

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 7, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David E. Price
Chairman
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Chairman Price and Ranking Members Granger and Diaz-Balart:

We write in strong support of extending the expenditure of funds deadline for programs created by P.L.113-2 in any future appropriations legislation. This bipartisan disaster recovery legislation provided much needed support to large-scale construction projects that would make cities and states across our country more resilient against natural disasters. Many of the projects funded by P.L.113-2 had been on track to be completed by the September 30, 2022 deadline to expend funds. However, the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis has put the completion of these projects at risk. We urge you to extend the deadline in any future appropriations legislation for expending funds in P.L.113-2 to ensure states and localities have the time needed to complete these projects.

The Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and National Disaster Resilience (CDBG-NDR) programs established by P.L.113-2 provided billions of dollars to improve disaster preparedness in communities across our nation. These programs established the Rebuild by Design and National Disaster Resiliency Competition which encouraged state and local governments to develop new methods for managing the accelerating consequences of a changing world's climates. These complicated projects can help build resilient infrastructure in existing densely populated areas that improve the local economy, create jobs, and help ensure taxpayers do not continue to foot the bill for repetitive, onerous losses caused by natural disasters like hurricanes.

Several of these projects progressed past the environmental impact assessment and broke ground. Others were expected to begin construction soon, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these projects were working diligently to meet the requirements to utilize federal funds in full by the 2022 deadline. However, the ongoing pandemic has caused unexpected delays. Labor contracts and supply chains have further complicated the long lead times needed to implement these large-scale infrastructure projects. These delays have put the full federal funding for these projects at risk because they are unlikely to be able to meet the current deadlines. Without an extension now that ensures the availability of these federal funds after September 30, 2022, states

and localities are unable to move forward with confidence that funding will be available to ultimately complete these vital disaster resilience projects. If states and localities forfeit these federal funds, there are no local financing options for the projects to be completed. This will result in a needless waste of already appropriated taxpayer funds and cause severe long-term distress to myriad communities.

While the funding expenditure deadline is about two years away, an extension of the September 30, 2022 deadline is needed now so communities can continue long-term planning on their projects that will protect our neighborhoods from natural disasters. As this pandemic continues to impact every community in America, significant adjustments are needed to previously scheduled deadlines. We urge you to help our states, cities, and towns by extending the expenditure of funds deadline for programs created by P.L.113-2. Thank you very much for your time and attention to our request.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress

Additional letter signers include:

Representative Cindy Axne
Representative Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Representative Joe Courtney
Representative Rosa L. DeLauro
Representative Josh Gottheimer
Representative Jahana Hayes
Representative Jim Himes
Representative Andy Kim
Representative John B. Larson
Representative Tom Malinowski
Representative Jerrold Nadler
Representative Donald Norcross
Representative Frank Pallone, Jr.
Representative Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Representative Cedric L. Richmond
Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Representative Mikie Sherrill
Representative Albio Sires
Representative Christopher H. Smith