

# APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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JUNE 9, 2021

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## MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 APPROPRIATIONS



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## **MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 APPROPRIATIONS**

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

### **MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY**

The CHAIR. The meeting has begun. I want to say thank you to all of you for joining us this morning. Welcome to the full Appropriations Committee Member Day hearing.

Before we get started I want to note that due to the number of Members who are participating—which is about 35, and, very exciting, it demonstrates the centrality of the appropriations process—but given the numbers that we have, we will not be asking questions so that we can be able to hear everyone and be able to listen to testimony and take into consideration the requests.

I cannot stress enough the importance of input from our colleagues—on and off the committee—in shaping the appropriations bill.

The Constitution vests the Congress with the power of the purse, and the Appropriations Committee exercises that power through our 12 annual appropriations bills. But every Member, no matter their party or their seniority, has a role in ensuring government funding meets the needs of their districts.

In addition to the funding requests we receive every year, this year the Appropriations Committee is accepting Community Project Funding requests, allowing Members to submit proposals to fund a small universe of worthy projects with strong demonstration of community support.

I am pleased to report that 331 Members have already submitted over 3,000 Community Project Funding requests. The Appropriations Committee has also received over 73,000 programmatic and language requests.

As we speak, the committee is carefully examining all of these requests, and Members will continue to have opportunities to work on appropriations bills as we move through subcommittee and full committee markups and the floor amendment process.

Today, as we provide yet another opportunity for you to make your pitches to the committee, I look forward to listening and to learning. I encourage you to be forthright. Please tell us what your communities need.

I appreciate your attendance, and thank you for your participation, and looking forward to a robust dialogue as we work through these requests together.

As Members of Congress, we are entrusted with the responsibility to speak up on behalf of our constituents. We owe it to them and to the American people to ensure no voice goes unheard.

And with that, I would like to recognize the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, Congresswoman Granger, for her opening statement.

Ms. GRANGER. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for hosting this hearing today. It is very important, as you said, that we hear from Members about their priorities before we start marking up appropriations bill. You have got a great response here.

We are going to have a lot to do in a very short amount of time if we are going to mark up and take bills to the floor before August. In order to do this, we will need to work out all the issues that we can in advance.

Today's hearing is a very important step in that process, and I want to thank the Members who are testifying today for their time and their input.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. We are, at the moment, if you will bear with us, we are waiting for our first two witnesses to join with us.

So we are going to go out of turn, though. Let me recognize Congressman Auchincloss from Massachusetts.

Congressman Auchincloss, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JAKE AUCHINCLOSS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Mr. AUCHINCLOSS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and Ranking Member Granger. I am here today to urge you to fully fund ten key Community Funding Projects that are top priorities for my constituents.

[Inaudible] Throughout the district work period to visit these sites and communities, and I am grateful to the committee for the opportunity to personally express how enthusiastic our State and local leaders are about supporting these projects to address the critical needs of my constituents.

As the country recovers from this pandemic, we must address the persistent shortcomings of our current infrastructure. It is critical that our recovery ensures people have access to life's fundamentals so that they can thrive in the present and be prepared for the future. These projects are investments in both.

For the present, clean drinking water, healthcare, and social services. For the future, disaster preparedness and economic development.

I will begin by outlining four water infrastructure projects that have emerged as priorities for my constituents.

One town in my district, Medway, is currently unable to pump sufficient water for peak demand. The town is at risk of not having enough water during emergencies, and the \$2.75 million I have requested will support the town's plan to develop a centralized water treatment facility to ensure residents have reliable drinking water.

Similarly, the town of Plainville's existing water system is over capacity, and the appropriation of \$1.5 million would expand its water treatment plant to twice its current capacity.

In the town of Norton, its water system is currently running at almost half capacity. The requested \$1.475 million would replace three wells that serve almost 20,000 people and increase capacity by approximately 1 million gallons per day.

Finally, my constituents in Hopedale are experiencing frequent water restrictions because the town's storage capacity has reached unsafe levels. Community Project Funding would support designing and constructing a new storage tank.

We know that health is more than just access to clean water. We have witnessed firsthand how critical community health centers are to ensuring that all people, regardless of income or insurance status, have access to the healthcare they need.

