

October 17, 2012

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President,

The undersigned are most honored to have been appointed earlier this year by you as Chair and Vice-Chair of The National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC or the Council) and we would like to take this opportunity to update you on the Council's activities.

NIAC has recently undertaken a study to identify ways that regions within the United States can become more resilient and the steps that your Administration can take to help regions accomplish resilience goals. In the course of conducting the study, we have come to appreciate the important role that the "lifeline sectors" play in the security and resilience of our communities and for the nation. These sectors, including energy, transportation, telecommunications, and water, face an increasingly complex set of risks that are interwoven into all facets of our businesses, infrastructures, and communities. When they fail, their impacts are strongly felt in many sectors and throughout communities and regions.

That is why the Council, at our October 17 meeting, voted to commend your Administration on going above and beyond normal communication and interaction with the electricity and nuclear sectors to have executive-level dialogue between CEOs in those sectors and senior government officials of your Administration to address high-impact infrastructure risks and potential threats. Three previous NIAC studies found that such high-level dialogue between the private sector and government can help to improve the security posture of critical infrastructure sectors and build trusted relationships that are critical in times of crisis. Such a dialogue took place on July 23 when Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Steven Chu, and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano, and White House National Security Staff met with several CEOs and trade officials from the electricity and nuclear sectors. This meeting produced a robust collaborative process to move forward. It led to a classified briefing on September 14 with 74 senior industry executives of the electricity and nuclear sectors and the promise of an ongoing dialogue and working discussions between industry and government leaders to address these high impact issues between the public and private sectors.

The Council has reaffirmed its previous recommendation to promote executive-level dialogue between industry and government leaders to address high-impact infrastructure risks given the promising success of this engagement with the electricity and nuclear sectors. We hope that if other lifeline sectors wish to engage with senior Federal officials, that these officials will place a priority on such executive-level engagement.

We look forward to reporting to you our findings and recommendations on regional resilience at the conclusion of our ongoing study.

Respectfully,

Ms. Constance H. Lau
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Inc.
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Dr. Beverly Scott
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