

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 25, 2019

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary James:

As you allocate funding in accordance with Public Law 116-20, the *Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019* (Disaster Relief Act), we respectfully urge you to favorably consider the Surf City and North Topsail Beach project in North Carolina. Congress provided this money to the Corps of Engineers to construct critical flood and storm damage reduction projects, including coastal storm damage reduction projects in states impacted by Hurricane Florence. The Surf City and North Topsail Beach project is a critical, shovel-ready coastal storm reduction project, and constructing it is a priority for North Carolina, a state seriously impacted by Hurricane Florence. We ask that you use Disaster Relief Act funding to support immediate construction of the project.

The Surf City and North Topsail Beach project is designed to prevent disastrous losses by protecting vulnerable areas of Topsail Island that lost storm protection capabilities in previous storms and through ongoing erosion. In the 1990s, Hurricanes Fran, Bertha and Floyd eroded approximately 25 feet of protective beach width over the project area. Today, shoreline erosion continues at a rate of two to three feet per year in some portions of the project area. Hurricane Florence further eroded the beaches and primary dune structure. The Corps estimates average damages exceed \$19 million for every year the project is not constructed. Hurricane Florence alone caused over \$100 million in damages to the towns' beaches and infrastructure. If Hurricane Florence had made landfall in North Carolina as a Category 3 or 4 storm, as was originally predicted, the damage would have been catastrophic.

The towns of Surf City and North Topsail Beach are aware of the risks they face and have sought to improve beach conditions on their own. However, they cannot make sufficient improvements without the full partnership of the federal government. As non-federal sponsors, the towns are committed to fulfilling non-federal cost sharing obligations, and have worked with the Wilmington District to complete preconstruction engineering and design and secure necessary permits and authorizations. They are ready to move forward with a Project Partnership Agreement and begin construction as soon as possible.

Coastal storm damage reduction projects have proven their effectiveness here in North Carolina and around the country. They save taxpayer dollars and protect people, infrastructure, and economies. The funding Congress provided to the Corps of Engineers in the Disaster Relief Act is intended to support construction of economically justifiable projects like Surf City and North Topsail Beach, which has a benefit cost ratio of 3.47 to 1.

For the reasons outlined above, we respectfully urge you to allocate Disaster Relief Act funding to construct the Surf City and North Topsail Beach project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Burr".

Richard Burr
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thom Tillis".

Thom Tillis
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Rouzer".

David Rouzer
Member of Congress