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Examining the Use of National Park Service Lands for a Migrant Camp at “Floyd Bennett Field”.

Good morning, Chairman Westerman Chair of Natural Resources and to all House Committee members of Congress. Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

In recent weeks, the Governor of NYS and the Mayor of NYC proposed a plan to use our National Park Floyd Bennett Field via the Biden Administration to temporary house migrants have become a great concern for our community.

Please let me share some of our concerns:

1. ****Concrete Evidence of Danger and Unsuitability:****

- This past weekend, there was almost 5 inches of water covering Runway 19- the exact location proposed for housing the migrants. This is not an isolated event but rather a frequent occurrence. This serves as a stark reminder to the potential dangers of Floyd Bennett Field. In addition it's a transit desert and has no infrastructure! No plumbing- no electricity- no sewage system.

2. ****State and Federal Environmental Guidelines were not followed:****

-As you may know SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review Act) mandates a rigorous review of environmental, social, and economic impacts for any project. However, in this particular case it is evident that due diligence was not executed in compliance with SEQR's multi-step decision process. This non-compliance not only negates the law but also risks unforeseen detrimental consequences on multiple fronts, including the socio-economic well-being of the local residents and the

environmental sanctity of the area.

3. **Federal Oversight and Responsibilities:**

- The failure to adhere to NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) regulations further illuminates the glaring shortcomings in evaluating the proposed plan. NEPA's binding regulations are designed to safeguard against environmentally detrimental proposals, ensuring the preparation of environmental impact statements. The absence of these critical assessments raises grave concerns about the underlying environmental sustainability and safety of relocating migrants to this area.

4. **Devastating Impact on National Park's Ecosystem:**

- Floyd Bennett Field, a National Park, is a treasure of natural beauty and biodiversity. Housing individuals here is equivalent to tarnishing the sanctity of Yellowstone National Park. The irreversible damage to flora and fauna and the destruction of natural beauty are contrary to the very ethos of conservation and preservation that National Parks symbolize.

5. **Historical Precedence and Legislative Prudence:**

- The 1972 decision by Congress against the housing plan on Floyd Bennett Field based on its inadequacy for residences must not be overlooked. This historical precedence serves as a legislative evidence of the unsuitability of the area for residential purposes.

Revisiting and overturning such well-founded decisions, without adequate reassessments, suggests a lack of prudence and disregard for established legislation.

6. **Ethical and Humanitarian Considerations:**

- Migrants, many of whom have already faced immense suffering, are entitled to a safe and secure living environment. Placing them in a flood-prone area during an active hurricane season, as well as the colder months ahead, is neither humane nor ethical.

7. ****Local Residents Welfare and Community Impact:****

- The proposal not only risks the safety of the migrants but also impacts the welfare and quality of life of the local residents surrounding Floyd Bennett Field. It is crucial to consider the cumulative implications to the community, which will have to bear the brunt of the socio-economic and environmental disruptions.

8. ****Conclusion:****

-In conclusion on behalf of every resident of the 59th Assembly district I ask the dedicated committee members of the Natural Resources Committee to take these points into consideration and reject this proposal. Please reflect on our commitment to uphold the principles of environmental stewardship, legislative compliance, ethical responsibility, and humanitarian compassion. Together, and with your support, we will continue to ensure that our National Parks and its historic sites are well preserved for future generations to come.