

## Rep. Van Drew Energy and Water Testimony

Good Morning Chairwoman Kaptur and Ranking Member Simpson and thank you for holding today's member day hearing of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water. My district of Southern New Jersey has over 150 miles of shoreline and half a dozen rivers. Our community's way of life depends on the Army Corps keeping our waterways clear and safe. This subcommittee plays a critical role in funding the many vital projects that the Army Corps implements in New Jersey.

I appear before the subcommittee to advocate for Community Project Funding from the construction account for the authorized construction project, "Barnegat Inlet to Little Egg Inlet, NJ." This funding will be used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Philadelphia District to implement a coastal storm risk management project that is currently behind schedule. This project will renourish protective beach along the 18 miles of the Jersey Shore that constitute the community of Long Beach Island, also known as LBI.

In October of 2012 Hurricane Sandy caused significant damage to LBI. This included but was not limited to damage to homes, infrastructure, and beaches. The Hurricane Sandy Reevaluation Report recommended a Coastal Storm Risk Management beach project on LBI, for which construction initiated in 2015 and completed in 2017.

The Coastal Storm Risk Management Project was designed to receive re-nourishment at 7-year interval relative to the start-date in 2015. The first periodic nourishment was scheduled for FY22, but funding was not provided. The project is in the same situation for FY23. Without community project funding this project will struggle to move forward with the pre-planned re-nourishment, and the LBI community will suffer for it.

This project has universal support from the community. The community desperately wants and needs this project to be implemented. This project is both a key resilience project and an economic driver.

This is an established Coastal Storm Risk Management project in an area which regularly experiences dangerous storm events. Without the beach to absorb wind and wave action the risks of flooding and damage are considerably increased. Many areas of this project are completely eroded up to the dunes, providing little to no protection and rendering the beach virtually unusable during high tide. Failure to complete the project will place the community in danger and impose detrimental economic impacts on the multi-billion-dollar Jersey Shore tourism industry on which the region depends.

This authorized project is behind schedule solely due to lack of funding, and is strongly desired by the community. The

implementation of this project will make the Jersey Shore/Long Beach Island community safer and more prosperous. It is the sort of project that community project funding is designed for. I urge the committee to provide the full requested amount of \$32 million to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Philadelphia District.

I again thank Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and the entire Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water for providing the opportunity to testify on this vital resilience project. Thank you for your consideration of this request.