

Members' Day Testimony (E&W) - Rep. Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter (1st District of Georgia)

Thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns and priorities for the First Congressional District of Georgia. It's an honor to represent a district rich in history and so many natural resources. As the representative for the entire coast of Georgia, I am able to travel from South Carolina to Florida to see how the needs of our communities intersect with the issues of the Energy & Water Subcommittee.

One of the focal points of our district and region's growth is centered on the Ports of Savannah and Brunswick. Whether it's container units out of Savannah or roll-on/roll-off cargo out of Brunswick, our region has benefited from the continued development of those ports and the accompanying infrastructure developments. The Port of Savannah is currently undergoing one of the largest deepening projects in the nation. This deepening, which is also one of the most exhaustively studied projects in the country, will allow for the largest ships in the world to call on the port with more cargo, creating efficiencies and leading to higher amounts of growth and revenue. Once that project is completed, it will yield nearly \$232M in annual economic benefits. As an example of its importance, the entire Georgia delegation once again came together this year to support the President's budget request of \$130M, the most significant request to date. That is

why I ask this committee to support that funding request and to help keep this vital project on track and on time.

In a similar vein, I joined a number of my colleagues in supporting robust funding for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. As the fund dedicated to keep our harbors and ports maintained, it is critical that this program be able to allocate ample amounts of funds to the ports that need it. With two major ports, I know all too well the importance of keeping those maintained and how that keeps the United States competitive in a global stage. For that reason, I request support for those funds.

As we look to options to address weather-related impacts on our districts, the Corps of Engineers is already deeply engaged in nature-based alternatives. They are working on innovative projects around the country that utilized natural sources for infrastructure that helps our communities, especially coastal ones such as those found in my district. For that reason, I have submitted a language request that appropriate levels of funding be allocated within the Dredging Operation Environmental Research account to help maintain that progress and to help our nation search for affordable and reliable solutions.

Nuclear power plays a large role in our nation's power portfolio, but especially in Georgia with the only two units under construction in the country.

With the recent milestones at Plant Vogtle, it's clear that nuclear energy should be a source in which we heavily utilize. However, we need to find a safe, long-term solution for the storage of nuclear waste. That is why I submitted a request that will help us to move one step further to the construction and use of Yucca Mountain.

Finally, I have submitted requests for both inland waterways and shore protection accounts. As a district that has over 100 miles of coastline and an ample stretch of the Intracoastal Waterway, it is imperative that proper attention be paid to areas of the country, such as the barrier islands of Georgia. Funding for those efforts will help ensure storm-resistant and weather-resistant communities of the future, ensuring long-term cost savings.

I thank the committee for their work on these issues and for the opportunity to testify today. Thank you for your attention to these matters and please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions.