

Broward County



Legislation Text

File #: 22-031, Version: 1

Broward County Commission Regular Meeting

Director's Name: Leonard Vialpando

Department: Resilient Environment **Division:** Choose a Division.

Information

Requested Action

MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution affirming overall support of the efforts of the United States Army Corps of Engineers and recommendations of the draft South Atlantic Coastal Study, endorsing prioritization of a comprehensive Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project Study, with an expansion to address both funding and authority needed to conduct the study, necessary authority, and requesting that the ranking for the Broward Back Bay Study be adjusted to a near-term priority and listed second on the project list.

Why Action is Necessary

Formal Board approval is necessary for the adoption of a Resolution.

What Action Accomplishes

Enables adoption of the above Resolution.

Is this Action Goal Related

Yes

Previous Action Taken

None.

Summary Explanation/Background

THE RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT AND THE BROWARD CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ABOVE MOTION.

This item supports the Commission's Value: Encouraging investments in renewable energy, sustainable practices, and environmental protection, and the Commission Goal: Proactively lead in the planning, design and construction of projects supporting resilience and climate adaptation, including coordination with other entities to foster resilient design as part of local and regional projects, especially shore protection efforts.

This item affirms overall support for the efforts of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and their recommendations as part of the draft South Atlantic Coastal Study (SACS) released in October 2021, with specific endorsement of the priority recommendation for funding of a comprehensive Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project Study and a request to elevate the ranking and accelerate the timeline for the recommended Back Bay Study for Broward County.

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners and partners in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact have been prominent advocates for the reevaluation of the Central and Southern Flood Control Project to address flood risk and resilience under conditions of sea level rise. This study has been the subject of collective advocacy for urgent action as the system is already recognized to be failing, with the potential for catastrophic failure under conditions that could manifest as early as 2035. Despite recent progress, the USACE still lacks the funding and expanded authority necessary to conduct the comprehensive study recommended by the USACE and our local project sponsor, the South Florida Water Management District. At the current pace, it is not expected that project improvements would be identified, authorized, funded, and constructed in time to address widespread failures in flood protection anticipated to adversely impact Broward and Miami-Dade Counties with just six additional inches of sea level rise, relative to 2009. This resolution urges that the final SACS document expand this priority recommendation to address both the funding and authority required to perform this comprehensive study.

The Draft SACS document also recognizes the need to address flood risk beyond the immediate coastal area by extending evaluations inland to tidally connected areas as part of “Back Bay” studies. Nearly one-third of Broward County is coastal or tidally connected, making this recommendation particularly relevant to the interests of the Broward community. However, while the Draft SACS document identifies a Back Bay Study for Broward County as a priority recommendation, Broward’s Back Bay Study is ranked tenth overall, trailing recommendations for communities with less pressing flood risk as well as recommendations for communities that have already gained the advantage of prior USACE coastal storm risk studies. This tenth overall ranking was also assigned despite Broward’s Back Bay Study ranking second in terms of addressing economic risk owing to the extent of potential damage to Broward County infrastructure. In the meantime, without a Back Bay Study, Broward County is unable to effectively compete for funding that is tied to authorized project recommendations that can only be derived from such studies. Based on these considerations, and the associated significant economic arguments, this resolution seeks an elevated ranking for the Broward Back Bay Study as a near-term priority.

This resolution is advanced for consideration by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as a formal recommendation and action by the Broward Climate Change Task Force on December 17, 2021.

This resolution provides for transmittal to the Commander of the USACE South Atlantic District, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, and the South Florida Congressional Delegation.

Source of Additional Information

Dr. Jennifer Jurado, Chief Resilience Officer and Deputy Director, Resilient Environment Department, (954) 519-1464

Marty Cassini, Manager, Intergovernmental Affairs/Boards Section, (954) 357-7575

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of this resolution.