Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2015

Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Ms. Darcy,

As you know, America's beaches are in a state of dynamic change as a consequence of factors including intense natural weather events, tidal and current impacts, and variability in sea levels. The impact of beach loss on a coastal community can be profound, negatively affecting both the safety and socio-economic well-being of coastal populations. That is why we ask that the Army Corps of Engineers fund an independent study by the National Academy of Science's National Research Council to assess the effectiveness of structures used in concert with beach and dune nourishment designed to prevent beach erosion.

The erosion of beaches is a serious threat to coastal property and infrastructure, ecological aquatic habitats, tourism, and recreational activity. That is why an array of engineered structural methods have been deployed to slow or prevent coastal erosion, including the construction of seawalls, revetments, groins, detached breakwaters, and beach and dune nourishment. While these structural methods are regularly deployed along coastlines, we lack current independent peer-reviewed studies and data comparing the effectiveness and impacts of these methods, relative to changing environmental conditions (e.g., sea/lake levels, intensity/frequency of storms). A study on the effectiveness of these beach erosion structures when used in concert with beach and dune nourishment is needed to guide federal, state and local policymakers as they work to better protect beaches and the safety of coastal communities, and should be conducted by an internationally respected organization like the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.

Specifically, this study should address:

- The relative effectiveness of erosion remedies;
- The expected longevity of these remedies and performance in different geomorphic settings; and
- The expected tradeoffs associated with these approaches, considering environmental, economic and social effects.

The study should also deal with the impact that beach erosion structures have on the ability of sea turtles to access nesting areas and habitats.

We hope that you agree that such a study would prove to be a valuable tool that would demonstrate both the strengths of the current structural methods and areas in which the structural

methods could improve. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure a sustainable future for our nation's beaches and coastal communities.

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Murphy
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

David Jolly
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Vern Buchanan
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Lois Capps
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Ander Crenshaw
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Stacey Plaskett
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