



An Association for All Bethany Beach, DE Property Owners

October 24, 2022

The Honorable John C. Carney Jr.
Tatnall Building
150 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd South
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney:

On behalf of BBLA's 1,800 property owner members, we are writing to you once again about the Back Bay Study opportunity.

Since our original letter of May 26, 2021, we have made numerous attempts to determine the status of efforts to collaborate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as the non-federal partner, on a Back Bay Study that would, in part, identify and evaluate solutions to the nuisance or sunny day flooding which has plagued our community for many years. Recommendations of the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study completed by the USACE in January 2015 included follow-on studies; however, Delaware has yet to sign the agreement to begin this important work. Based upon the observations and reports from community members, the press, and experts, the frequency and intensity of storms continues to accelerate, with an increase in damages to properties, infrastructure, businesses, community health, water quality, and environmental resources.

Throughout the last 18 months, we have spoken with many State and Federal decision makers about this matter, including Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long on May 11, 2022. Numerous conversations with DNREC have transpired, but to no avail, including talking with Secretary Garvin and his Chief of Staff Kim Siegel. We have continually asked about support for a Back Bay Study and especially the status of efforts to complete a feasibility cost sharing agreement (FCSA) with USACE, which is required to initiate work and release available Federal funds.

Our Federal outreach includes a meeting myself and two other BBLA Board members had with Senator Carper's Sussex County Regional Director Karen McGrath on September 6, 2022 for an in-depth discussion of our serious flooding issues and our concerns about how long it is taking for the cost sharing agreement to be executed and the vitally necessary work to begin. Additionally, we have had phone conferences and meetings with USACE Headquarters and Philadelphia District staff. All of these parties have expressed support for doing the Back Bay Study, have acknowledged the seriousness of our flooding issues, and promised that efforts are underway to finish the legal issues; however, to our knowledge, you have not yet signed an agreement with the USACE.

This last nor'easter storm, in early October 2022, Bethany Beach again experienced extensive flooding from ocean surge into the Back Bay, the Salt Pond, several canals, and the Bethany Loop Canal. As depicted in the enclosed photos, rainwater always makes our interior drainage problems worse. The Town of Bethany Beach has hired several contractors over the past few years to provide a preliminary analysis of our flooding problem and identify several potential solutions. It has been recommended that an inflatable bladder dam and flood gate system would significantly reduce or eliminate nuisance/sunny day flooding. For example, had the structural system been in place, all, or nearly all, of the Back Bay flooding would have been prevented. This expert recommendation gives us hope; however, at the same time property owners are distressed that known **preventive actions are not being taken**. Should USACE and DNREC execute an FCSA, the work accomplished by the Town could be used and expanded upon in a broader Federal study.

We look forward to your response to the issues we have raised and to gain an understanding of your position on signing the necessary agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers to get work started on the Back Bay Study. BBLA wants

to be helpful with this process because we know a coordinated effort must commence for the betterment of Bethany Beach, Sussex County, and the State of Delaware.

You or your staff can contact me at 571-356-6608 or reach out to BBLA's Director of Communications and Advocacy Mary Louise Embrey at mary.louise.embrey@gmail.com.

Sincerely yours,



Ron Dobes

President of BBLA Board of Directors

CC:

The Honorable Bethany Hall-Long

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper

The Honorable Christopher A. Coons

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester

The Honorable Bryan Townsend

The Honorable Gerald W. Hocker

The Honorable Peter C. Schwartzkopf

The Honorable Ronald E. Gray

Shawn M. Garvin, DNREC Secretary

Rosemary Hardiman, Mayor of Bethany Beach