

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2021

Mr. Jaime A. Pinkham
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20314

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Pinkham and Acting Director Young:

Thank you for your work in responding to Hurricane Ida. To help our communities rebuild from Ida's destruction, we urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to prioritize supplemental construction funding provided by the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 117-43) for the Byram River Basin project.

For decades, residents in Greenwich, Connecticut, and Port Chester, New York, have suffered repeated, prolonged, and devastating flooding as a result of the Byram River overflowing during major storms. Hurricane Ida is the latest storm to ravage neighborhoods adjacent to the Byram River – water engulfed homes, destroyed valuable possessions, and left Greenwich and Port Chester residents with millions of dollars in damages.


USACE has identified two 19th and 20th-century bridges – the West Putnam Avenue and Hillside Avenue bridges – as major contributors to flooding in the Basin. The bridges, otherwise known as the U.S. Route 1 bridges, restrict water flow and thereby induce flooding upstream in the Pemberwick section of Greenwich. In 2020, USACE completed the Byram River Basin Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study, which recommended removing and replacing the two bridges. Providing funding for their replacement will enable more water to pass through during storm events and decrease flooding risks to nearby neighborhoods.

USACE has a history of collaborating with our communities to build resilience to flood events. In 1942, USACE led a report on channel improvements to minimize flood damages in Greenwich's Pemberwick neighborhood and parts of Port Chester. In the following decades, the Corps constructed levees in the area to safeguard residents and conducted several other studies to consider additional mitigation measures. Replacing the U.S. Route 1 bridges at a higher elevation should be the Corps' next step to protect residents, property, and infrastructure.


The Byram River Basin project received authorization in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260). Funding this project without delay is essential as work on the bridges will bolster recovery efforts in two Ida-affected states. Without USACE support, communities near the Byram River will continue to suffer from flood damage, road closures, downed power lines, and unsafe conditions.

For these reasons, we urge you to provide Army Corps of Engineers construction funding appropriated through the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act to the Byram River Basin project.

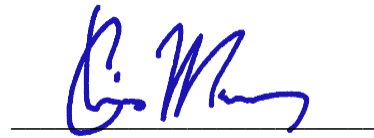
Sincerely,




JIM HIMES
Member of Congress



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
United States Senator



MONDAIRE JONES
Member of Congress

cc: Mr. Matthew Cosby
Chief of Staff
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

Mr. Joseph Seebode
Deputy District Engineer and Chief of Programs and Project Management
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

Ms. Rifat Salim
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District