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# Senate Approves Testa Bill to Invest in Coastal Communities

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The New Jersey Senate approved legislation sponsored by Senator Michael Testa that would establish a Boardwalk Preservation Fund to construct, repair, and maintain boardwalks and structures throughout the state's coastal communities.



Sen. Michael Testa's bill that would establish a Boardwalk Preservation Fund to construct, repair, and maintain boardwalks and structures throughout the state's coastal communities was passed by the New Jersey Senate. (©iStock)

"Boardwalks are an economic driver for shore town communities and generate millions of dollars in revenue for the state. The Senate's approval of my bi-partisan legislation supports coastal counties and municipalities by making a historic investment to improve the infrastructure of these iconic tourist attractions," said Testa (R-01). "Millions of tourists flock to the Jersey Shore each year to enjoy our boardwalks and our beautiful beaches. This bill would provide grants to help cities and counties preserve and maintain these vital features of the Jersey Shore for generations to come."

Boardwalks along the New Jersey coast are a major driver of tourism and create significant revenue opportunities for the state.

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Senator Testa's bill, [S-3989](#), would establish the Boardwalk Preservation Fund within the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to award grants to municipalities and counties for the purpose of supporting boardwalk, ancillary, and appurtenant structure projects along the Shore. The bill utilizes American Rescue Plan COVID State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds and appropriates \$100 million to the DCA to administer the fund.

Municipalities, counties, or a combination of both who are awarded grants through the DCA Boardwalk Preservation Fund would be required to make a contribution or expenditure no less than five percent of the project's cost. Under the bill, grant applicants who make a contribution or expenditure greater than five percent would be given preference by the DCA.

A grant applicant that has one of the highest fifty distress scores on the 2020 Municipal Revitalization Index would not be required to make a contribution or expenditure under the bill.

"Awarding grants through the Boardwalk Preservation Fund is necessary to support the long-term economic success of the New Jersey Shore and preserve the historical significance of these structures," Testa added. "This bill would bolster vital coastal infrastructure and provide a significant return on investment for the state by improving our tourist appeal and opening additional opportunities to generate revenue."