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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA

CHAIRMAN, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL
HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRMAN, TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

SENIOR MEMBER, HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

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March 29, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
2006 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Henry Cuellar
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Joyce, and Ranking Member Cuellar,

I write to respectfully request Community Project Funding in fiscal year 2024 for Phase I of the Borough of Bay Head, Ocean County, NJ Flood Mitigation Project. This project will be overseen by the Borough of Bay Head, who are based in Borough Hall, located at 83 Bridge Avenue, Bay Head, New Jersey 08742, in my congressional district in New Jersey (NJ-04).

This project will help to greatly expand the capacity for Bay Head to control, manage and mitigate flooding, which will support the needs of people living and commercial businesses operating in low lying, flood-prone areas by preventing flooding and subsequently reducing the risk of property loss/damage and cost of flood insurance, and as such is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. It will provide relief for all residents living in Bay Head who use the streets and walkways which now flood four to five times per year during major storms. The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 203 of the Stafford Act (42 U.S.C. 5133), as amended by Section 1234, National Public Infrastructure Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation, of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018.

In the past, flooding has resulted in blocking or partially blocking all traffic on all but two east-west roads in Bay Head and all but five north south roads. This includes restricting, if not blocking, traffic to the Fire Station, Emergency First Aid Station, Police Office, emergency communications facility, US Post Office, sewer pumping

station, and the Town Hall during major flood events. Backup emergency north-south and east-west evacuation routes also pass through Bay Head, and these streets flood regularly during storm events preventing vehicular traffic which presents a major safety hazard for individuals living and visiting adjoining towns and the Barrier Island which Bay Head, Mantoloking, Lavallette, Seaside Heights, and Seaside are located on.

An additional major benefit of this project is that it will improve the ecological health of Twilight Lake by limiting/restricting the flow of pollutants which are now entering Twilight Lake causing environmental harm. A recently completed Twilight Lake Watershed Implementation Plan, March 2022 identifies both the tidal flow control gate and the living shoreline as necessary activities to improve the ecological health of Twilight Lake.

Consistent with the goals and objectives of the *NJ Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2014* and the *Ocean County, NJ Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2018*, Phase I of the proposed project includes the establishment of much-needed tidal flood control gate - a permanent structure that will remain open the majority of the time, but will be closed when a major flood is projected for Bay Head, thus preventing the storm tidal waters of Barnegat Bay from flowing through Scow Ditch and into Twilight Lake, which then overflows its shoreline flooding the streets, homes and businesses of Bay Head.

In addition, the project calls for raising the height of the shoreline berm around Twilight Lake, which will mitigate storm waters from entering Twilight Lake via the Twilight Lake Watershed and overflowing the shoreline.

Phase I of the project includes detailed analysis, engineering and design. Upon completion of Phase I, the Borough plans to move forward with Phase II, the construction phase. With a BCA of 9.49, the cost of Phase I is \$1,087,000.00, and the Borough is committed to providing the 25% cost share of \$271,750.

This project has a great deal of community support including from the Bay Head Environmental Commission, the non-profit Save Barnegat Bay, the borough mayor and council members, as well as other county and state elected officials.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of my request for assistance for the Borough of Bay Head Flood Mitigation Project.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project. I appreciate the Committee's due consideration of the proposal.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress