

November 19, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support Coastal Protection Projects in Jobs Bill

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

On behalf of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association, I am writing to urge you to support any and all efforts to increase the level of funding for coastal protection projects in any future legislation aimed at creating jobs. During these uncertain economic times, our nation needs to invest in projects that not only create jobs quickly, but continue to employ hardworking Americans long after the project is complete. Beaches provide middle class and/or service oriented jobs. Consider all of the economic development in a thriving beach community – restaurants, hotels, shops, water sports, etc. – all jobs that are filled by middle-class Americans and only exist because of the beach. For every beach that is lost to erosion, thousands of jobs are also washed out to sea.

The United States is a world leader in the fields of coastal science and engineering. Nevertheless, our Federal government invests only about \$100 million each year in caring for our 84,000 miles of coastline compared to over \$3 billion annually by the member countries of the European Union on far less coastline. The Federal government, in partnership with state and local governments, has invested in less than one-fifth of the nation's critically eroded miles of coastline. As a result, we are losing sandy beach infrastructure that supports over 1 million jobs in addition to providing recreation, storm damage reduction and unique environmental habitat. The images from fierce hurricanes such as Katrina and Ike are still with us, as is their devastation. Yet there are storms hitting parts of coastal America this very day that are causing significant coastal damage that could have been prevented.

Projects such as initial beach construction, periodic beach renourishment, critical maintenance of coastal inlets as well as coastal mapping projects create jobs and protect our valuable and vulnerable coasts. We also urge Congress to permit non-Federal interests to pay their portion of project costs over a period of years at no interest. While there are hundreds of authorized projects awaiting construction, there are undoubtedly many instances where local and state non-Federal sponsors have not yet budgeted for their share and must await the next budget cycle to do so.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

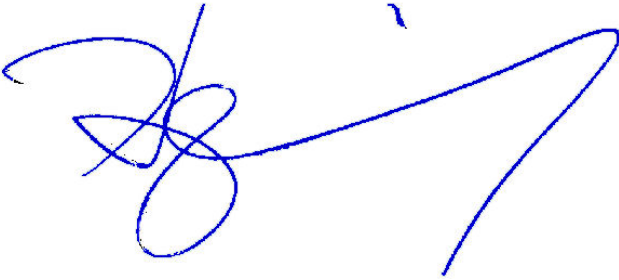
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We urge you and your colleagues to support efforts to include these valuable coastal protection projects in the jobs bill. Should you require any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long, sweeping tail that ends in a hook-like shape.

Mayor Harry Simmons
President