Manet Community Health Center will be able to use the requested \$500,000 to develop a satellite facility and deliver equi-

table and comprehensive healthcare in the heart of Attleboro's downtown.

In addition, Attleboro's New Hope domestic violence shelter's request for \$2 million would support the construction of a new shelter and provide refuge to the hundreds of survivors seeking refuge every day in Massachusetts who are unable to access space due to lack of capacity. The new shelter will help survivors recover from mental health disease and substance abuse.

To ensure these basic resources are available around the clock, we must proactively protect our infrastructure through disaster mitigation. The requested \$1.5 million for North Attleboro would dredge the Ten Mile River. In Somerset, the \$1 million in pre-disaster mitigation project funding would repair and reinforce the Somerset Dam.

By protecting basic necessities, we can look to the future and what investments will ensure our communities continue to grow.

Bristol Community College's request for \$2 million for its National Offshore Wind Institute would prepare a workforce that supports green energy and good-paying jobs. The institute can turn a climate crisis into an opportunity to create jobs while protecting the planet for the next generation.

Offshore wind can do for the South Coast what life sciences did for Cambridge and Boston 20 years ago: become an engine of economic development and innovation.

Also on the South Coast, the requested \$1 million in Economic Development Initiative funding would provide a pivotal boost to Fall River's waterfront as an environmentally friendly place to work, visit, and recreate.

These priorities represent the input of local, regional, and State officials, town administrators and mayors, State reps and State senators, regional planning bodies, and the Governor and cabinet.

We have also consulted a diverse set of experts from relevant sectors, including transportation, housing, economic development, renewable energy, and the life sciences.

It is my belief that these investments will go far beyond benefiting only the Fourth District of Massachusetts. We have long been a leader in my home State in the life sciences, technology, and education.

And I am proud to support projects that are going to further the Commonwealth's standing as a powerhouse of talent, work ethic, and innovation for the generation to come.

I appreciate your time, Madam Chairwoman.

[The information follows:]



**Rep. Jake Auchincloss (MA-04) – Appropriations Committee Member Day – FY22****June 9, 2021**

Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, I appreciate the opportunity to share how the FY2022 funding bill will benefit the people and economy of our country in the context of Massachusetts' Fourth Congressional District. I write to urge you to fully fund ten key Community Funding Projects that are top priorities for my constituents, listed alphabetically:

**1. Battleship Cove Off Street Parking and Pier Improvement Project (City of Fall River):** Economic Development Initiative funding would provide a pivotal boost to Fall River's waterfront as a place to work, visit, eat, and play. This funding will help the City create additional capacity for tourists to visit the historic Battleship Cove. It will also protect a recently remediated waterfront pier facility from erosion, to create more resilient public infrastructure for recreation and transient dockage/boating purposes. These improvements will spur private investment resulting in job creation, job retention, and an enhanced quality of life for the people of Fall River and people across the state.

**2. Bristol Community College Offshore Wind Institute (City of Fall River):** Bristol Community College is leading the way in the development of offshore wind off the coast of Massachusetts. With the help of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, their National Offshore Wind Institute (NOWI) will offer professional development training, focused on skills and competencies required for careers in the offshore wind industry. Graduates will receive a Bristol academic offshore wind associate degree and certificate. The College has partnered with Maersk Training, a global program with training facilities across Europe, to

utilize their breadth of knowledge and familiarity with the offshore wind sector to best shape the NOWI and ensure its offerings are responsive to the U.S. market and sector.

**3. Central Water Treatment Facility (Town of Medway):** Medway is not able to pump sufficient water for peak demand and is at risk of not having enough water during emergencies. Drinking Water State Revolving Funds will help the Town of Medway develop a centralized water treatment facility to provide adequate quantities for both drinking water and fire protection. Additionally, this water treatment facility will improve the quality of drinking water that is high in manganese and iron. It will also help the Town of Medway mitigate and remove PFAS to meet the Massachusetts Department of Environment Protection (MassDEP) standard. Safe and clean drinking water is essential for any community to thrive, and this project will be broadly and durably beneficial to my district.

