

Offered by Councilor Michelle Wu



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS FLOODING IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS*, The City of Boston is extremely vulnerable to flooding from multiple sources: coastal flooding, as rising sea levels meet more intense weather patterns; riverine flooding, as the Charles River, Neponset River, Mother Brook and others swell with more intense rain events; and stormwater flooding, as the city's drainage system struggles to absorb and manage runoff; *and*
- WHEREAS*, On January 5, 2018, Boston experienced a record-breaking flood as the high tide reached its highest level since the National Weather Service began keeping records in 1921, which not only beat the record set during the Blizzard of 1978 but also occurred much more suddenly, over a single tidal cycle. During this storm, severe flooding restricted access and caused damage to roads, public transportation, and many buildings; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The City of Boston's Climate Ready Boston initiative released a vulnerability assessment in 2016 estimating that sea levels could rise 10 feet by the end of the century and 37 feet by 2200, nearly double the previous predictions, with East Coast communities bearing a disproportionate impact from accelerating melt of the ice sheets covering Antarctica; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The City of Boston has also published a Coastal Resilience plan for East Boston and Charlestown, including proposed defenses that would cost \$200 million in East Boston and \$62 million in Charlestown, and similar studies are being completed for South Boston, Fort Point, and the Seaport; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Funding for additional major infrastructure projects will be needed to adapt and protect the city from increasingly frequent flooding, including the potential for a major seawall in Boston Harbor, reconstruction of roadways, and renovation of many homes where residents cannot afford the entire cost of adaptation; *NOW*
- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED***: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss flooding in the City of Boston and the legislative, funding, and governance structures needed for the city and residents to adapt, and that representatives from the Boston Planning and Development Agency, Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Energy, Environment, and Open Space Cabinet, other interested parties, and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: February 14, 2018