

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 28, 2018

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
The White House Office of Management
& Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

R.D. James
Assistant Secretary
Office of the Assistant Secretary of
the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310

Director Mulvaney and Assistant Secretary James,

Thank you for your continued attention to the urgent need to dredge Hampton-Seabrook Harbor, New Hampshire's largest commercial fishing port. We write to you to reiterate our concern that without emergency, off-cycle dredging, the harbor could become unusable in the very near future. We ask that you include this project in the Fiscal Year 2019 Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Work Plan and that the Work Plan be issued within the 60-day window pursuant to Public Law 115-244 to ensure Hampton-Seabrook Harbor remains functional.

Since it was last dredged in 2013, accelerated shoreline erosion as a result of significant shoaling has caused the harbor to fill with tailings from a nearby tidal bar. Many vessels that utilize the harbor now rely on the tides to successfully navigate the shallow water. According to the Corps' Condition Surveys and shoaling reports, shoaling has caused the harbor to become shallower than authorized depths.

As we have emphasized in the past, the urgent need to dredge Hampton-Seabrook Harbor is both an economic and a safety issue. The harbor currently supports 25 party-fishing boats, numerous lobster and commercial fishing boats, a federally funded pier with emergency response and patrol boats, and approximately 1,500 recreational vessels that are launched through the Hampton River Marina. According to the New Hampshire Division of Ports and Harbors, the marina is estimated to be the single largest contributor to the Hampton economy, and hundreds of jobs would be at risk if the harbor were to become nonfunctional. In addition, the harbor provides barge support for the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station and serves as a refuge to rescue vessels from neighboring ports in Massachusetts. In the absence of emergency dredge maintenance, vessels utilizing the harbor's resources may soon be unable to access or reach the open ocean.

We appreciate your commitment to addressing this issue through the inclusion of dredge planning funds that were included in the Corps Fiscal Year 2018 Work Plan. However, in order to preserve the usability of Hampton-Seabrook Harbor, we request that this project receive priority for maintenance funds that were made available in Public Law 115-244. Congress has emphasized the importance of completing this project as soon as possible through Section 1319 of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, which is currently pending before the full

Senate. As conditions continue to worsen, we ask that the Corps use all existing authorities to ensure Hampton-Seabrook Harbor remains usable.

With the upcoming construction window quickly approaching, it is also imperative that the Corps release the Fiscal Year 2019 Work Plan no later than November 20, 2018. This date corresponds with the 60-day deadline pursuant to Public Law 115-244. An on-time release of the Work Plan provides the opportunity for the dredging to occur in the current construction window and to avoid the New Hampshire Division of Ports and Harbors from having to close the harbor.

Hampton-Seabrook Harbor is an essential part of the New Hampshire seacoast economy and public safety infrastructure. As your offices develop and finalize the Fiscal Year 2019 Work Plan, we respectfully request that you give all possible consideration to Hampton-Seabrook Harbor. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

cc: New England District, United States Army Corps of Engineers
New Hampshire Division of Ports and Harbors
New Hampshire Dredge Management Task Force
Town of Hampton
Town of Seabrook
Yankee Fishermen's Cooperative
Eastman's Docks, LLC
Hampton River Marina