The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

March 29, 2019

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

We write to respectfully request that you provide at least $10 million for Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act grants in the Fiscal Year 2020 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Our nation’s beaches add tens of billions of dollars to our economy and provide recreational activity for millions of Americans each year. The Jersey Shore alone generates $44 billion a year and supports over half a million direct and indirect jobs. The quality of our water is of the utmost importance in ensuring that record of economic and recreational success continues, and BEACH Act grants are the best tool at our disposal to ensure that our coasts are safe for swimming, surfing, fishing, and other activities.

BEACH Act grants help states and localities pay for testing to ensure our waters are safe for swimming. When tests show unsafe levels of bacteria, local and state agencies notify the public or close the beaches completely until bacteria levels fall to acceptable levels. Without this critical federal support, beachgoers would be in serious jeopardy, with many states and localities unable to fill the resulting funding gap to keep communities safe.

A modest continuation of funding would have an outsized impact on American beachgoers, the communities that welcome them, and the businesses that count on their support each year. To that end, we urge you to maintain this vital investment by dedicating at least $10 million for BEACH Act grants in the Fiscal Year 2020 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

PETER T. KING  
Member of Congress
EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress

DONALD NORCROSS
Member of Congress