



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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Press Release

**BISHOP, ISRAEL URGE BUDGET COMMITTEE TO RESTORE
FUNDING FOR IMPORTANT LI STUDY**

Washington, DC— Today, Congressmen Tim Bishop and Steve Israel sent a joint letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee urging them to restore funding for Army Corps of Engineers' shore protection projects. One project of great importance to Long Island is the Fire Island to Montauk Point Study. The President's fiscal year 2005 budget eliminates funding for the decades-long study, despite the fact that it is scheduled to produce a draft Environmental Impact Statement by the end of the year.

"Eliminating this funding is like dropping out of a marathon when you're in sight of the finish line," Bishop said. "We're going to fight hard to restore the funding, because this project is so important to the safety of our shoreline and the health of Long Island's economy."

"The federal government has been committed to protecting and restoring Fire Island beaches for the last thirty years," Israel said. "The administration's budget represents a dramatic retreat from that commitment. The Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point study is unique in bringing together diverse interests in one aim to protect and preserve this local treasure. It would be tragic for that cooperation to stop now due to shortsighted budgeting."

The Fire Island to Montauk Point Study is a comprehensive initiative that would provide for storm protection and beach erosion control along a stretch of the south shore of Long Island covering nearly 83 miles. The study has already cost upwards of \$20 million. The cost of continuing the project for another year is estimated at \$1.7 million. Bishop and Israel said they will fight for that funding in the House Appropriations Committee.

In the letter, Bishop and Israel took the President's budget to task for massive cuts to the Army Corps' shore protection budget. The President requested \$63.7 million for shore protection projects, which are critical to sensitive coastal areas like Long Island. This is a cut of nearly 50 percent from the \$121.2 million approved by Congress last year.

"The elimination of funding for the Fire Island to Montauk Point Study represents just one piece of a disturbing collection of cuts to projects that would yield tremendous economic benefits," Bishop and Israel wrote in the letter.

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