



**TO:** TOPSAIL ISLAND SHORELINE PROTECTION COMMISSION  
**FROM:** MIKE MCINTYRE  
**SUBJECT:** APRIL AND MAY JOINT REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE  
**DATE:** MAY 14, 2025

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This report and legislative update provides information on the following topics:

- Washington News
  - House Republicans Announce Budget Reconciliation Plans
  - EPA Considering Compliance Relief from Biden-Era SDWA Rules
  - UPDATE: TFG Special Reports as of May 1, 2025
- Advocacy Update

## Washington News

### House Republicans Announce Budget Reconciliation Plans

House Republicans are advancing a sweeping \$4.5 trillion budget reconciliation package, aiming to pass it through Congress by Memorial Day using the budget reconciliation process that bypasses the Senate filibuster. The bill will address taxes, energy, defense, and immigration and includes controversial proposals like a new fee on electric and hybrid vehicles, cuts to federal employee pensions, and reimbursements for Presidential home security costs. It also seeks to roll back clean energy tax credits from the Inflation Reduction Act, repeal environmental regulations, expand fossil fuel production, and sell off some federal land.

Markups for the package are scheduled over the next few weeks across various committees. Early sessions will involve Transportation and Infrastructure, Homeland Security, Armed Services, Financial Services, Judiciary, and Oversight and Governmental Affairs. More contentious markups, including those from the Natural Resources and Energy and Commerce Committees, began on May 6th and 7th, and Ways and Means—overseeing major tax credit changes—began mark up the week of May 12.

Democrats are preparing a strong pushback, especially against climate and Medicaid-related cuts, and aim to prolong the debates. The Energy and Commerce markup could become particularly heated, with Republicans proposing to scale back methane emission fees and EPA regulations. Meanwhile, the Ways and Means Committee faces pressure to find a middle ground on clean energy tax credits. Republican

leaders acknowledge the need to balance internal party divisions to successfully pass the package. Senate action would follow House passage, with possible further revisions to the legislation.

### **EPA Considering Compliance Relief from Biden-Era SDWA Rules**

President Donald Trump's nominee to lead the EPA's water division, Jessica Kramer, recently discussed potential relief options for utilities struggling with compliance under the Biden administration's Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulations with the Council for Infrastructure Financing Authorities' (CIFA) 2025 Summit on Water Infrastructure.

Kramer emphasized that the agency is actively exploring ways to provide support for utilities facing challenges related to PFAS regulation and lead service line replacement, specifically under the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI). While Kramer acknowledged the importance of maintaining public health protections, she suggested that the agency might allow more time or provide other forms of relief to help utilities comply.

Her comments reflect ongoing concerns among utilities about meeting the SDWA's deadlines, with some claiming the timelines are unrealistic, particularly the 2037 deadline for lead service line replacement. Kramer's remarks align with similar statements from EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin, who has acknowledged the financial challenges some communities face in complying with the new rules.

Currently, litigation is underway regarding both the LCRI and the PFAS rules, with the EPA seeking delays in proceedings. The agency's potential changes to these rules could be impacted by the SDWA's "anti-backsliding" provisions, which prevent weakening of drinking water standards once they are set. Despite the legal challenges, the EPA is reviewing its options, with discussions ongoing about how to balance compliance relief with health protections.

Also, top officials at the EPA's water office have announced plans to begin reviewing states' Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Intended Use Plans (IUPs) starting in FY 2026 to ensure compliance with President Donald Trump's executive orders (EOs). These reviews will focus on aligning state plans with restrictions imposed by the EOs, particularly barring funding for environmental justice (EJ), climate change, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. However, officials assured states they would maintain "maximum flexibility" in how funds are used and work to minimize restrictions.

### **TFG Special Reports Updated as of May 1, 2025**

TFG has been closely monitoring and providing updates on actions taken by the Trump administration. TFG has recently updated its Special Report on "[Executive Actions from the Second Trump Administration](#)". Updates covered in the May 1 report include 20 executive orders (EOs) and memoranda signed between March 31 and April 28 (in addition to updates on federal litigation surrounding various executive actions taken since January 20th).

Additionally, TFG has released an updated Special Report on the “[Impact of Executive Action on Federal Funding](#)” which examines how the Trump Administration’s executive orders may affect federal funding. We are actively monitoring these rapid federal policy shifts and will continue to provide updates on new developments.

## Advocacy Update

### 2025 Washington, D.C. Advocacy Trip

We had the pleasure of conducting a series of successful meetings on Capitol Hill and at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters on April 28 through 30 for the Commission’s annual advocacy visit. The Commission traveled to Washington to attend the meetings with the Ward and Smith and TFG team and met with the following:

- Representative David Rouzer
- Representative Greg Murphy, M.D.
- The Office of Senator Ted Budd
- The Office of Senator Thom Tillis
- House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment
- House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries
- Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters

We discussed the following priorities:

- Secure Passage of H.R. 1885 to Amend the Boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit L06 in North Topsail Beach
- Support Approval of the Surf City Coastal Storm Risk Management Project General Reevaluation Report So the Project Can Proceed to Construction
- Obtain Legislative or Administrative Change Allowing the Borrowing of Sand from Within the Coastal Barrier Resources System for Use Outside the System
- Improve Island-Wide Coordination in Disaster Recovery and Protect FEMA
- Maintain Funding for New River Inlet and New Topsail Inlet and Connecting Channels Navigation Dredging

We have already worked with the Commission to conduct necessary follow-up with the offices with whom we met. Please see the attached “FY 2025 Federal Priorities” document for more information on the specific talking points used for the meetings.

## North Topsail Beach CBRA Mapping Issue

As we mentioned in the March report, Representative Murphy introduced [H.R. 1885](#), the *Town of North Topsail Beach Coastal Barrier Resources System Map Amendment Act of 2025*. The updated legislative language, which we developed over the past five months, is more specific about which parcels in unit L06 would be removed from the CBRS and addresses feedback from committee staff and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Following the Commission's meetings with Representative Murphy and the House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries, Mayor Pro Tem Tom Leonard of North Topsail Beach was invited back to Washington, D.C. to testify in support of the bill before the Committee. The hearing will take place on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

## FEMA Issues

On April 4, 2025, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a [press release](#) announcing it is ending the [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#) program and canceling BRIC applications from Fiscal Years 2020-2023. The BRIC program helps communities proactively prepare for natural disasters by funding projects that reduce hazard risks. The decision to cancel the program comes amid a comprehensive reassessment of FEMA's funding strategies and goals, following a recent [Executive Order](#) from President Trump that aims to place greater responsibility for disaster readiness on state and local authorities. In the wake of the cancellation, FEMA is working to develop a new approach to mitigation that is more responsive to state and local requirements, achieves clear mitigation goals, and results in more-timely obligation of funding.

TFG provided the brief included in this packet to the Commission on May 12<sup>th</sup>. This [TFG Brief](#) offers context and guidance to local governments and public agencies in response to the recent executive action. It explains the evolution of the BRIC program and highlights how shifting federal priorities are reshaping its direction. The goal of the Brief is to equip communities who are managing an existing BRIC project, awaiting funding, or exploring alternatives, with the information and strategies needed to navigate this rapidly shifting policy environment. We continue to actively monitor any changes made to FEMA.