



PUBLIC POLICY

NON-DOMESTIC SAND SOURCES

ACTION NEEDED:

Urge Congress to **SUPPORT** enabling the Secretary of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow counties to acquire sand by purchase, exchange or otherwise from non-domestic sources for the purpose of beach renourishment.

BACKGROUND:

In the 115th Congress, the Sand Acquisition, Nourishment, and Development 39 (SAND) Act of 2017 (H.R. 833/S.279) was introduced in both the U.S. House of Representatives 40 and the U.S. Senate. The SAND Act proposed to repeal current law that does not allow communities to buy sand from foreign countries to replenish shorelines due to beach erosion. Sen. Rubio has re-introduced this bill in the 116th Congress (S.2460); at this time, there is not a companion in the House. It has been referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. In Miami-Dade and Broward Counties, the limited supply of suitable offshore sands has been depleted, increasing the need for cost-effective options to replenish Florida's beaches. Current beach projects are using sand trucked from upland mines over 100 miles away while the ban on federally funded non-domestic (foreign) sand prevents the possible use of Bahamian sand from 60 miles away. Florida's economically critical beaches increasingly need unrestricted sand sources kept affordable by free-market competition. Although a study by the Army Corps of Engineers found that sand is available offshore of St. Lucie & Martin Counties, those sands are planned for use by other counties, may not be a good match for southern beaches, create public and political concerns over using "their" sand, and cannot be purchased with state funds for use in South Florida.

ANALYSIS:

This policy change is necessary for the following reasons:

- Expanding the opportunities for competing vendors to cost-effectively maintain Florida's beaches.
- Providing a sand source similar to South Florida sand in content and color.
- Using barged non-domestic sources is less disruptive than hundreds of trucks per day at truck-hauled projects.
- Eliminating the USACE's need to take offshore sand from one county for use in another.
- Reducing competition between counties for the same upland and offshore sand sources.
- Impacts of beach re-nourishment including: coastal storm risk management; beach erosion control; hurricane storm protection; protecting infrastructure; preserving the environment for wildlife; supporting the economy; promoting coastal resiliency