**4. Hopedale Water Supply (Town of Hopedale):** The Town of Hopedale is experiencing a critical water supply issue, in both a quantity and quality perspective. Recent PFAS testing results combined with a low draw have shut down a primary well. Dedicated funding from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund will provide an immediate, significant improvement to the Town's water quantity issue, especially in the high demand periods, while also providing additional benefits to the long term, new source aspects. The additional storage capacity would also improve the water volumes related to PFAS mitigation. I appreciate that the Committee allowed me to submit this additional priority after the EPA awarded a Brownfields Grant to another one of my priority projects, the Attleboro Dye Works Site.

**5. Manet Community Health Center Satellite Clinic (City of Attleboro):** Manet Community Health Center plans to open a satellite health center in the heart of Attleboro's downtown. Manet provides critical support for residents who may otherwise not receive

treatment, and a new location would allow for more residents to access the care they need. Their physician, nurse and social work team will serve roughly 1,300 new patients in its first year and act as a new location for their 325 existing patients. The proposed facility will be accessible to seniors, students, children, and, through its telehealth services, those who are experiencing homelessness. The satellite clinic will offer comprehensive health care services including primary medical care, access to specialists, preventive health screenings, and behavioral health counseling. Through HRSA's Health Facilities Construction and Equipment grant program, Manet will be able to develop this new facility and deliver more equitable healthcare for constituents of Massachusetts' Fourth District and people across the region.

**6. New Hope New Domestic Violence Shelter (City of Attleboro):** New Hope is a non-profit organization in my district providing shelter and social services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. They seek Economic Development Initiative funding to help build a new 11,000 square foot, domestic violence shelter in the City of Attleboro. The shelter will be located on a public transportation route, providing access to a range of services, such as jobs and educational programs, to help families rebuild their lives. The new shelter will incorporate design strategies that build dignity and respect, including private bathrooms, a commercial size kitchen, a large dining space, play space for child development activities, a dedicated educational space with a computer lab and library, and living space that is large enough to accommodate 14 families. This Community Project Funding will help New Hope serve the 200 survivors seeking shelter every day in Massachusetts who are unable to access space due to lack of capacity. It will also support New Hope in its mission to help survivors recover from mental health disease and substance use.

**7. Plainville Critical Water Needs (Town of Plainville):** The Town of Plainville is a small community in my District. The Town has worked hard to better the lives of its citizens, in part by attracting Thermo Fisher to build a new facility and create jobs in an underserved area of the Fourth District. Additionally, Plainville is investing in senior housing for its aging population. However, the Town's existing water system is currently over capacity and needs \$1.5 million to expand its water treatment plant to twice its current capacity. Dedicated Drinking Water State Revolving Funds would help the Town meet the needs of seniors living in assisted and public housing as well as those families drawn to good-paying jobs that come as a result of Thermo Fisher's new facility investment.

**8. Somerset Emergency Dam Improvements (Town of Somerset):** Built in 1964, the Somerset earthen embankment dam is the Town's primary source of drinking water with a storage capacity of 1.5 million gallons. However, it has been assessed that if just a few inches of water overtook the dam, the event would lead to erosion and dam failure. As a result, the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety has classified this dam as a High Hazard Potential dam. With the requested Pre-Disaster Mitigation Project funds, the Town will utilize nature-based solutions designed to work with storm flow through the use of sod and stone to stabilize the earthen structures. This environmentally resilient approach keeps capital cost and long-term maintenance requirements low and ensures the town can safely maintain its water supply.

**9. Ten-Mile River Dredging Project (Town of North Attleborough):** The Ten-Mile River travels from the northwest corner of North Attleborough to the southeast corner of town. In the 1930s under the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Ten-Mile River was cleaned, repaired, straightened, and walled. In the 90 years since, the town's population has more than doubled, and its downtown area has grown significantly. The river, which has a 7-foot

elevation difference, now overtops its banks in storm events of 1 or greater. With the support of Pre-Disaster Mitigation Project funding, North Attleborough intends to dredge the entire 9,200-foot length between ponds, including two State-maintained culverts, and re-establish two small overflow ponds and repair stone walls to protect a growing number of homes, businesses, and infrastructure projects from future flood damage.

