Dear Council Members:

In January 2018, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC) embarked upon an initiative to address sea level rise and climate resiliency. This initiative has evolved into the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition (TBRRC).

TBRPC member governments of Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough and Manatee are a unique and extraordinary area, sharing a sense of community, economy, and critically important environmental resources. TBRRC has been formed to coordinate climate adaptation and mitigation activities across county lines with the goal of advancing local and regional responses to, and preparations for, economic and social disruption that could occur from sea-level rise. The TBRRC will also provide state and local agencies with access to technical assistance and support in addressing the effects of climate change.

Over the past several months the TBRRC Steering Committee has worked to establish a mission and timeline, and created a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to include the best scientific experts and stakeholders on the topics of sea level rise, climate change and resiliency. A Memorandum of Understanding for local governments to review, consider, and vote upon has been developed by the TAC and has been supported by the Steering Committee. It would be requested that each elected member of the Council to place this item on an agenda of your local legislative body to review, consider, and vote to endorse.

Enclosed you will find the Memorandum of Understanding Creating the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition and a timeline for the initiative. We are respectfully requesting that you present the document to your Commissions and/or Councils for a vote by the first week in September. Upon request, our staff is available to you to provide you with additional information or to provide a presentation at your individual meetings.

The next steps going forward will be to identify those local governments who are supporting and adopting the Memorandum of Understanding Creating the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition. The document will then be presented to the full Council for voting consideration at the September 10, 2018 meeting with an official Signing Celebration (venue to be determined) on Monday, October 8, 2018.

As your Executive Director it is my privilege to serve the Board of this well respected organization and to further this initiative. Our efforts today will provide a positive impact well into the future by enhancing the quality of life for many generations to come in the Tampa Bay region. If you would please email me and Wren Krah, wren@tbrpc.org, to advise us if your county or city will join this initiative and sign the attached MOU it would be most appreciated. Please contact me if I can provide further information or assistance, sean@tbrpc.org.

Respectfully,

Sean T. Sullivan
Executive Director

Enclosure: Memorandum of Understanding Creating the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition
Memorandum of Understanding
Creating the
Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition

WHEREAS, the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition has been formed to coordinate climate adaptation and mitigation activities across county lines, to advance local and regional responses to and preparations for economic and social disruption projected to result from sea-level rise, and to provide state and local agencies with access to technical assistance and support in addressing the effects of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Counties of Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee and Sarasota of the Tampa Bay region and the municipalities within (the “Coalition Members”), are a unique and extraordinary area, sharing a sense of community, economy, and critically important environmental resources; and

WHEREAS, the Tampa Bay region has some of Florida’s most remarkable beaches, rivers, estuaries and springs which are closely coupled to the region’s cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Tampa Bay region has approximately 4 million residents, which represents approximately 19% of Florida’s population, and is projected to exceed 5 million residents by 2040; and

WHEREAS, the Tampa Bay region has a Gross Domestic Product of more than $2.5 billion annually, more than 37% of statewide economic output; and

WHEREAS, the resiliency of the Tampa Bay region’s economic, environmental and social health relies on crucial coastal transportation infrastructure, including: seaports, rail systems, roads, and airports; and

WHEREAS, the Tampa Bay region is vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate, including: sea-level rise, rainfall, heat events, wildfires, droughts, flooding and storms, which threaten current community priorities, human wellbeing and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, rising sea levels, intense rainfall and other climatic stresses will compromise crucial drainage infrastructure and drinking water supplies (through saltwater intrusion into rivers and the aquifer); and

WHEREAS, extreme weather events can impact the lives of residents, damage property and disrupt businesses; and
WHEREAS, natural areas including forests, beaches with dunes, wetlands, mangroves, and oyster reefs can provide valuable flood risk reduction and water quality benefits and may be compromised by changing climate conditions; and

