



August 13, 2021

Commissioner Basil Seggos
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233

Re: US Army Corp - Rockaway Ramp/Boardwalk Proposal

Dear Commissioner Seggos,

We hope this letter finds you well. We are writing you today on behalf of our constituents of Belle Harbor, Neponsit, and others on the Rockaway Peninsula in their opposition to the United State Army Corp of Engineers' (USACE) west end design for a concrete path and ramps planned for Beach 126th Street to Beach 149th Street.

While the need for improved access to the beach for that area is agreed to, we believe it is imperative that the USACE and DEC acknowledge the concerns of the residents who live in the area when it comes to any large, permanent structure that will be built in their community.

In response to the proposed project, the Belle Harbor Property Owners Association conducted a survey where over 1,000 of its residents responded. More than 90% of those surveyed were against the concrete path on the beach and more than 60% preferred an alternative, such as a Mobi-mat, rather than the ramps leading to the beach.

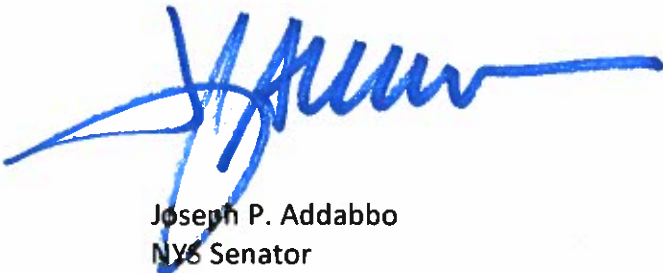
The survey indicated that many homeowners in the area feel that this proposed walkway and ramp would bring even more unwanted vehicles like electric scooters, mopeds, skateboards and more. We already have a well-documented safety issue with these vehicles on the boardwalk. The proposed concrete path would extend that problem and make every beach entrance in Belle Harbor and Neponsit a blind alley that could endanger children and the elderly as they walk onto the beach. They are also worried that this infrastructure will bring with it more danger during extreme storms, litter, a hideout haven and could burden the impacted communities with upkeep costs due to deterioration.

Additionally, the Belle Harbor Property Owners Association survey found most residents with disabilities, and those with family members with disabilities, are against the ADA-compliant ramps in the proposed project and would prefer a different solution. Indeed, they have spoken clearly about how the path and the ramps will not work for them as designed.

We share these concerns with the residents and disabled community regarding the proposed project and hope to be able to discuss the issues with DEC and USACE.

Thank you for hearing our concerns and we look forward to a project that will be beneficial for everyone involved for generations to come.

Sincerely,



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