



Wrightsville Beach Chamber of Commerce support of US House Bill 524

WHEREAS, Wrightsville Beach, NC public coastal infrastructure is critical to the public safety interests, it's beaches financial assets, and economy and must be protected from the effects of storms and other natural disasters and to the whole of New Hanover County, North Carolina's wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, Coastal tourism is a major economic generator for Wrightsville Beach in New Hanover County, providing recreational opportunities for North Carolinian's and tourists from across the nation

WHEREAS, Wrightsville Beach, Carolina Beach and Kure Beach require routine Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation projects to maintain their engineered shoreline templates that provide essential protection to minimize damage caused by hurricanes and other storms; and

WHEREAS, projects designed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Wrightsville Beach have utilized Corps. of Engineers designed and constructed navigational structures to protect inlet access and provide for inland borrow sites for sand from the Masonboro Inlet for more than 50 years; and

WHEREAS, the sand placed on the Wrightsville Beach strand is transported, through the natural coastal north south sand migration processes, back into the inlet borrow sites, resulting in an environmentally friendly, cost-effective project that reuses and recycles beach quality sand at the most cost effective process; and

WHEREAS, Masonboro Inlet is inside CBRA zones and the adjacent beach strand is not, resulting in a recent interpretation that advised that federal funds could not be used to support Wrightsville Beach nourishment projects that use inlets within its CBRA zone as borrow sources for the beach outside CBRA zone; and

WHEREAS, the interpretation has resulted in projects for Wrightsville Beach that would use borrow off shore sites, resulting in increased costs and the potential for more harm to the environment; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Atlantic Ocean borrow site for Wrightsville Beach is adjacent to an area of a remnant artificial reef created in the 1970s using hundreds of thousands of tires, which at the time of creation was approved by the US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife, and the Audubon Society, local governmental agencies, and other officials resulting in a potentially compromised borrow site that would significantly increase costs and harm to the environment; and

WHEREAS, by not utilizing the inlet borrow sites, Masonboro Inlet continues to be infilled by sand that naturally flows to them therefore resulting in major increased costs that would be incurred to maintain navigable inlets and the dumping the inlet dredged sand on spoil islands, while also impacting the region's programmatic approach to beach and inlet dredge material management; and

Whereas, the loss of the critical exemption ruling protecting the onshore borrow site is caused by a legislative change in law years after the Corps. of Engineers design of Masonboro Inlet navigation and sand saving infrastructure jetties on the North and South sides of the inlet;

WHEREAS, Congressman David Rouzer has introduced H.R. 524, which would restore the exemption from CBRA inlet borrow sources that were used to support beach nourishment projects for decades; and

WHEREAS, Wrightsville Beach with its Masonboro Inlet would be eligible for continuance of its former 50 year exemption should H.R. 524 become law, allowing the projects to return to the successful, cost-effective model that provided healthy coastal infrastructure for decades.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Wrightsville Beach Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors supports the passage of H.R. 524.

ADOPTED this 9th day of April, 2023.

Wrightsville Beach Chamber of Commerce

 Susan K Bulluck, Chairman

Larry Morgan, Restaurant Consultant

Sue Bulluck, owner (Bulluck & Co., IORC/AmRuss, AmRuss Ventures)

Nicolas Montoya, General Manager (Blockade Runner Resort)

William Sisson, DC (Alternative Health Care Clinic)

Suzanne Neblett, (Rate Mortgage)

Sue Redick, owner (Redix of WB & Wilmington)

Devlin Horton, (Horton & Mendez PLLC)

Matty Roberts (Soundside Water Sports) pending

Brian Elliott, General Manager (Lumina Holiday Inn) pending