**10. Well Replacement (Town of Norton):** The Town of Norton's water system is currently running at almost half-capacity, and is in desperate need of Drinking Water State Revolving Funds to replace Wells 4, 5, and 6. These three wells support approximately 70 percent of the Norton water system, serving almost 20,000 people across the Town. Unfortunately, Wells 5 and 6 are running on 50 percent capacity and will need to be replaced before they fail. Well 4 is at the end of its usefulness and is experiencing a steady decline. The combined projects would increase capacity by approximately 1.05 million gallons per day. Without Wells 4, 5, and 6, the Town of Norton will not have enough water for its residents.

In closing, thank you for your attention to these important projects, which I believe deliver the greatest impact to my constituents and best leverage federal dollars. These priorities represent the input of local, regional, and state officials—town administrators and mayors; state representatives and senators; regional planning bodies; and the governor and cabinet. We have also consulted a diverse set of experts from relevant sectors, like transportation, housing, economic development, renewable energy, and the life sciences to select projects that I am confident will best serve the many cities and towns across Massachusetts' Fourth District. I look forward to working with you to deliver projects with the greatest benefit to my constituents.

The CHAIR. I want to thank the gentleman for his testimony and for the thoughtfulness of the projects that have been initiated.

So with that, as I mentioned earlier, because we have really 35 Members, we are not going to be asking questions. That doesn't diminish our consideration of your efforts and your projects. So thank you very much.

And with that, if I can, I want to recognize Congressman Derek Kilmer from Washington State.

Congressman Kilmer, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. DEREK KILMER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

Mr. KILMER. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks to you and the ranking member for hosting today's Member Day hearing.

Ensuring that the House is equipped to uphold its article I responsibilities is important, and it is challenging work, and I thank you for your leadership.

I am here today actually not to talk about my service on the Appropriations Committee, but to talk about the work of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, which I chair alongside Vice Chair William Timmons.

The Select Committee's guiding principle is to make Congress work better for the American people. This simple but profound goal guides all of our work and helps identify institutional problems and develop hopefully helpful solutions.

During the 116th Congress, the Select Committee unanimously passed almost a hundred recommendations to improve the way Congress works. About a third of those recommendations were included in legislation that passed the House last March.

Today, Vice Chair Timmons and I want to highlight just some of the Select Committee's recommendations that we think deserve funding. Investing in these recommendations would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the legislative branch so we can better serve the American people.

The Select Committee has and will continue to focus on building staff capacity. That means figuring out what Congress needs to do to attract and hold on to a diverse and talented workforce.

The committee held four hearings on these issues in the 116th Congress, and kicked off the 117th with a series of three hearings devoted to staff recruitment, retention, and diversity.

We also recently held a hearing on accessibility in Congress, which featured a perspective on the challenges staff with disabilities face while working on the Hill.

We know that staff deserve better benefits, more training opportunities, and a healthy work-life balance. We also know that offering competitive salaries is essentially the only way to prevent staff from leaving Capitol Hill for private sector or executive branch jobs.

This ongoing brain drain leaves Congress reliant on lobbyists for policy expertise, and that is not the system the Framers intended.

One important way to address these issues is to address the vehicle by which Members pay staff, the Member Representational Allowance, or MRA. The Select Committee recommended report language directing a thorough and updated evaluation of the MRA

formula—including a consideration of staff pay—that provides a modernized and data-driven means of determining the MRA.

Paying our staff more is a priority. At the same time, Congress needs to provide staff with the skills and training that they need to excel at their jobs that they were hired to do.

And to this end, the Select Committee suggests funding or support for the CAO to provide institution-wide standard onboarding training for new employees, including required training to ensure all new staff understand their role, how Congress operates, as well as logistics like benefits.

Staff are key to this institution's success, and investing in their training helps Congress work better for the American people.

These are some of the examples of important steps Congress can take to begin the long-overdue process of investing in the amazing staff who help us carry out our representational and legislative responsibilities.

These requests are also consistent with additional efforts underway in the House to increase staff pay and benefits.

I would like to mention one final recommendation. The Select Committee also suggested funding or support for the CAO to create a pilot Congressional Leadership Academy for Members.

If Members believe that additional professional development and institutional training will help them better carry out their representational and legislative responsibilities, they have should have access to programs that will help them continue learning so that they can do their jobs smarter.

Congress is actually the first place that I have worked that hasn't really had those sorts of professional development opportunities, and I think that is a worthy investment by the institution so that Members can better serve their constituents.

