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Ranking Member Johnson, Vice Ranking Member Beyer and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Ann Phillips. I'm a retired Surface Warfare Officer - I drove and commanded ships for the United States Navy for 31 years, served abroad in Guam and Lisbon, Portugal, and operated extensively with NATO and Partnership for Peace nations. My experience in climate and national security stems from my work as Chair of the Surface Force Working Group for the Navy's Task Force Climate Change while still on active duty, and from my work since retiring, chairing the Infrastructure Working Group for the Hampton Roads Intergovernmental Sea Level Rise Pilot Planning Project from 2014 to 2016, and now as a member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Climate and Security. I believe climate change has a significant and intensifying impact on our national security, and continue to work at the local, regional, and national level to foster action across the whole of government and community to both address and build resilience to this threat.

The Department of Defense has a history of taking climate impacts seriously dating back to at least 2003. This is because climate change can create and intensify real operational risks and global instability. From an operator's perspective, these tangible threats magnify challenges from the most basic man, train, and equip preparations by local commanders, to the strategic implications and long range global planning requirements of the Combatant Commander. As warfighters, our armed forces have an inherent "responsibility to prepare" to execute their mission, and that preparation drives serious provision for climate change. The Department of Defense executes based on pragmatic analysis of engineering and scientific fact, using data from the full range of Federal science agencies, juxtaposed against stated requirements and operational plans. This includes developing coastal resilience, drought resilience, wildfire resilience, and the innate flexibility to operate under the most challenged environmental and atmospheric conditions, from the Arctic to the desert.

Threats from climate change are not limited in their impact to Federal or Department of Defense facilities. These threats also impact the entire civilian community and diaspora who live and work in the regions and localities surrounding these facilities. This challenge is particularly acute at coastal military installations, and nowhere more so than in Hampton Roads, a region on the front lines of climate impact. Hampton Roads is experiencing sea level rise and land subsidence at a rate of change second only to New Orleans, and twice that of the rest of the East Coast. The Sewell's Point Tide gage, located on Naval Station Norfolk, shows a relative rise of nearly 18 inches since 1930, and that, coupled with tides, wind, and storm surges, now results in increasing flooding disruption for the base and surrounding communities. With 16 major bases, including many unique "one-of-a-kind" assets and capabilities spread across 17 cities and municipalities, the Hampton Roads Region is a crucible for the entire range of climate-related challenges. This region's extensive and diverse federal presence spreads across a community of 1.7 million people and nearly 2900 square miles, including 825 miles of coastline, all connected by an extensive network of bridges and tunnels. Hampton Roads exemplifies why climate change adaptation and resilience requires a "whole of government and community" approach to achieve resilience solutions. It also highlights why the Defense Community must have unrestricted ability to plan, evaluate risk, prepare and implement to projected future circumstances, and, to execute its mission through collaboration and cooperative agreements both inside and outside the "fence line," across the full span of federal, state, regional, and local governments.

In summary, the Department of Defense takes its inherent responsibility to prepare for climate impact to our national security seriously. In turn, it must have the ability to plan, interact, share data, and share financing strategies, in an open manner between Federal, State and Local government authorities, to prepare itself for future climate impacts, and to prepare as a nation to execute our national security strategy. Thank you again for the opportunity to offer this testimony, and I look forward to your questions.