

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4640

To designate public colleges and universities that provide research, data, and recommendations on physical science, social science, economic analysis, policy analysis, risk analysis, monitoring, predicting, and planning for coastal flooding as National Centers of Excellence in Coastal Flood Research and Education.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 13, 2017

Mr. TAYLOR (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To designate public colleges and universities that provide research, data, and recommendations on physical science, social science, economic analysis, policy analysis, risk analysis, monitoring, predicting, and planning for coastal flooding as National Centers of Excellence in Coastal Flood Research and Education.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Centers of
3 Excellence in Coastal Flood Research and Education Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN COASTAL**
5 **FLOOD RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.**

6 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of the Na-
7 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall des-
8 ignate public colleges and universities as National Centers
9 of Excellence in Coastal Flood Research and Education
10 (in this section referred to as “National Centers of Excel-
11 lence”). The Administrator shall make the first such des-
12 ignations by not later than 180 days after the date of the
13 enactment of this Act.

14 (b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of such designation
15 are the following:

16 (1) To recognize those institutions of higher
17 education that have exhibited national leadership in
18 research and education in coastal flooding.

19 (2) To identify such National Centers of Excel-
20 lence as sources for expert advice and guidance for
21 Federal agencies engaged in coastal flooding re-
22 search and education issues and projects.

23 (c) **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.**—The Adminis-
24 trator shall designate as National Centers of Excellence
25 only those public universities and colleges that—

1 (1) have demonstrated proven expertise in phys-
2 ical and environmental science, flooding, and socio-
3 economic impacts of flooding research;

4 (2) are located in a State that frequently experi-
5 ences coastal flooding;

6 (3) have previously partnered with, or received
7 funds from, Federal agencies for coastal flooding
8 and watershed issues, including the Corps of Engi-
9 neers, the United States Geological Survey, the Na-
10 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the
11 Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Na-
12 tional Science Foundation, the Department of Hous-
13 ing and Urban Development, and the National Aero-
14 nautics and Space Administration;

15 (4) have been designated by State legislation as
16 technical and scientific advisory entities with respect
17 to coastal flooding for State agencies and localities;

18 (5) can demonstrate formal institutional col-
19 laborations in coastal flooding research and edu-
20 cation with other public universities or colleges with-
21 in the same State; and

22 (6) can demonstrate a history of convening
23 local, State, and Federal entities, including Depart-
24 ment of Defense commands, to develop plans for
25 coastal flooding.

1 **SEC. 3. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION WITH FED-**
2 **ERAL, REGIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOV-**
3 **ERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS.**

4 As a condition of designation as a National Center
5 of Excellence under this Act, the Administrator shall re-
6 quire a public college or university to enter into an agree-
7 ment with the Administrator under which it agrees to—

8 (1) collaborate on Federal flood-related issues
9 with Federal agencies such as the Federal Emer-
10 gency Management Agency, the Environmental Pro-
11 tection Agency, the National Aeronautics and Space
12 Administration, the National Science Foundation,
13 and the Department of Agriculture;

14 (2) collaborate and share best practices on re-
15 gional, State, and locally specific flooding and flood-
16 related issues with—

17 (A) State, county, and local governments;

18 (B) local councils of governments or re-
19 gional planning organizations;

20 (C) State agriculture, natural resource, en-
21 vironment, economic development, and water
22 agencies;

23 (D) floodplain managers;

24 (E) State homeland security personnel,
25 county disaster recovery coordinators, emer-

1 agency management personnel, and first re-
2 sponders;

3 (F) resource conservation and development
4 councils;

5 (G) watershed organizations and boards;

6 (H) agriculture and commodity organiza-
7 tions and farmers;

8 (I) environmental organizations; and

9 (J) business and development organiza-
10 tions; and

11 (3) explore opportunities to collaborate, when
12 appropriate, on Federal flood-related issues with
13 other Federal agencies such as the Bureau of Rec-
14 lamation, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Bu-
15ureau of Land Management, the National Park Serv-
16ice, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Public Health
17Service, the National Science Foundation, the De-
18partment of Defense, the Department of the Inte-
19rior, the Department of Housing and Urban Devel-
20opment, and various national laboratories.

21 **SEC. 4. INFORMATION COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION;**

22 **REVIEWS AND ADDITIONAL DESIGNATIONS.**

23 (a) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Administrator shall an-
24 nually submit to Congress and the President a report de-
25 scribing the activities, partnerships and collaborations,

1 Federal policy recommendations, previous and continuing
2 budgets, and findings of, and any other applicable infor-
3 mation from, the National Centers of Excellence, and
4 make such report available to the public in an easily acces-
5 sible electronic format on website of the National Oceanic
6 and Atmospheric Administration.

7 (b) REVIEW OF REPORTS FROM NATIONAL CENTERS
8 OF EXCELLENCE.—The Administrator shall review re-
9 ports from National Centers of Excellence to ensure that
10 recommendations and guidance of such Centers in regard
11 to flooding and flood-related issues are communicated to
12 relevant Federal agencies.

13 (c) REVIEW OF NATIONAL CENTERS OF EXCEL-
14 LENCE AND POTENTIAL DESIGNEES.—The Administrator
15 shall periodically review the National Centers of Excel-
16 lence and potential new designees as such Centers, to—

17 (1) ensure that the National Centers of Excel-
18 lence continue to meet the criteria for designation
19 under this Act; and

20 (2) designate additional National Centers of
21 Excellence in accordance with this Act.

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