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December 1, 2017

The Honorable Patrick M. O'Connor  
Massachusetts Senate  
State House, Room 520  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator O'Connor,

Thank you for your letter to Governor Baker on October 10, 2017 relative to the Atlantic Bridge Project and the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the Fore River area. The Baker-Polito Administration places tremendous value on working with elected officials to ensure that the needs of the communities they represent are being met.

We appreciate the input you provided regarding important elements of the HIA. As you know, recognizing the serious concerns regarding the air quality in the Fore River area and the potential impact of the proposed project on air quality and public health, the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) have been directed to jointly prepare a focused HIA. This assessment will document the current background air levels at the site, and the incidence and/or prevalence of relevant health conditions within the community, and will also consider the future air quality impacts of the project on public health.

DPH and MassDEP have been coordinating to develop a scope for the HIA, and are committed to the important elements you raised in your letter, including: clear guidelines and criteria; open communication and ample notice of events and activities; public access to all relevant documents; and commitment of resources for a robust process.

We appreciate and share your goal of a transparent, impartial, and independent evaluation of these issues and will share with you the draft scope for the HIA when it is finalized. To this end,

the final scope and elements of the HIA will be determined following engagement and consultation with local stakeholders and community leaders. The assessment will be completed prior to the issuance of any air permits by MassDEP. Based on initial discussions, we expect that assessment will take approximately 10-12 months to complete.

The Baker-Polito Administration remains committed to ensuring that community concerns are heard fully, and will work with you to ensure that the needs of the residents of the Fore River area are given due and timely consideration by the state agencies reviewing this project, as well as the federal regulators making the primary decisions regarding this project.

Sincerely,



Matthew A. Beaton

Secretary

Cc:

Senator John F. Keenan, Norfolk & Plymouth

Mayor Robert L. Hedlund, Town of Weymouth

Representative James M. Murphy, 4<sup>th</sup> Norfolk

Mayor Thomas P. Koch, City of Quincy

Mayor Joseph C. Sullivan, City of Braintree

House Majority Leader Ronald Mariano, 3<sup>rd</sup> Norfolk

Representative Bruce J. Ayers, 1<sup>st</sup> Norfolk

Senator Walter F. Timilty, Norfolk, Bristol & Plymouth

Representative Joan Meschino, 3<sup>rd</sup> Plymouth

Representative Mark J. Cusack, 5<sup>th</sup> Norfolk

Representative James M. Cantwell, 4<sup>th</sup> Plymouth

Representative Tackey Chan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Norfolk

Commissioner Martin Suuberg, Department of Environmental Protection

Commissioner Monica Bharel, Department of Public Health