CHARLES E. SCHUMER **Majority Leader**
NEW YORK

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

September 25, 2023

Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon
Chief of Engineers
Commanding General
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Lieutenant General Spellmon:

I write to you with an urgent matter regarding storm damage done to four U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects in Suffolk County, New York and request that USACE use their authority under Public Law (PL) 84-99 to provide emergency assistance to the county by reviewing the previous requests and the supplemental damage information submitted to USACE. The project areas that sustained damage are the:

1. Fire Island Inlet to Moriches Inlet (FIMI) Stabilization Project
2. Fire Island Inlet and Shores Westerly to Jones Inlet Beach Erosion Control and Navigation Project
3. West of Shinnecock Inlet (WOSI) Interim Storm Damage Reduction Project, and
4. Downtown Montauk Stabilization Project.

Since the beginning of this year, the county and state have at multiple points requested emergency assistance from USACE for several of these project areas.

Multiple winter storms in December 2022 and January 2023, including a December 16th Nor'easter and the historic December 21-26 extratropical cyclone – informally called Winter Storm Elliott, which crippled much of the northeastern United States – caused significant losses of sand along the Atlantic Ocean shoreline. On the East End of Long Island, the West of Shinnecock Inlet area has long been a site of erosion and the storm of late December 2022 caused severe additional erosion at WOSI, as well as to the beach area along the commercial and residential hub of Montauk. Major erosion also occurred along Fire Island's beaches, and emergency repair is particularly needed in the eastern Fire Island communities where the beachfront has diminished and USACE assistance is critical to protecting them from future storm events: communities including Seaview, Ocean Bay Park, Point O'Woods, Cherry Grove, Fire Island Pines, Water Island, and Davis Park. In Fire Island Pines, for instance, it's my understanding that water has overtaken and greatly eroded sections of the dune. Significant erosion also occurred in the area just west of Fire Island Inlet and the beaches to its west, and sand placement is needed in this area to nourish the westerly beachfronts that protect critical roadway infrastructure, local government assets. It is critical that USACE provide its expertise and ability, and work with state, county, and local officials to restore the project areas as soon as possible.

Local officials, Suffolk County, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation have done what they could to help these areas recover, but are seeking assistance from USACE to provide a robust, more-permanent restoration. It is my understanding that the county and

the state have submitted additional information to better inform USACE of the significant damage that has been done to these structures. Once again, I request that USACE headquarters review the additional information, and use its PL 84-99 authority to coordinate with state and local officials to address this pressing issue and provide aid with all due haste.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

CC: COL Alexander Young, Commander and District Engineer, New York District, USACE