

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 19, 2020

Admiral Karl L. Schultz  
Commandant, United State Coast Guard  
Coast Guard Headquarters  
2703 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20020

Dear Admiral Schultz,

Following the capsizing of the M/V Golden Ray on September 8th of last year, the Coast Guard responded in heroic fashion, evacuating personnel on board and securing the vessel. The Coast Guard was then tasked, through the Unified Command, of coordinating the initial response and cleanup, which it did, successfully, preventing an environmental disaster. However, since it was decided that the shipwreck could not be salvaged and would ultimately require demolition and removal, this project has been plagued by persistent setbacks. At the beginning of this year, when Unified Command approved a change in salvaging contractors and demolition plans, our offices were assured that this was necessary to expedite the removal of the shipwreck before the peak of hurricane season. Given the date of this letter, it is clear that this objective was not met.

Throughout this year, the Coast Guard and the Unified Command have referenced the complications of standing up and carrying out different aspects of its removal plan. While we appreciate the complexity of this operation, as well as issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, whether it's the containment system, the difficulty in getting equipment onsite, or the anchoring system, we are increasingly discouraged by this project's delays. Recently, on October 7th, we were notified that Unified Command would be reviewing multiple options for a revised anchoring system, delaying cutting and lifting by several more weeks. These delays are frustrating; however, what's even more baffling is that this holdup is occurring after a two-month pause in demolition activity to allow peak hurricane season to pass and to regroup after an earlier COVID-19 outbreak. Overall, the fact that this new challenge is engineering-based has put in doubt whether a definitive plan is, in fact, being executed.

As the representatives charged with advocating for the Georgians and communities impacted by this wreck, we're increasingly concerned with these delays. After continued setbacks, it's difficult to ignore the idea that there should have been additional due diligence done on the project, such as the details of the anchoring system. Each day the project is delayed is one more day that the public and the local communities must worry about something going wrong. As such, we must request weekly updates from the Unified Command and detailed explanations for any delays in the project. It is critically important to our community that this project is done safely and efficiently. If these delays continue, then we must consider additional Congressional action to ensure accountability for our constituents.

Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter  
Member of Congress



David Perdue  
United States Senator