

CSO Supports Introduction of Preventing Environmental Hazards Act

by CSOstaff | Jun 6, 2024 | News & Events



Yesterday Rep. Murphy (R-NC) along with Reps. Pingree (D-ME), Davis (D-NC), Kiggans (R-VA), Rouzer (R-NC), D'Esposito (R-NY) and Wittman (R-VA), introduced new legislation that seeks to address the increasing number of homes and other properties at risk of imminent collapse as a result of long-term coastal erosion. The Preventing Environmental Hazards Act would make important changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) by allowing property owners to file claims with NFIP if a structure is at imminent risk of collapse, as opposed to having to wait until a structure succumbs to erosion. Additionally, the legislation would no longer require a claim to be tied to a specific extreme event but takes into consideration erosion that has created a hazard over the course of weeks, months or years.

Structure collapses due to erosion not only impact property owners but have significant consequences for communities and the environment. Debris from collapsed structures becomes an additional hazard, polluting water with building materials, as well as, potentially hazardous waste and other contaminants, that can be difficult, if not impossible, to remove. Encouraging property owners to remove threatened structures prior to collapse, communities can be saved from long and costly clean ups, and

impacts to water quality, public health and safety.

"The Preventing Environmental Hazards Acts presents one possible solution to the insurance challenges facing property owners along shorelines where structures are now at risk of imminent destruction and collapse due to coastal erosion. The changes proposed by this act remove the current perverse incentives to avoid safely removing threatened structures prior to collapse, allowing property owners and communities to prevent environmental damage. This bill also recognizes the increasing and evolving risks that rising seas levels and increased extreme weather events take on coastal communities over the long term." said Coastal States Organization Executive Director, Derek Brockbank.

Coastal States Organization looks forward to working with Rep. Murphy and his colleagues to advance this proposal and continue to look for additional ways to address the challenges created by long-term of coastal erosion.