

April 8, 2014

The Honorable John Fleming  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans  
and Insular Affairs  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans  
and Insular Affairs  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Testimony by Congressman Mike McIntyre**  
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

*--As Prepared for Delivery--*

Thank you Chairman Flemming and Ranking Member Sablan (*pronounced "Sah-blahn"*) for allowing me to join this hearing today to discuss the important topic of coastal protection and our efforts to correct the boundaries of the Coastal Barrier Resources System in Southeastern North Carolina.

Our nation's coastline is an invaluable resource that must be diligently protected from natural and man-made forces that might diminish its beauty and value.

Our beaches are of incredible economic importance to the local, state, regional, and national economy contributing nearly \$35 billion in annual federal revenues.

In my district, located on the beautiful coast of North Carolina, tourism is the economic lifeblood of our region – directly supporting over 10,000 jobs and generating over \$1 billion annually to our local communities.

That's why I am 100% committed to protecting, preserving, and enriching our North Carolina coast so that visitors and residents alike are able to enjoy those wonderful treasures for generations to come!

The Coastal Barrier Resources Act of 1982, otherwise known as "CBRA" was designed to accomplish that very same goal by identifying areas of undeveloped land on coastal barriers that were prone to damage by natural disasters and to prevent such land from harmful development.

Congress enacted CBRA to minimize the loss of human life, wasteful Federal expenditures, and the damage to natural resources associated with coastal barriers.

In order to disincentive development within these “CBRA Zones”, financial expenditures and assistance are prohibited within the designated areas, meaning all homeowners within the zones are ineligible the National Flood Insurance Program.

Unfortunately, when mapping portions of the CBRA zones in my district, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made several errors designating the boundary lines of the zone, mistakenly including areas that were already under development at the time the mapping was conducted.

Specifically, the maps outlining units “L07, L08, and L09” of the Coastal Barrier Resources System in North Carolina are in need of updating in order to remove 127 acres from the CBRS zone which were incorrectly included during the original mapping process.

The legislation that I have introduced, H.R. 3572, will revise and correct the boundaries of the CBRA zone and provide relief to our homeowners whose properties should be eligible for federal assistance.

In addition, our bill recommends adding 891 acres to the Coastal Barrier Resources System in order to maintain and protect areas that fortify our beaches and provide essential habitat for our coastal ecosystem.

These corrections to the map will result in the removal of 32 structures from the CBRA zone, including many houses that were mistakenly drawn in to the zone.

I have met with many of these homeowners and heard their stories of the severe and drastic results of the CBRA mapping mistakes.

To name one example: Mr. Hoke Pollock owns a house that was incorrectly drawn in to one of the CBRS units, and has been rendered helpless during hurricane season with no way of protecting his home with federal flood insurance.

He and others like him have seen home values plummet as buyers realize they cannot obtain financing from mortgage companies without flood insurance.

All this because of simple mapping errors! It’s time to fix these mistakes and correct the CBRA zones using the more accurate digital mapping technology we now have at our disposal.

In crafting this legislation, we have worked in close conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to recommend new maps, dated March 12, 2014, which will better reflect the original intent of the boundaries of units L06, L07, and L09, and correct the mapping errors.

We are encouraged by the fact that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service understands the pressing need to revise the original maps and I am appreciative of their help and collaboration throughout this process.

The revisions to the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System that we have proposed in H.R. 3572 are as common-sense as they are overdue!

I appreciate the opportunity to speak about this legislation today and I look forward to working with the Committee on Natural Resources and the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs to advance this legislation so we can implement corrected maps that improve our environment, our coast, and our economy.

Thank you for your time.