

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 14, 2022

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public
Works
United States Senate
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public
Works
United States Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Capito, Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

As you begin conference negotiations on the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA), we write in support of a provision of great importance to the State of Maine that was included in the Senate-passed WRDA. This provision will help fund a permanent solution to the severe, ongoing erosion at Camp Ellis Beach in Saco, Maine, pursuant to Section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968.

More than 150 years ago, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a jetty extending out from the Saco River, adjacent to Camp Ellis Beach, and expanded it in the 1950s. This jetty altered the pattern of currents and sand deposition and is the primary cause of the severe erosion of Camp Ellis, washing away 38 homes over the last 50 years. The 1998 shoreline was 400 feet inland from where the shoreline stood in 1908.

Funding to address erosion at Camp Ellis is only authorized at \$26.9 million, despite the fact that most recent cost estimates to remediate erosion are nearly \$42 million. We appreciate that the Senate included §§ 403(19) and 404(a) in the WRDA, which states:

SEC. 403. EXPEDITED COMPLETION OF PROJECTS. The Secretary shall expedite completion of the following projects:

* * *

(19) Project for mitigation of shore damage from navigation works, Camp Ellis Beach, Saco, Maine, pursuant to section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968 (33 U.S.C. 426i).

SEC. 404. SPECIAL RULES

(a) The following conditions apply to the project described in section 403(19):

(1) The project is authorized to be carried out under section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968 (33 U.S.C. 426i) at a Federal cost of \$45,000,000.

(2) The project may include Federal participation in periodic nourishment.

(3) For purposes of subsection (b) of section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968 (33 U.S.C. 426i), the Secretary shall determine that the navigation works to which the shore damages are attributable were constructed at full Federal expense.

These provisions would increase Camp Ellis' authorization to \$45 million, and direct the Corps to expedite completion of the project, ensuring a permanent solution for the funding challenges Camp Ellis has faced. As conference negotiations continue to reconcile differences between the House and Senate, we urge you to retain this vital language for Camp Ellis.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact us or our staffs, [REDACTED].

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress