene[d] an advisory committee to analyze strategies for adapting to the predicted impacts of climate change in the Commonwealth," and published, in 2011, the Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Report;

- l) WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the regional planning agency serving the 101 cities and towns of metro Boston, developed the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (RCCAS) through a wide collaborative process, involving dozens of experts representing public and private sectors, universities and not-for-profit organizations;
- m) WHEREAS, many Metropolitan Mayors Coalition municipalities and regional actors have developed or are developing climate action plans and are taking various steps to prepare for climate change and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;
- n) WHEREAS, the appropriate integration of these plans and reports would provide a strengthened foundation and framework for a more prepared and resilient metro Boston Region;
- o) WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition recognizes the benefits of an ongoing organized collective preparedness action and the opportunity to align individual local efforts with the regional framework and vision;
- p) WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition municipalities and other government partners recognize the desirability and the necessity to collaboratively and cooperatively develop and advocate for mutually beneficial agreements, policies and strategies intended to influence regional, state and national resilience efforts, while recognizing the needs of individual jurisdictions and authorities;

NOW, THEREFORE, we the undersigned chief executives of metro Boston municipalities and partners in other levels of government jointly establish the Metropolitan Boston Climate Preparedness Commitment and agree to collaborate in identifying, evaluating and implementing ways to prepare the metro Boston region for climate change. We shall work together to take coordinated action on critical regional infrastructure and systems, and to develop best practices for local government, policy recommendations for state and federal partners, and funding and investment vehicles to meet the challenges of climate change. This collaboration shall include, but is not limited to:

- I. Sharing knowledge, plans, best practices, and experience of climate change and climate preparedness;
- II. Aligning and accelerating regional preparedness action; directing resources and investments to regional infrastructure upgrades and resiliency interventions; and developing programs and policies that create a more resilient metro Boston region;
- III. Integrating a climate preparedness and resilience framework into planning, program development, and project reviews undertaken by the region and/or municipalities, particularly in vulnerable communities with marginalized and disadvantaged populations;
- IV. Encouraging all signatories to develop or advance existing climate vulnerability assessments or plans, now and into the future, and to leverage academic, governmental, and other community resources in producing such assessments and plans;
- V. Establishing a mechanism, the Metro Boston Climate Preparedness Taskforce, for coordinating a regional and cross-governmental effort to protect critical infrastructure and other important

resources and systems, such as transportation, energy, food, telecommunications, clean water, health and safety protections.

The Taskforce will include representatives from all signatories of this Commitment and other participants as determined by Taskforce members. The Taskforce will meet approximately every two months, with its first meeting to be held before July 2015.

Each signatory shall commit appropriate staff resources and expertise to participate in the Taskforce and work toward the development of regionally coordinated climate preparedness action. In the first year, the Taskforce will:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of existing and planned climate preparedness strategies by collecting vulnerability assessments and preparedness plans and projects within the metropolitan region, as well as looking to best practices from other regions; and
- Identify any crucial gaps in knowledge and propose means to address them; and
- Identify critical regional infrastructure for which there are inadequate climate preparedness plans, and recommend priorities for adding and strengthening plans and implementing them; and
- Identify opportunities for better coordination of ongoing regional climate preparedness action, and prepare and implement a plan to increase such coordination; and
- Identify and develop appropriate frameworks that better enable signatories to realize joint regional action; and
- Prepare a report on the first year of activities for the Mayors, City Managers, and Town Managers of the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition by May 30, 2016;

VI. Pledging to participate with other parties to this Commitment to host a second Metro Boston Climate Preparedness Summit in 2016, and to meet approximately annually thereafter.

These shared commitments build on the significant work that many of our communities and agencies are already undertaking. By signing this letter, we pledge to each other our support for the shared vision that these principles and actions represent. We commit to actively pursue those strategies that have the capacity to have the greatest collective and positive impact.

This Commitment shall become effective upon adoption. ADOPTED this day, May 13th, 2015.