

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Franklin County, Ohio Commissioner Paula Brooks Participates in President's Climate Task Force Meeting

Columbus, OH – Commissioner Paula Brooks from Franklin County Ohio, completed her second meeting as a member of the White House Climate Preparedness and Resilience Task Force. She attended with other State, Local, and Tribal leaders from around the nation, (see link below).

While California is experiencing the worst drought in the state's history, the remainder of the country, including Ohio, has been experiencing historic cold and severe winter weather events. "Climate change means we will experience changing temperatures and more frequent and severe weather events," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "We have to be prepared for these weather extremes that are increasing in severity and frequency, which affect millions of Americans, including Ohioans."

"Watersheds from Lake Erie to the Ohio River are threatened, by both drought and flooding. This strikes at both public safety and our economy," said Commissioner Brooks.

The Task Force seeks recommendations from their respective stakeholders on how to remove barriers, create incentives, and modernize federal programs to encourage investments, best practices, and partnerships to help facilitate resilience to climate change.

"Strengthening our infrastructure to be resilient during powerful storms and weather events can be achieved by partnering," said Commissioner Brooks. "It is vital to our future that we create successful partnerships between our private sector and federal, state, county, city, and other government. We all share this responsibility."

Federal agency directors and senior leaders, including Homeland Security and the USEPA, listened to the Task Force representatives discuss the effects that climate change is having on their communities. Reduced snow packs in the Rocky Mountains for spring crop irrigation and drinking water, to increased flooding risks, and power outages in the Midwest, to coastal erosion on the east and west coasts were some of the real life issues referenced.

“Becoming more prepared and resilient to climate change does not necessarily mean spending additional taxpayer dollars,” said Commissioner Brooks. “It’s about using science and innovative engineering and development practices around natural infrastructure, to create good jobs, while making our country’s infrastructure stronger, and more advanced.”

Brooks serves as the Energy Sector Co-Chair of the Built Systems Subgroup. She also serves on the Natural Resources and Agriculture Subgroup. “We have a responsibility to prepare for climate change and build resilience into our communities, to guarantee a bright future for the next generation.”

Commissioner Brooks will be engaging stakeholders throughout Ohio in the coming months.

For more information on the Climate Task Force, visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/resilience/taskforce>

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