



State of Rhode Island  
**Coastal Resources Management Council**  
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March 13, 2025

Representative Marvin L. Abney  
Chairman, Rhode Island House Finance Committee  
12 Summer St.  
Newport, RI 02840

RE: Letter of Support for bill H 6016 to provide funding for critical coastal hazard decision support tools hosted at URI

Dear Chairman Abney:

On behalf of the RI Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), I am writing to support bill 2025-H 6016 to ensure funding is continued for critical coastal hazard decision support tools hosted at URI.

Three research-based decision support tools require continued funding to meet the needs of Rhode Islanders. These tools—1) the RI Coastal Hazards Analysis, Modeling, and Prediction system (RI-CHAMP), 2) STORMTOOLS, and 3) MyCoast Rhode Island—were developed in 2014 to respond to the needs expressed by Rhode Island's emergency managers, partner communities, state regulatory agencies, and military installations. These URI-led products play a key role in building capacity to address risks from coastal storms, rising sea levels, and increasing storm intensity. They contribute to the continuous improvement of Rhode Island's emergency management system, state and local resilience planning, coastal policy and permitting processes, and boosting community awareness and buy-in. These tools may soon go offline due to a funding shortfall.

CRMC is very concerned about the prospect of losing access to these critical tools. As an agency, we are proud to have supported the development and implementation of STORMTOOLS, RI-CHAMP, and MyCoast for over a decade. Our office staff regularly use the tools in standard permitting review, policy planning, and, critically, community outreach and education. These modelling tools are also essential in the public outreach work we conduct and are used by Rhode Islanders every day to inform themselves of future risks. In an ever-changing climate, it is important now more than ever to ensure continuous and accurate information is provided to our community.

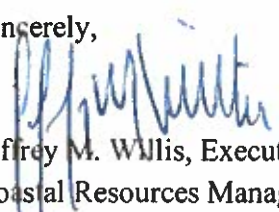
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Several efforts have been made in the past to, among agencies, plan potential funding support to ensure the viability of the tools, but the work has been limited due to inflation and increased costs associated with providing our programs. We have made good-faith efforts to support the tools by providing in-kind staff support over the years, in addition to providing maintenance funding from our federal award, but it is challenging for any one agency to take on the costs. We would deeply appreciate a new infusion of state resources to ensure the tools remain as useful for many state agencies and other users as they have been for a decade.

CRMC urges you to provide these essential funds so that we can continue to apply the tools and work with our URI colleagues to expand their capacity overtime and build resiliency of Rhode Island communities to storms and other coastal hazards.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital funding.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Willis, Executive Director  
Coastal Resources Management Council

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cc: Chantale Sarrasin, House Fiscal Staff  
Laura Miguel, CRMC Deputy Director  
Emily Hall, CRMC Geologist