Making Congress work better for the American people is a worthwhile investment. On behalf of the Select Committee on Modernization, I appreciate your consideration of these requests, and I am happy to provide additional information to support your work.

So thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee today, and I yield back.

[The information follows:]



**Statement for Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-6)  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Member Day, June 9, 2021**

Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for hosting today's Member Day hearing. Ensuring that the House of Representatives is equipped to uphold its Article One responsibilities is important and challenging work and I thank you for your leadership.

I am here today to talk about the work of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, which I chair alongside Vice Chair William Timmons. The Select Committee's guiding principle is to make Congress work better for the American people. This simple but profound goal guides all of our work; it helps us identify institutional problems and develop helpful solutions.

During the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Select Committee unanimously passed almost 100 recommendations to improve the way Congress works. About one-third of those recommendations were included in legislation that passed the House last March.

Today Vice Chair Timmons and I want to highlight some of the Select Committee's recommendations that we think deserve funding. Investing in these recommendations would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the legislative branch so that we can better serve the American people.

Select Committee Members believe that Congress is stronger when Members find ways to work together to solve problems. Relationship building is key to successful collaboration and the more opportunities Members have to get to know one another, the better. In this spirit, the Select Committee requests funding for the Committee on House Administration to institute biennial bipartisan retreats for Members .

and their families at the start of each Congress. This would help promote productive engagement across the aisle and ultimately encourage better policy making.

The Select Committee has and will continue to focus on building staff capacity. That means figuring out what Congress needs to do to attract – and hold onto – a diverse and talented workforce. The Committee held 4 hearings on these issues in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress and kicked off the 117<sup>th</sup> with a series of 3 hearings devoted to staff recruitment, retention, and diversity.

We know that staff deserve better benefits, more training opportunities, and a healthy work/life balance. We also know that offering competitive salaries is essentially the only way to prevent staff from leaving Capitol Hill for private sector or executive branch jobs. This ongoing “brain drain” leaves Congress reliant on lobbyists for policy expertise and that’s not the system the Framers intended.

One important way to address these issues is to address the vehicle by which Members pay staff – the Member Representational Allowance, or MRA. The Select Committee recommends report language directing a thorough and updated evaluation of the MRA formula – including a consideration of staff pay – that provides a modernized and data-driven means of determining the MRA.

The Select Committee also requests funding to remove constituent communications costs from the MRA and create a shared account for Member communications. This will help free up additional funds that Members could use to increase staff salaries.

These are some examples of important steps Congress can take to begin the long-overdue process of investing in the amazing staff who help us carry out our representational and legislative responsibilities.

These requests are also consistent with additional efforts underway in the House to increase staff pay and benefits.

Making Congress work better for the American people is a worthwhile investment. On behalf of the Select Committee on Modernization, I appreciate your consideration of these requests and am happy to provide additional information to support your work.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee today.

The CHAIR. Thank you, Congressman Kilmer. And just want to just briefly say that we are grateful for the work that the bipartisan Committee on Modernization completed, as it has helped us in putting into place the process for Community Projects Funding. So thank you for your good work.

And with that, let me recognize Congressman Timmons from South Carolina.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. WILLIAM R. TIMMONS, IV, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

Mr. TIMMONS. Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for hosting today's Member Day hearing, and thank you for your leadership on this important committee.

I am here today to talk about some of the recommendations the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress has made to make Congress a more effective and efficient institution.

I serve as vice chair of the Select Committee, alongside Chairman Kilmer. We work as partners to identify problems and develop solutions to make Congress work better for the American people.

I am proud of what the Select Committee accomplished in the 116th Congress. We proved that it is possible for Members from both sides of the aisle to sit down together, engage in tough discussions, listen and learn from one another, and ultimately find bipartisan solutions to the challenges that we all face.

The committee unanimously passed 97 recommendations to improve the way Congress works and turned many of these recommendations into legislation that passed the House last year.

Today, I want to join Chair Kilmer in highlighting some of the Select Committee's recommendations that we think should be funded.

A modern Congress is one that is well equipped to serve the American people, and we think that is worthy of investment.

In addition to the important staffing-related recommendations that Chair Kilmer has just addressed, I want to highlight a few recommendations designed to make Congress a more collaborative and efficient institution and Members better able to serve their constituents.

