

**Call Governor Kaine** at 804-786-2211. Leave your name, address and phone number and/or email information when you leave the message. Here's a suggested message if you call:

In June 2006 Huntington in Fairfax County had over \$10 million in losses from Cameron Run flooding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said the primary causes were sedimentation from development and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project. Also, the creek was moved in the 1960s to build the Capitol Beltway. No flood protection means a blighted neighborhood. The Corps has just completed a 65% levee design with a cost of \$20.5 million. Flood protection is essential and possible only with state, county and federal support. Please support our neighborhood by helping Fairfax County to fund the levee. Thank you.

*/or/*

**Send an email** via the contact form at:

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/AboutTheGovernor/contactGovernor.cfm>

- Complete the information fields (name, address, etc.).
- Suggested Subject is "Huntington Flood Protection, Fairfax County"
- You may copy and paste any of the suggested text below or your own comments into the "Your Comment" field.

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The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine  
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia

Dear Governor Kaine:

On behalf of the Huntington community in Fairfax County, I am respectfully asking you to provide assistance to our community by contributing funding for permanent protection from flooding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has just completed a 65 percent design of a levee that will provide protection against a 100-year flood, but the project does not offer a sufficiently high cost-benefit ratio to compete with other Corps projects. The next step is to complete a final design, which will cost approximately \$3 million, and the total project cost including the final design is estimated to be \$20.5 million.

#### The June 2006 Flood

In June 2006 the Huntington community in Alexandria sustained more than \$10 million in losses from a devastating flood. Homes had flooded basements and some also had flooded first floors. Many residents were forced from their homes for an extended period as utilities were shut down, and the damage to real property was extensive. The loss of personal property (including vehicles) was substantial and almost everything touched by flood water had to be removed and discarded. Sewer backups occurred throughout the neighborhood. It was difficult for residents to go to work while they tried to remediate property. The financial impact of the flood was devastating for affected residents, many of whom are working-class or retired. Even for those persons who had flood insurance, the impact was severe, since coverage is limited to real property and provides very limited coverage for personal property. Even worse was the impact on residents who lacked flood insurance; the flood damaged many properties that were outside the flood plain, and typically those residents did not have flood insurance.

Although we do not have data on health impacts, at least one resident had a heart attack that could have been fatal except for timely medical assistance. Exposure to the dirty water was a health risk. Residents experienced significant stress during the flood itself, during the immediate aftermath with the displacement from homes, from the effort of remediation, and from the loss of

items of actual or sentimental value. Furthermore, many Huntington residents experience anxiety during every heavy rainfall as the June 2006 flood was a traumatic experience.

Fairfax County mounted a round-the-clock emergency response center for several weeks, and police, fire and other emergency responders were very engaged with assisting residents; the cost was perhaps from \$3 million to \$5 million. The emergency center and the situation in the neighborhood impeded traffic on Huntington Avenue, a designated secondary road that is a primary link to the Huntington Metro station.

#### Causation Factors

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study initiated in July 2006 and funded by Fairfax County with federal assistance, the flooding risk from Cameron Run exists from both riverine and tidal flows. The primary cause of increased risk as compared to 1965 and later is unabated sedimentation from upstream development. Other contributors to flooding include the Route 1 interchange construction of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (WWB) project and the Jones Point development. The present-day Telegraph Road interchange construction of the WWB project, which is not included in the Corps study, may reasonably be viewed as an additional source of sedimentation. Also, Cameron Run was straightened and narrowed in the 1960s to accommodate construction of the Capitol Beltway, increasing the risk of flooding in our neighborhood.

While all of this development and transportation improvement has provided great value to Northern Virginia residents and businesses, it has come at the expense of Huntington. Since 2006, we have experienced flooding in storm events that would not have threatened our properties and persons in the past. As recently as September 2008, with Hurricane Hannah, evacuations in our neighborhood were required. Sedimentation continues and we expect another damaging flood unless we receive protection.

#### Why Our Neighborhood Needs Flood Protection

The continuing threat of flooding adversely affects property maintenance and values, greatly diminishes the quality of life, and increases the risk of Huntington becoming a blighted neighborhood. Protection will help raise property values and increase the tax base.

If there should be another flood, as inevitably will occur without flood protection, all of these effects would recur but with even more intensity because of the prior damage and anxiety. Some properties with flood insurance would be at risk of FEMA requiring them to be elevated to maintain coverage or otherwise would be bought out at federal expense. Repeated flooding will aggravate property damage and perhaps compromise the infrastructure. Properties could shift quickly from ownership to rental and could even be abandoned. Huntington could, in short, become a blighted neighborhood, with deteriorating living conditions and rising crime rates. Given its location at the Huntington Metro station, which is a transportation anchor for the Route 1 corridor, and new residential development to east and west sides of the neighborhood, this would be an undesirable outcome for more than the immediate community.

Many in the Huntington community believe we are at a crossroads. This is an intact community dating from the 1940s that offers affordable housing to a diverse population, in terms of age, race, income and ethnicity. The neighborhood is deemed a conservation area that cannot be sold to developers, in order to preserve moderate income housing. We believe it is worth fighting for Huntington. State funding could make a lasting, critical difference in ensuring the continuing vitality of our neighborhood.

#### The Solution Has Been Identified

The Army Corps of Engineers has just completed a 65% design of a levee with an estimated cost of \$20.5 million. The time for completion once funding is obtained is approximately 4 \_ years. Unfortunately, the narrow cost-benefit analysis methodology used by the Corps to evaluate projects does not produce a ratio that will qualify us for priority consideration, in great part

because the value of properties here is not high, and the value of potential future development cannot be considered, nor can the protection of life and health of residents. Therefore, funding for flood protection falls squarely on Fairfax County and they are seeking state and federal assistance. This also makes sense as the causes of flooding relate to local, state and federal development and initiatives.

Thank You for Considering My Request

I appreciate your consideration of this request. When you consider the incredible immediate and lasting costs of flooding, and the promotion of well-being and improved development that remediation offers, funding a flooding solution can certainly be regarded as an investment that will produce positive financial results over time. Also, it simply is the right thing to do for people who live with this risk.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank you for your many years of public service. You face difficult decisions and bear a great responsibility and we are fortunate to have persons such as you who are willing to dedicate themselves to the public interest.

[name]  
[address and/or email]