

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 13, 2020

The Honorable Rickey “R.D.” James  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney  
Director  
The Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Assistant Secretary James and Director Mulvaney:

We write to express our deep disappointment with your recent budgetary decisions regarding the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. As you know, the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) New England District recently concluded that the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges are structurally deficient and in desperate need of replacement.<sup>1</sup> We have applauded that recommendation because we believe that fully replacing these structures is not only the best solution for the Cape & Islands, but the *only* viable long-term solution for the nearly 250,000 residents and businesses of the region who rely on this vital connection to the rest of Massachusetts. Yet for some inexplicable reason, neither the USACE Work Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 nor the President’s FY 2021 budget request include any funds for the Canal Bridge project. We are greatly disturbed by this omission of funds for the Cape Cod Canal Bridges and demand answers as to how the USACE plans to finance the replacement of such vital bridges that have long outlived their usefulness.

As we noted to Assistant Secretary James in a prior letter, an allocation of initial funds in FY 2020 would have represented a significant down payment and a responsible long-term investment.<sup>2</sup> The USACE’s national headquarters is expected to make a final decision on the New England District’s replacement recommendation in the spring of 2020,<sup>3</sup> and having these initial funds available would have ensured the project could begin immediately after that plan is decided. Although the USACE’s Work Plan did allocate \$11.9 million to ongoing operations and

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<sup>1</sup> Cape Cod Times, “Army Corps: Replace the Cape Cod Canal Bridges,” Ethan Genter, October 4, 2019, <https://www.capecodtimes.com/news/20191003/army-corps-replace-cape-cod-canal-bridges>.

<sup>2</sup> Press Release, Office of U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey, Senators Markey and Warren, and Rep. Keating Urge Army Corps of Engineers to Include Funding for Cape Cod Bridges Replacement in 2020 Work Plan (Oct. 18, 2019), [www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senators-markey-and-warren-and-rep-keating-urge-army-corps-of-engineers-to-include-funding-for-cape-cod-bridges-replacement-in-2020-work-plan](http://www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senators-markey-and-warren-and-rep-keating-urge-army-corps-of-engineers-to-include-funding-for-cape-cod-bridges-replacement-in-2020-work-plan).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, *Cape Cod Canal Bridges Major Rehabilitation Evaluation Study: Frequently Asked Questions*, <https://capecodcanalbridgesstudy.com/faqs>.

maintenance of the Cape Cod Canal itself, the USACE failed to allocate any additional funding for commencing work in the next year on replacing the Canal Bridges.<sup>4</sup> This decision could prevent construction from proceeding on schedule and lead to increased costs brought on by project delays.

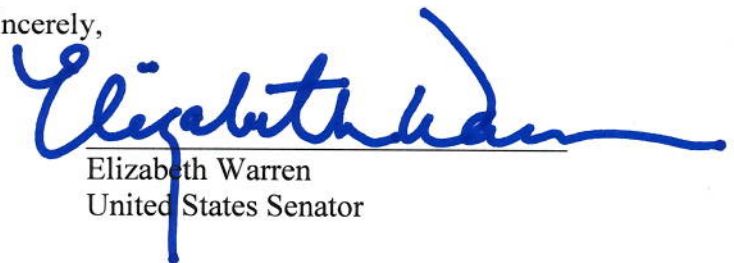
The President's budget also requested \$12.4 million for ongoing operations and maintenance at the Cape Cod Canal in FY 2021, but similarly failed to include any proposal for additional funding to replace the Canal Bridges during that year.<sup>5</sup> We are concerned that this decision reflects a failure to understand the urgency of the situation for the Cape & Islands. The residents of this region cannot wait multiple years for this project to begin. The Bourne and Sagamore are not only vital links to the beating heart of the Massachusetts tourism economy, but critical evacuation routes in the event of an emergency. Two new structures are needed without delay in order to protect both the local economy and public safety.

We are committed to a full replacement of the Canal Bridges and will fight in Congress to secure the funding this region needs. We urge you to work with us moving forward and reverse your misguided budgetary decisions regarding the Bourne and Sagamore.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact our offices at your convenience.

Sincerely,

  
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

  
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

  
William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *FY 2020 Work Plan – Operation and Maintenance* (Feb. 2020), [www.usace.army.mil/Portals/2/docs/civilworks/budget/FY%202020%20OM%20Statement%20of%20Managers%20FINAL.PDF](http://www.usace.army.mil/Portals/2/docs/civilworks/budget/FY%202020%20OM%20Statement%20of%20Managers%20FINAL.PDF).

<sup>5</sup> Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), *Fiscal Year 2021: Civil Works Budget of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (Feb. 2020), <https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/utills/getfile/collection/p16021coll6/id/2124>.