Select Committee members believe that Congress is stronger when Members find ways to work together to solve problems. Relationship building is key to successful collaboration, and the more opportunities Members have to get to know one another, the better.

In this spirit, the Select Committee requests funding for the Committee on House Administration to institute biennial, bipartisan retreats for Members at the start of each Congress. This would help promote productive engagement across the aisle and ultimately encourage better policymaking.

Productivity could also be increased by better balancing our time between home and DC and better managing our often hectic and unpredictable schedules. The Speaker has made a number of changes to the schedule, and I believe that in years to come we will be able to further hone the best schedule we can possibly have for future Congresses.

Another important recommendation was to create a bipartisan Members-only space in the Capitol to encourage more collaboration and relationship building across party lines. This space should be full service, to be very inviting, and could hopefully have an indoor and outdoor option for days when the weather is nice.

During the 116th Congress, the Select Committee devoted a lot of time to exploring ways to improve the House schedule and calendar, and we will continue to do so in the 117th. We know there is no perfect calendar and no schedule that will please every Member. Everyone's situation is different, and our preferred schedules, to some degree, reflect those differences.

That said, there are still ways we can make more efficient use of our time. One of the biggest challenges we heard about from colleagues was managing competing committee schedules.

For this reason, the Select Committee recommends including funding or support for the Clerk to establish a common committee calendar on docs.house.gov that identifies Member committee conflicts in real-time, at the time a committee meeting is published.

By identifying and collecting data on committee conflicts, we can begin to develop solutions towards creating more efficient and productive committee schedules.

The other recommendations I would like to address today focus on helping Members and staff work smarter and better on behalf of the American people.

The Select Committee recommends funding or support for the CAO to support Member offices with their casework business processes. This includes providing electronic document management, accessibility, and the creation of constituent forms that can be viewed, edited, and electronically signed.

By building these kinds of efficiencies into our systems, we can better work for our constituents. That is what we are here to do.

The Select Committee also requests funding to remove constituent communication costs from the MRA and create a shared account for Members' communications.

As Chair Kilmer noted, increasing staff salaries is a priority. This recommendation will help free up additional funds that Members could use to pay staff more.

These recommendations, in addition to those addressed by Chair Kilmer, will make Congress work better for the American people, and I believe that is an investment worth making.

I appreciate your consideration of these requests, and I am happy to provide additional information to support your work.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee today. And with that, I yield back. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

**Statement for Rep. William Timmons (SC-4)  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Member Day, June 9, 2021**

Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for hosting today's Member Day hearing and thank you for your leadership.

I am here today to talk about some of the recommendations the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress has made to make Congress a more effective and efficient institution. I serve as Vice Chair of the Select Committee, alongside Chair Derek Kilmer. We work as partners to identify problems and develop solutions to make Congress work better for the American people.

I am proud of what the Select Committee accomplished in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress. We proved that it is possible for Members from both sides of the aisle to sit down together, engage in tough discussions, listen and learn from one another, and ultimately find bipartisan solutions to the challenges we all face. The Committee unanimously passed 97 recommendations to improve the way Congress works and turned many of those recommendations into legislation that passed the House last year.

Today I want to join Chair Kilmer in highlighting some of the Select Committee's recommendations that we think should be funded. A modern Congress is one that is well equipped to serve the American people and we think that's worthy of investment.

In addition to the bipartisan retreat and staffing related recommendations that Chair Kilmer addressed, I would like to highlight a few recommendations designed to make Congress more efficient and Members better able to serve their constituents.

Something I think on which we can all agree is the need to better balance our time between home and D.C., and to better manage our often hectic and unpredictable schedules. During the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Select Committee devoted a lot of time to exploring ways to improve the House schedule and calendar and we will continue to do so in the 117<sup>th</sup>. We know there is no perfect calendar and no schedule that will please every Member. Everyone's situation is different and our preferred schedules to some degree reflect those differences. That said, there are still ways we can make more efficient use of our time.

One of the biggest challenges we heard about from our colleagues was managing competing committee schedules. For this reason, the Select Committee recommends including funding or support for the Clerk to establish a common committee calendar on docs.house.gov that identifies Member committee conflicts in real-time, at the time a committee meeting is published. By identifying and collecting data on committee conflicts, we can begin to develop solutions toward creating more efficient and productive committee schedules.

