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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

April 9, 2018

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
Department of Defense
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Lieutenant General Todd Semonite
Commanding General & Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G St., NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Brig. Gen. Diana M. Holland, Commander
Army Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic
60 Forsythe St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8801

Colonel Robert J. Clark, Commander
Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington
69 Darlington Ave.
Wilmington, NC 28403

Dear Asst. Sec. James, Lt. Gen. Semonite, Brig. Gen. Holland, and Col. Clark:

I am writing to respectfully request that you direct unallocated fiscal year 2018 funding to four maintenance dredging projects in Carteret County, North Carolina – Morehead City Harbor, Beaufort Harbor, the channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight, and Bogue Inlet.

Our offices have discussed these projects at length on many occasions. The Corps has been particularly helpful in doing what it can to keep Morehead City Harbor adequately dredged, and for that I am grateful. While federal resources have not been as frequently available for the other projects, and navigability has suffered as a result, I appreciate the Corps' willingness to work with state and local partners to help do what can be done.

I am thankful that Morehead City Harbor was included in the president's fiscal year 2018 budget request at a level of \$5.57 million. While that is helpful, it is likely to be insufficient in maintaining the channel at its authorized depth. Unfortunately, no funding was included in the president's budget for the other projects.

As you know, due to the ban on congressional earmarks, North Carolina's senators and I have no ability to add money to these specific projects through the legislative process. However, to address situations such as these, Congress added to the Corps' fiscal year 2018 appropriations bill several unallocated pots of money for different project categories. For example, \$341 million was added for "Deep-Draft Harbors and Channels." Morehead City Harbor should be eligible for funding from this pot. In addition, \$24.28 million was added for "Navigation Maintenance," and \$50 million was added for "Small, Remote, or Subsistence Navigation." Beaufort Harbor, the channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight, and Bogue Inlet, should all be eligible for funding from either of these pots.

Congress also directed the Corps to consider several criteria when deciding which projects to fund from these pots. All of the projects I've mentioned should rank competitively based on those criteria. They are certainly critical pieces of the economy in Carteret County, North Carolina. I urge you to give them all due consideration.

If I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing your response. As always, thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter B. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress