

NEWS RELEASE

**The Travelers Institute Selects Charleston, S.C.,  
to Launch National Series of Coastal Risk Symposiums**  
*Panel to Identify Strategies for Protecting and Insuring Coastal Region*

**CHARLESTON, S.C., Oct. 29, 2009** – To address financial threats posed to coastal areas by potential changing climate trends, The Travelers Institute will host its first coastal risk symposium tomorrow, October 30, at the Maritime Center in Charleston, S.C., in partnership with the City of Charleston, the South Carolina Department of Insurance, *H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment* (The Heinz Center), Ceres and the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of South Carolina. The policy discussion will bring together business, government and community leaders to identify strategies and solutions to protect and insure the coastal region, an economic driver in South Carolina that supports recreation, tourism and industry, as well as real estate with an insured value of more than \$190 billion, according to AIR Worldwide.

“We are pleased to host the first of a series of coastal strategy symposiums in South Carolina, a state that has demonstrated a strong commitment to public-private partnerships to protect its coast as well as a dedication to coastal mitigation through the S.C. Safe Home Program and a stable insurance regulatory environment,” said Joan Woodward, Travelers Executive Vice President, Public Policy, and head of The Travelers Institute, who will serve as moderator of the lunchtime panel.

“Effective and sustainable solutions for protecting the country’s coasts will come from the coordinated efforts of many and we in South Carolina are pleased to help lead this important call for action,” said Joseph P. Riley Jr., Mayor, City of Charleston, S.C.

Panelists for the Coastal Risk Symposium include:

- The Honorable Joseph P. Riley Jr., Mayor, City of Charleston, S.C.;
- Leslie Jones, Deputy Director for Actuarial, Market and Alternative Risk Transfer Services, South Carolina Department of Insurance;
- Deb Callahan, President, The Heinz Center;
- Sharlene Leurig, Manager of Insurance Program, Ceres; and
- Eric Nelson, Vice President of Risk Management, Personal Insurance, Travelers.

The symposium will address concepts from the recently completed Resilient Coasts Blueprint, developed by The Heinz Center and Ceres, and endorsed by The Travelers Institute, Mayor Riley and other leaders in insurance, government, non-governmental organizations and academia.

“After years of spiraling coastal losses, business, environmental, housing and government leaders are aligning in favor of practices that protect human well-being, conserve valuable coastal ecosystems and preserve insurable markets,” said Sharlene Leurig, Manager of Ceres’ Insurance Program.

“A strategy to deal with increasingly hazardous coastlines involves hard work rather than quick fixes, and the first step is building broad consensus among local leaders, insurers, builders, conservationists and those people living in vulnerable communities,” said Deb Callahan, President of The Heinz Center. “Fortunately, we’ve found wide agreement that better decisions on where and how to build—and protecting coastal buffer zones like wetlands—will make us all much safer and save us a lot of money, too.”

According to the Insurance Information Institute, the collective value of coastal properties from Texas to Maine nears \$9 trillion. The blueprint outlines steps to reduce coastal risk with specific recommendations that include:

- Developing and implementing the necessary science and decision-making tools to address potential climate impacts;
- Requiring risk-based land use planning;
- Designing adaptable infrastructure and building code standards to meet future risk;
- Strengthening ecosystems as part of a risk mitigation strategy;
- Developing flexible adaptation plans;
- Maintaining a viable private property and casualty insurance market;
- Integrating impacts from potential changing climate trends into due diligence for investment and lending.

“South Carolina commends The Heinz Center and Ceres for their blueprint and looks forward to building on it by strengthening our coastal mitigation program and maintaining a stable insurance regulatory environment that will support the citizens of this state,” said Scott Richardson, Director, South Carolina Department of Insurance.

Also on the agenda is the [Travelers Coastal Wind Zone Plan](#), a comprehensive, private market approach to improve the affordability and availability of coastal wind storm insurance for homeowners. The Travelers Plan calls for:

- A stable and consistent regulatory environment, with a uniform set of rules applied to named wind coverage for coastal zones from Texas to Maine;
- Transparency in calculating insurance premiums;
- Federal reinsurance mechanism for extreme events (such as hurricanes causing losses several times greater than those arising out of Hurricane Katrina); and
- Stronger buildings through federal guidelines for appropriate building codes and land use planning.

“With more than half of all Americans living within 50 miles of the nation’s coasts, and with many experts warning that warming ocean temperatures may result in more severe catastrophic storms, an action plan is warranted now,” said Woodward. “It is time for the insurance industry and the government to recognize the human and economic toll at stake and create a stable, market-based insurance system that makes catastrophic wind coverage available and affordable for residents in coastal areas.”

### **About The Travelers Institute**

The Travelers Institute, created by The Travelers Companies, Inc. (NYSE: TRV), engages in discussion and analysis of public policy topics of importance to the insurance marketplace and the financial services industry. The Institute draws upon the industry expertise of Travelers’ senior management and the technical expertise of many of Travelers’ underwriters, risk managers and other experts to provide information and analysis to public policy makers and regulators. Travelers is a leading provider of property casualty insurance for auto, home and business. For more information, visit [www.travelers.com](http://www.travelers.com).

### **About H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment**

The Heinz Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to improving the scientific and economic foundation for environmental policy. The Center tackles some of the most important environmental issues of our time by convening business, environmental groups, academia and government. The Center’s guiding philosophy is that we must all work together to find lasting solutions to environmental challenges and leave the earth a better place for future generations.

### **About Ceres**

Ceres is a national network of investors, environmental organizations and other public interest groups working with companies and investors to address sustainability challenges such as global climate change. Ceres directs the Investor Network on Climate Risk, a \$7 trillion network of investors and asset managers that promotes better understanding of the financial risks and opportunities posed by climate change.

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