Legislation Details (With Text)

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Res. No. 366

Resolution calling upon the President of the United States to rescind proposed cuts in federal funding and support the Congressional call for restoration of funding for beach renourishment and shore protection measures.

By Council Members Nelson, Addabbo, Avella, Barron, Clarke, Fidler, Gentile, Palma, Quinn, Recchia, Sanders, Vallone and Gennaro

Whereas, According to a study released on April 24, 2004 by Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-Queens and Brooklyn), New York State loses $155,992,000 to fight beach erosion under the new Bush Administration budget for fiscal year 2005 (the Bush Budget); and

Whereas, The federal funding is desperately needed to protect beaches along New York City's Atlantic and Long Island Sound shorelines; and

Whereas, The Bush Budget cuts funding in two ways, first by ending long term beach renourishment programs and second, by cutting funding to implement shore protection measures; and

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Whereas, The beaches along New York City's coasts are under assault from tidal currents, wave impacts, hurricane and storm damage causing erosion that is washing the beachfronts out to sea; and

Whereas, The best defenses to this erosion are shoreline protection and restoration projects, usually spearheaded by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which include beach erosion studies, building groins and jetties to protect beaches from surf, storm surge and tidal currents, and long term renourishment efforts such as pumping tons of dredged sand back onto eroded beaches; and

Whereas, Historically, these defenses have been funded through federal-state cost sharing arrangements in which the federal government pays 65% and the state pays 35%; and

Whereas, The Bush Budget includes a policy change that will permanently end federal participation in long term renourishment programs, despite the fact that the Army Corps of Engineers has already entered into contracts with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to conduct beach renourishment at several city beaches or has been authorized by Congress to do so; and

Whereas, Beach renourishment can take decades to accomplish and cost tens of millions of dollars; and

Whereas, As examples, the federal government was going to provide $26 million through the year 2036 for Coney Island and approximately $10 million through 2027 for Rockaway; and

Whereas, At Coney Island, funding will be eliminated to construct berms, groins and fillers to provide storm damage protection for approximately 3 miles of beachfront as well as renourishment on a 10 year cycle for 50 years; and

Whereas, A research study and renourishment of 6.2 miles of beach extending from Beach 149th Street to Beach 19th Street in the Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay will be eliminated; and

Whereas, The Bush Budget will also eliminate funding for designing groins and placing of beachfill to provide shore protection at Orchard Beach, which will also staunch erosion on Eastern Long Island; and

Whereas, On the south shore of Staten Island, the Bush Budget will eliminate a study to identify the best means to prevent storm damage along 13 miles of coastline, from Fort Wadsworth to Tottenville; and

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Whereas, If the Bush Budget is approved as presented, none of these funding allocations will survive; and

Whereas, The Bush Budget cuts national funding for shore protection projects and studies by approximately half in fiscal year 2005, from $121, 226, 000 to $63, 728,000; and

Whereas, According to the report released by Rep. Weiner, the Bush Budget will also eliminate beach erosion studies and the construction of groins and jetties at nine City beaches; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the President of the United States to rescind proposed cuts in federal funding and support Congressional call for restoration of funding for beach renourishment and shore protection measures.

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