WHEREAS, climate resiliency is the planning for and implementation of activities to reduce the Tampa Bay region’s vulnerability to a changing climate, and is amongst the most consequential actions the Tampa Bay region could pursue; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition Members are committed to being resilient to a changing climate, and will consider adaptation and risk reduction strategies intended to ensure public safety and safeguard infrastructure, property, environmental assets, and basic quality of life for current residents and future generations; and

WHEREAS, many of the activities undertaken to enhance resiliency to a changing climate will be concurrent with existing local efforts and objectives addressing aging infrastructure, emergency management, and public health; and

WHEREAS, while counties and cities in the Tampa Bay region have independently identified and undertaken activities to address vulnerabilities, a collaborative commitment working together to build the region’s resiliency will best serve the Tampa Bay region; and

WHEREAS, proactively preparing for a changing climate will be less costly and enhance the major sectors of the regional economy, maintaining and growing manufacturing, health care, tourism, agriculture and other economic segments; and

WHEREAS, measures to mitigate hazard risks provide a significant return on investment because resilient communities and regions support a thriving economy and create opportunities to attract new businesses and economic investments; and

WHEREAS, local governments play a critical role in fostering social equity in the face of climate related challenges, including the potential for community displacement; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition Members have joined in formation of the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition to coordinate their efforts and enhance their abilities to prepare, adapt and mitigate for the effects of sea-level rise and climate change in their individual communities and throughout the entire Tampa Bay region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF THE COALITION MEMBERS THAT:

SECTION 1. Findings --The findings set forth above are adopted and set forth as the reasons and statement of purpose for the formation of the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition.

SECTION 2. Regional Cooperation – The Coalition Members shall work together to maximize their efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of sea-level rise by: identifying vulnerabilities to the effects of
climate change in their communities; identifying common vulnerability assessment methodologies; planning for mitigation and adaptation actions that will enhance the resiliency of their communities; learning from each other and their prior efforts and planning documents; leveraging their resources; and pursuing public private partnerships.

SECTION 3. Regional Resiliency Action Plan -- The Coalition Members shall develop a Regional Resiliency Action Plan which shall include strategies for coordinated regional preparation for and adaption to a rapidly changing global environment based on mapping of projected sea-level rise and resulting amplification of localized impacts of hurricanes and tropical storms, and which shall identify funding strategies at the local, state and federal levels for mitigation and adaptation actions to deal with those impacts.

SECTION 4. Science Based Decisions -- It is essential that the Coalition Members base their strategies and actions on sound science and technical data, and for this reason they shall work together to identify experts for guidance and shall use the regional recognized sea-level rise projections as produced by the Tampa Bay Climate Science Advisory Panel to assess sea-level rise vulnerability, inform planning efforts, and provide guidance on what sea-level rise projections should be incorporated into local planning efforts.

SECTION 5. Legislative Strategy -- The Coalition Members shall develop a legislative strategy which includes a joint position statement recognizing the vulnerabilities of the Tampa Bay region to the impacts of sea-level rise and includes recommendations for the allocation of state and federal resources, which may include designation of the Tampa Bay region as uniquely vulnerable for the purpose of securing enhanced levels of federal participation and funding in regional adaptation and mitigation programs.

SECTION 6. Community Involvement -- Recognizing the importance of involvement in these regional, cooperative efforts by all members of the community, the Coalition Members shall engage and involve local businesses, organizations, associations and individuals in developing policies and recommendations which will have the support and commitment of community members and organizations, which is essential for successful implementation.

SECTION 7. Intent -- The Coalition Members each join the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition as an expression of their intent and commitment to work together on a regional level to identify and address the effects of sea-level rise, but by joining this Coalition the Coalition Members do not hereby commit local resources or staffing and acknowledge that the governing body of each Coalition Member retains that power and authority.

SECTION 8. This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect on __________________.

[Signature Blocks to Follow]
The **Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition** is an initiative of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and has been formed to coordinate climate adaptation and mitigation activities across county lines, to advance local and regional responses to and preparations for economic and social disruption projected to result from sea-level rise, and to provide state and local agencies with access to technical assistance and support in addressing the effects of climate change.

The **City of St. Petersburg, Florida** has adopted the Memorandum of Understanding creating the **Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition** and joins the coordinated efforts to enhance our abilities to prepare, adapt and mitigate for the effects of sea level rise and climate change in our individual communities and throughout the entire Tampa Bay region.

City of St. Petersburg, Florida

Commissioner Janet C. Long, Chair
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

October 8, 2018
**Business new benefits to student debt payment**

**Coastal Construction the assistance may help retain employees.**

**BY RICHARD DANIELSON**

**Times Staff Writer**

**TAMPA — With $50,000 in loan debt, Arriel Cases could not have been happier to open the latest week from his company, Coastal Construction Group.**

"I called my boss to make an appointment for my loan payment, and we were able to do that remotely," he said, referring to Coastal's Tampa office.

"Yes, it is Coastal is starting a pilot to help employees pay off student debt early."

Working Gradifi, a company that helped him establish an online retirement fund to pay off student debt, Cases will pay a $500 loan in exchange for a year of service. A

"I think this is a great idea, the bump up $500 a month for another year, a $500 loan in exchange for a year of service. A

Coastal Construction says it is one of the many steps the company is taking to attract and retain employees."

**Regional governments join to cope with a changing world.**

**BY CRAIG PITTMAN**

**Times Staff Writer**

The nearly 30 months of negotiations, local government officials from Pinellas County, Hillsborough County, and Collier County gathered in St. Petersburg on Monday to sign a pact to help each other find ways to cope with sea level rise and climate change.

The pact for the 24-member group, dubbed the Tampa Bay Regional Resilience Coalition, avoids any discussion about who is causing the Earth to warm and makes the seas higher. That might be too controversial.

"We are trying to stay away from the political debate over the cause of sea level rise and climate change," said Ray Bass, executive director of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, said before the event. "But we just had the warmest September on record here, and the question is, 'How are you going to address that?'

"As U.S. Rep. Charlie Crist, D-St. Petersburg, said at the event, "This is a totally nonpartisan issue. There's no D or R behind a storm."

Regional governments join to cope with a changing world.

"I agree with that, but the issue is still being debated, the sea level rise and climate change, the impacts of rising sea levels and climate change, the impacts of rising sea levels."

The coalition includes cities in Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee and Sarasota counties and dozens of cities. That area of 6,000 square miles is occupied by 3.5 million people, Sullivan said.

"We are clearly a force to be reckoned with," he said.

A 2014 federal report labeled the Tampa Bay area as one of three areas in Florida particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, with the others being Miami and Apalachicola.

The report, the National Climate Assessment, also warned that climate change would drive increases in harmful algae blooms off Florida's coast, worsening seasonal allergies for people already made miserable by springtime pollen and heavier rainstorms and flooding in low-lying areas.

An insurance industry group has ranked the Tampa Bay region as the most vulnerable metropolitan area in the United States to storm surges, with $175 billion in potential losses.

The Tampa Bay pact is modeled on the South Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, formed in 2010 by Broward, Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties and including the city of Miami.

A state law that took effect in 2015 requires coastal governments to address sea level rise and future flooding. The compact was signed by Gov. Rick Scott.

But Gov. Rick Scott has questioned whether climate change exists and has said the state will not have to do anything about it because it is not real. Scott has denied the ban exists.

**Times staff writer Richard Danielson contributed to this report.**

**Self-employed trucker wins $3.38M verdict after crash**

**BY RICHARD DANIELSON**

**Times Staff Writer**

**TAMPA — A Hillsborough County jury has awarded $3.38 million to a self-employed commercial truck driver whose career ended in a crash when an incoming trucker drifted into his lane.**

Since then, he has been unable to work and lost his commercial driver's license because he couldn't complete the required physical examination.

"Mr. Capote's life was completely destroyed by this accident," Broussard said in an announcement of the verdict. "A reckless driver robbed him of the life that