



1212 New York Ave. Street N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
202.525.5717

Free markets. Real solutions.
www.rstreet.org

June 19, 2019

RE: Vote NO on Amendment No. 94

Dear Member,

My name is R.J. Lehmann and I am director of the Finance, Insurance and Trade Policy program at the R Street Institute, a free-market think tank in Washington, D.C. I write to express concern about Amendment No. 94 to H.R. 3055, offered by Reps. Jeff Van Drew (D-N.J.) and three cosponsors. This measure would defund future implementation of the U.S. Department of Interior Solicitor's 1994 opinion FWS.CW.0380, which found that dredging sand and other sediments from Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) units to renourish beaches outside the CBRS violates the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA).

Signed by President Ronald Reagan in October 1982, the CBRA sets aside 3.5 million acres of protected wetlands, beaches, coastal barrier islands and aquatic habitat along the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Great Lakes as, effectively, a "federal-subsidy-free" zone. In addition to minimizing damage to fish and wildlife and other coastal resources, recent research finds the program has saved taxpayers \$9.5 billion of federal funds that otherwise would have been expended from 1989 through 2016. Current projections are that maintenance of the program will save as much as \$108 billion in federal expenditures over the next 50 years.

In our opinion, the solicitor's opinion should be preserved. Expending federal funds for renourishment of developed beaches at the expense of protected CBRS units violates both the letter and spirit of the CBRA, which for nearly 40 years has stood as emblematic of the ideal conservative approach to conservation.

Sincerely,

R.J. Lehmann
Director of Finance, Insurance and Trade Policy
R Street Institute