

CAPE COD REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES

Barnstable County Complex
3195 Main Street - Route 6A
Barnstable, MA 02630
(508) 375-6761

email: aofd@barnstablecounty.org

<i>Ronald Bergstrom</i>	<i>(Chatham)</i>	<i>Susan Moran</i>	<i>(Falmouth)</i>
<i>Mary Chaffee</i>	<i>(Brewster)</i>	<i>Thomas O'Hara</i>	<i>(Mashpee)</i>
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<i>D. McCutcheon</i>	<i>(Truro)</i>	<i>Janice O'Connell, Clerk</i>	

November 8, 2018

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works
Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary James;

We write to urge you to include funding for the dredging of Wellfleet Harbor in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers FY19 work plan. At a meeting held on November 7th, 2018, the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates authorized the sending of this letter in support for funding for the dredging of Wellfleet Harbor.

Sediment build-up continues to be an issue affecting vessel movements in Wellfleet Harbor, Massachusetts, which is causing harm to commerce, recreation, and safety. Funding for the dredging of Wellfleet Harbor will have real benefits for public safety, public access, and other Outer Cape economy for years to come.

Wellfleet Harbor is the economic engine for the Town of Wellfleet and serves as a regional hub for tourism and commerce. The local shell fishing industry regularly produces over \$4 million dollars of income on a wholesale basis and around \$15 million dollars of retail, while supporting over 200 jobs in Wellfleet. Tourism spending provides even more of an economic boost. The town's population swells from less than 3,000 year-round residents to well over 20,000 on any given day during the ten to twelve-week summer season. In 2016, visitors to Wellfleet spent more than \$6 million dollars for lodging and over \$16 million at local restaurants. This spending is tied to activity in the Wellfleet Harbor. The town estimates that this dredging project will have net benefits of more than \$36 million dollars and a benefit cost ration of at least 8.2.

Sediment buildup at Wellfleet Harbor not only harms the economy, but it also has a significant impact on search and rescue operations. Wellfleet's Harbormaster is an integral part of the Cape and Islands Maritime response System (CCIMRS) with responsibility for search and rescue, to prevent loss of life at sea and to protect the maritime environment for Wellfleet Harbor and Cape Cod Bay. Regrettably, the Harbormaster is unable to offer protection to the thousands of mariners who use Wellfleet Harbor and surrounding waters because of extreme silting in the harbor. Not only does this put these people in jeopardy, it affects Wellfleet's federal designation as a harbor or refuge for other ships in distress.

Importantly, the Town of Wellfleet and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts plan to make a substantial investment in this federal project. While the total cost of the dredging project is \$20 million dollars, Wellfleet Harbor is only seeking \$5 million dollars. Moreover, the town has a plan for maintenance dredging over the long-term, eliminating this federal obligation.

Maintenance dredging of Wellfleet Harbor is long overdue. We hope you will dedicate sufficient funding to this project. If you have any questions regarding this funding request please contact Daniel Green in Senator Markey's office at (202) 224-2742.

Sincerely,

E. Suzanne McAuliffe, Speaker
Assembly of Delegates