



North Carolina General Assembly
Senate

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October 31, 2025

The Honorable Josh Stein
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

Subject: Immediate State of Emergency Declaration Request — Ocracoke Shoreline Collapse

Dear Governor Stein,

I am writing to urgently request that you declare a State of Emergency for Highway 12, encompassing Hatteras to Ocracoke.

Over the past forty days, the Buxton community has suffered catastrophic shoreline collapse, resulting in the loss of sixteen homes and over two hundred feet of shoreline. NC Highway 12, south of Oregon Inlet — the only access route for residents, emergency services, and visitors — has been washed out by ocean waters, isolating families and placing lives at risk. Local emergency management and county resources are fully exhausted and cannot effectively respond without state support.

Additionally, this has negatively impacted school children with too many missed school days, causing them to miss valuable classroom time as well as after-school activities.

This has also placed a heavy burden on our local tourism industry, as well as our commercial and recreational fishing industries, and the local businesses that are supported by said industries.

Under N.C. Gen. Stat. §166A-19.20, a State of Emergency may be declared when conditions exist that threaten life, property, and critical infrastructure, and when local capability is exceeded. This situation clearly meets that standard.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that you:



1. Declare a State of Emergency for the affected Ocracoke area (Highway 12, encompassing Hatteras and Ocracoke) and activate all necessary state resources, including NC Emergency Management and, if required, the North Carolina National Guard, to assist with evacuations, debris removal, and stabilization of the shoreline and access routes.
2. Initiate coordination with federal partners, including FEMA Region IV, the National Park Service (Cape Hatteras National Seashore), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to secure emergency assistance under the Stafford Act (§§501 & 401) and Public Law 84-99.
3. Direct immediate technical assessment and protective measures under Section 14 of the 1946 Flood Control Act and Section 111 of the 1968 Flood Control Act, authorizing emergency shoreline and infrastructure protection where state and federal interests intersect.

This is not routine coastal erosion — it is an accelerating structural collapse endangering lives, public access, and federal lands. The severity of the damage, the repeated compromise of Highway 12, and the overwhelming strain on local resources warrant immediate state intervention.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter and for your continued leadership in protecting North Carolina's coastal communities. I stand ready to assist in whatever way necessary. I cannot stress enough the importance of rendering immediate assistance to the people who are victimized by this shoreline collapse.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Hanig", written in a cursive style.

Senator Bobby Hanig
North Carolina Senate – District 1

BH/es