



November 22, 2019

The Honorable Kathy Castor  
Chair, Select Committee on the Climate Crisis  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Castor:

On behalf of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), please accept this letter and attached projects in response to the call for policy recommendations from the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

Landscape architects plan livable communities that foster active lifestyles, design stormwater management systems that decrease the frequency and severity of flooding, plan cutting-edge transportation corridors that reduce traffic and air pollution, and help communities prepare for and recover from natural disasters. Landscape architects plan and design sites where millions of people live, work, and play, including commercial and residential developments, streetscapes, and parks, as well as large-scale land planning to protect watersheds, coastlines, and ecosystems.

We must ensure that future climate policies address climate impact on the greater landscape, not just buildings. Future policies must take site and landscape design into account, as our landscapes can be utilized to withstand and mitigate the sea-level rise, flooding, and increased storm surge caused by climate change. By using green and nature-based infrastructure, such as living shorelines, bio-swales, and green roofs, landscape architects are at the forefront of designing a resilient and sustainable future that can help mitigate the effects of the climate crisis. As your committee prepares its report of climate change policy recommendations, ASLA urges you to require the use of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions as a cost-efficient and highly effective tool in combatting the climate crisis.

Environmental justice is a key component in combatting the climate crisis. Landscape architects are renowned for their community engagement skills. They work with community members to better understand how a space has been and aspires to be utilized by all users. We cannot protect our frontline communities without asking them what is needed. To truly address the climate crisis, we must ensure environmentally vulnerable places and people are protected under future policies. ASLA requests that your committee's forthcoming report also calls for meaningful community engagement and full disclosure of all possible impacts of climate-related activities, policies, projects, or other undertakings.

Recently, ASLA convened a Blue Ribbon Panel on Climate Change and Resilience that produced a comprehensive report titled [\*Smart Policies for a Changing Climate\*](#). The report

identified core principles, key planning and design strategies, and public policies that are critical to promoting healthy, climate-smart, and resilient communities. ASLA urges the committee to include the policy recommendations contained in this report, as they have been identified as much-needed policy tools to help landscape architects and other design professionals address changes to our climate.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide policy recommendations for future climate legislation. The attached projects and the report *Smart Policies for a Changing Climate* demonstrate how landscape architects are the leading design professionals tackling climate change, and we stand ready to help the committee chart a course toward a more resilient and sustainable future.

Sincerely,  
Daniel Hart  
Manager of Federal Government Affairs