

H. MORGAN GRIFFITH  
9TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON  
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January 17, 2020

Governor Ralph S. Northam  
Patrick Henry Building  
1111 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Northam,

I am writing to express my concern about the risks posed by the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel expansion project to the habitats of Virginia's birds.

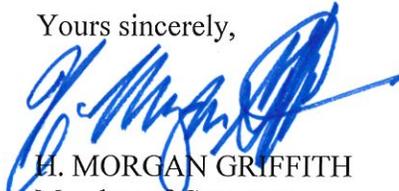
According to the American Bird Conservancy, the paving of South Island will displace more than 20,000 waterbirds, including royal terns and gull-billed terns, which are considered endangered in Virginia. Their current habitat is free from predators. If the project advances without an alternative nesting site, there is no guarantee that they could find a habitat of equivalent safety, threatening to reduce the numbers of these wonderful creatures that contribute to the biodiversity of our Commonwealth.

I urge the Commonwealth to take steps to create an alternative nesting island, an action recommended by Virginia Tech researchers who have studied the issue. This alternative would need prompt action to allow the birds a habitat when they return from their wintering grounds.

To be clear, I am not taking a position opposed to the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel expansion project. I am merely saying that Virginia should be a good steward of its natural resources and provide an alternative nesting site.

I appreciate your attention to this request. If you have any further concerns, or if I can be of assistance at the federal level, please contact Emily Michael of my staff at 202-225-3861. I remain,

Yours sincerely,



H. MORGAN GRIFFITH  
Member of Congress