

**Member Name:** Earl L. ‘Buddy’ Carter

**District:** First District of Georgia (GA-01)

**Members’ Day Testimony – Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development**

Thank you for this opportunity to share my priorities and concerns for the First Congressional District of Georgia. It’s an honor to represent a district that is so geographically diverse and rich in water resources. I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and the Energy & Water Subcommittee to address a number of the different challenges we’re currently facing.

I’d like to start by saying thank you for your continued commitment to working with us to complete the the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project. As you know, it is the most exhaustively studied deep-draft project in the nation and represents a significant economic opportunity not just for Coastal Georgia and the surrounding areas, but for the region as a whole. Under the Corps of Engineers’ original cost estimate, the federal government’s share would need to be roughly \$100 million annually to keep the project on track and on budget. It is these major deep-draft navigation projects that will be the stimulus for growing our economy. For this reason, I am respectfully supporting a funding request that would ensure robust funding for the construction of deep-draft navigation projects across the country.

We're also fortunate to have one of the busiest roll-on/roll-off ports in the nation. The Port of Brunswick has also seen tremendous growth with the majority of their increase being roll-on/roll-off and bulk cargo. While this is great news, it is not without difficulties. For years, we've worked with the Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Ports Authority to deepen the river to authorized maintenance depth, but the federal funding has been below needed levels. In addition, compounding shoaling and natural disasters have created additional challenges for the operators of those ships. As a result, I am supporting the need for better funding for maintenance projects across the nation. With needed attention towards our nation's operations & maintenance needs, we can keep our water-based infrastructure projects on track.

While I've touched on these two major ports, the issue of harbor maintenance is a concern that both this subcommittee and the authorizers have addressed before within the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. As we seek to grow our economy, we need to have ports that can sustain adequate depths as we transition to larger vessels making calls. I know, Mr. Chairman, that you remain committed to finding a solution to this problem and I look forward to working with you to remedy this situation.

In addition to the previously mentioned projects, the Tybee Island Shore Protection Project is vital to protecting and sustaining the measures needed to keep

the residents of Tybee Island safe from further severe weather events. The recent damage caused by Hurricane Matthew was mitigated thanks to the dune protections that were in place. Phase two of the Savannah Channel Impact Study is important to assessing erosion along the shoreline and to determine the steps necessary to reduce the impacts of future severe weather events. I support sufficient funding under Additional Funding – Shore Protection Investigations to ensure that Tybee Island, like many other communities, has the protection it needs to survive another disaster.

Mr. Chairman, I am extremely appreciative of the hard work you and your colleagues on the subcommittee do in crafting the Energy & Water Appropriations bill. As we discuss infrastructure development and ways to stimulate our economy, we need to look no further than the water-based infrastructure stimulating global trade. I deeply appreciate your attention to these matters and thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.