

PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Resolution #202

Introduced by Legislator: Barbara Scuccimarra on behalf of the Health, Social, Educational & Environmental Committee at a Regular Meeting held on September 4, 2018.

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APPROVAL/REQUESTS TO NYSDEC AND USACE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT, PUBLIC INFORMATION, AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS CONCERNING PROPOSED STORM SURGE BARRIERS

WHEREAS, in response to Superstorm Sandy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) initiated a coastal storm risk management study for the NY/NJ Harbor & Tributaries Focus Area, with a goal to develop and implement measures to reduce the risk of coastal storm damage to communities, critical infrastructure, and important societal resources; and

WHEREAS, the non-federal sponsors of the study include New York State, represented by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and New Jersey, represented by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection; and

WHEREAS, the USACE is currently considering six different alternatives, ranging from no action alternative, to constructing massive in-water barriers to shoreline and nature-based measures; and

WHEREAS, several of these plans – specifically, the ones including giant in-water barriers throughout New York Harbor (Alternatives. 2, 3A, 3B & 4) – could potentially threaten the very existence of the Hudson as a living river; and

WHEREAS, barrier projects throughout the harbor would reportedly cost up to \$60 billion to build, and \$100 million to \$2.5 billion to maintain every year, without even addressing sea level rise, thereby raising questions about fiscal responsibility and a failure to address sea-level rise; and

WHEREAS, the USACE reportedly plans to narrow down the six alternatives to one or two, which are to be announced in a draft report due fall 2018, without a thorough review of the environmental impacts of each plan, and without meaningful public input; and

WHEREAS, while a seventy-day public comment period is now open through September 20, the USACE has only held five public meetings, on three days, to inform the public and consider the full range, or “scope” of the issue; and

WHEREAS, such a limited number of meetings in such a short timeframe is inadequate given the enormous scale of the project, and it fails to provide a meaningful opportunity for public involvement, leaving out a large number of communities that may be drastically affected by the selected alternative; now therefore be it

Vote:

State Of New York

ss:

County of Putnam

I hereby certify that the above is a true and exact copy of a resolution passed by the Putnam County Legislature while in session on September 4, 2018.

Dated: September 6, 2018

Signed: _____

Diane Schonfeld
Clerk Of The Legislature Of Putnam County

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RESOLVED, that the Putnam County Legislature does hereby request that the scoping comment period be extended from the current seventy (70) days to at least ninety (90) days; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Putnam County Legislature does hereby request that more information on the proposed storm surge barriers be shared with the public, including those studies reviewed, or that will be reviewed, by USACE to evaluate alternatives; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Putnam County Legislature does hereby request additional public scoping meetings across New York City, Long Island, and the Hudson Valley; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be delivered to NYSDEC Commissioner Basil Seggos; USACE New York District Project Manager Bryce Wisemiller; and Nancy J. Brighton, Chief, Watershed Section, Environmental Analysis Branch, Planning Division, USACE.

BY ROLL CALL VOTE: EIGHT AYES. ONE NAY – LEGISLATOR NACERINO. MOTION CARRIES.



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Signed: *Diane Schonfeld*

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