

# Everyone needs storm protection

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Let me ask you a question. If you were purchasing home insurance, would you accept coverage that only protected 75 percent of your home? Or health insurance that only covered you from the waist up?

The answer to both questions is obviously (and likely emphatically) no.

So, why should the Houston-Galveston area accept storm surge protection that doesn't protect 100 percent of the region? And, why is storm surge protection important to not only those living on the coast, but those living as far away as Katy and The Woodlands? The answer lies in the assets that are of local, national and global importance that call the Houston-Galveston region home, such as the Port of Houston, the busiest U.S. port in terms of foreign tonnage and second busiest in overall tonnage; the nation's largest petrochemical complex, which supplies 40 percent of the nation's fuel and 60 percent of America's specialty military fuel; NASA Johnson Space Center; and the world-renowned Texas Medical Center.

While there has been much debate recently about two proposals for storm surge protection, the only proposal that makes sense for the entire region is the coastal barrier system for storm surge protection (formerly referred to as the Ike Dike).

The coastal barrier system, which is designed to save the entire Houston-Galveston region from a direct hit by a hurricane, utilizes proven technology that's been used for decades in The Netherlands and other parts of the world.

This levee-and-gate system is not selective in determining who and what will survive a worst-case scenario storm and would protect the homes and businesses of 5.5 million people, plus the critical infrastructure that is vital to the health of the state and national economy, according to the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership.

Some say the \$6 billion cost estimate to construct the coastal barrier system is too much. But, consider this. The damage from Hurricane Ike was upward of \$35 billion, which, at the time, made it the third costliest hurricane in history.

For a fraction of the cost of recovery, the region can greatly mitigate the negative impacts of hurricane storm surge for years to come.

I am proud that the City of La Porte is a part of the coalition of 15 cities that passed resolutions officially supporting the coastal barrier system.

I would encourage everyone to visit [www.bacpa.org](http://www.bacpa.org) to learn more about the coastal barrier system. It's an investment in our future that we must work together to make a reality.