The other recommendations I'd like to address today focus on helping Members and staff work smarter and better on behalf of the American people.

Chair Kilmer mentioned the need to provide staff with better pay, benefits, and training. I'd like to offer some more detail on what the Select Committee recommends when it comes to better training for new staff. The Committee suggests funding or support for the CAO to provide institution-wide, standard onboarding training for new employees, including required training to ensure all new staff understand their role, how Congress operates, as well as logistics like benefits. Staff are the backbone of this institution and investing in their training helps Congress work better for the American people.



Along the same lines, the Select Committee recommends funding or support for the CAO to support Member offices with their casework business processes. This includes providing electronic document management, accessibility, and the creation of constituent forms that can be viewed, edited, and electronically signed. By building these kinds of efficiencies into our systems, we can do better work for our constituents. That is what we are here to do.

Finally, the Select Committee recommends funding or support for the CAO to create a pilot Congressional Leadership Academy for Members. If Members believe that additional professional development and institutional training will help them better carry out their representational and legislative responsibilities, they should have access to programs that will help them continue learning.

These recommendations, in addition to those addressed by Chair Kilmer, will make Congress work better for the American people and I believe that's a worthy investment. I appreciate your consideration of these requests and am happy to provide additional information to support your work.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee today.

The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much. And, again, to both you and to Chair Kilmer, thank you for the work that is being done by the Modernization Committee and the laudable goals that you have for making Congress work better and more efficiently and also dealing with the issues of quality of life for Members and for the ability to communicate across party lines as well. So grateful for the work of this committee.

And with that, if I can, I would like to introduce for testimony Congressman Frank Mrvan from Indiana.

Congressman Mrvan, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. FRANK J. MRVAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF INDIANA**

Mr. MRVAN. Thank you.

I would first like to thank Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for holding today's Member Day hearing.

I also want to congratulate the full committee, including the chair and ranking member of each subcommittee, for soliciting and considering Member requests for Community Project Funding as a part of our fiscal year 2022 appropriations process.

As you are well aware, our Constitution states clearly, "No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law," and I am pleased that this committee has taken steps to reaffirm the legislative branch's power of the purse, as well as giving the Members the opportunity to direct Federal spending to worthy locally supported projects.

I also appreciate the stringent transparency measures instituted by the committee. We must always be reminded of our fiduciary responsibilities to hardworking taxpayers. As a public servant, we must conduct appropriate oversight to ensure the American people that each and every appropriated dollar is fulfilling an essential need in benefiting our communities.

I have the great honor and privilege of representing Indiana's First Congressional District, following in the footsteps of my mentor and friend, Chairman Pete Visclosky. Our First District is at the center of vital road, rail, air, and port networks and home to major manufacturing industries.

This infrastructure, coupled with our incredible workforce and adjacency to the great city of Chicago, enables our region to continue to attract new businesses and talent.

Northwest Indiana is proud to have the largest concentration of steel production and the largest inland oil refinery in our country. These industries foster economic activity and provide good-paying union jobs to thousands of workers in my district.

One particular request I would like to draw your attention to is the value of the International Trade Commission.

As I mentioned earlier, my district leads the Nation in steel production. In order to prevent bad actors from exporting their unemployment to our Nation—and my district in particular—we must ensure that the ITC has sufficient funding to uphold our trade laws.

As you know, the ITC is required by U.S. law to release its budget justification independently from the Office of Management and Budget.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with Chair Kearns and Vice Chair Stayin regarding the ITC's fiscal year 2022 budget justification. Most significantly, the funding increase that the Commission is requesting is essential to hire more staff and make necessary information technology investments commensurate with their high record of caseload.

The ITC budget justification provides the most complete understanding of its financial needs and offers insight into how inadequate funding levels would impact its ability to enforce our trade laws and protect American workers.

Therefore, I request the committee to closely review the ITC's budget justification and fund the ITC at \$118.8 million for fiscal year 2022.

In closing, I would like to again take a moment to recognize my predecessor, Chairman Visclosky, who served on this committee with distinction for many years. Mr. Visclosky consistently demonstrated the incredible value of the House Appropriations Committee and how responsible Federal investments can transform regional economies.

Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and all the members of this committee, I look forward to building on Mr. Visclosky's positive legacy and developing strong collaborative relationships with this committee.

I thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today.  
[The information follows:]

**Testimony of the Honorable Frank J. Mrvan, U.S. Representative, IN-01**  
**House Appropriations Committee**  
**June 9, 2021**

I first would like to thank Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for holding today's Member Day hearing.

I also want to congratulate the Full Committee, including the Chair and Ranking Member of each Subcommittee, for soliciting and considering Member requests for Community Project Funding as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations process.

As you are well aware, our Constitution states clearly "No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law," and I am pleased this Committee has taken steps to reaffirm the Legislative Branch's "power of the purse," as well as given Members the opportunity to direct federal spending to worthy, locally-supported projects.

I also appreciate the stringent transparency measures instituted by the Committee. We must always be reminded of our fiduciary responsibility to hard-working taxpayers. As public servants, we must conduct appropriate oversight and assure the American people that each and every appropriated dollar is fulfilling an essential need and benefiting our communities.

I have the great honor and privilege of representing Indiana's First Congressional District, following in the footsteps of my mentor and friend, Chairman Pete Visclosky. Our district is at the center of vital road, rail, air, and port networks, and home to major manufacturing industries. This infrastructure, coupled with our incredible workforce and adjacency to the great city of Chicago, enables our region to continue to attract new businesses and talent. Northwest Indiana is proud to have the largest concentration of steel production and

the largest inland oil refinery in our country. These industries foster economic activity and provide good-paying union jobs to thousands of workers in my district.

One particular request I would like to draw your attention to is the value of the International Trade Commission (ITC). As I mentioned earlier, my district leads the nation in steel production. In order to prevent bad actors from exporting their unemployment to our nation and my district in particular, we must ensure that the ITC has sufficient funding to uphold our trade laws.

As you know, the ITC is required by U.S. law to release its budget justification independently from the Office of Management and Budget. I recently had the opportunity to meet with Chair Kearns and Vice Chair Stayin regarding the ITC's FY 2022 budget justification. Most significantly, the funding increase that the Commission is requesting is essential to hire more staff and make necessary information-technology investments commensurate with their record high caseload. The ITC's budget justification provides the most complete understanding of its financial needs and offers insight on how inadequate funding levels would impact its ability to enforce our trade laws and protect American workers. Therefore, I request the Committee closely review the ITC's budget justification and fund the ITC at \$118.8 million for FY 2022.

In closing, I would like to again take a moment to recognize my predecessor, Chairman Visclosky, who served on this Committee with distinction for many years. Mr. Visclosky consistently demonstrated the incredible value of the House Appropriations Committee and how responsible federal investments can transform regional economies. Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and all members of this Committee, I look

forward to building on Mr. Visclosky's positive legacy and developing strong, collaborative relationships with this Committee. I thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today.

The CHAIR. Thank you very much. And I can attest that Congresswoman Granger and myself had the opportunity to serve with Congressman Visclosky and are proud of his legacy as well. But thank you for your testimony regarding the ITC and its value going forward. So appreciate your testimony.

And with that, let me just introduce Congressman Brian Mast of Florida for your testimony. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. BRIAN J. MAST, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF FLORIDA**

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro, thank you, Ranking Member Granger, members of the Appropriations Committee.

Today, I am here to advocate for full Everglades restoration and water quality infrastructure funding.

Specifically, I request that \$725 million be allocated in the United States Army Corps of Engineers' construction account for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration in the fiscal year 2022.

This committee has continually been supportive of Everglades restoration and for very good reason. The Everglades is a world treasure that has a massive impact on the way of life for millions of Floridians, including those that I represent in the Palm Beach, Martin, and St. Lucie Counties of Florida, but going all the way down to Miami and the Florida Keys.

Ensuring the preservation of this unique ecosystem is vital to the ecology, economy, and public health for all of those across Florida, and we are at a critical juncture in the restoration process to do just that.

The Army Corps of Engineers, after years of planning, studying, designing, has finally reached a point in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan where they are making significant progress, where these things can be moved forward with the appropriate funding lines.

The Corps is nearing completion on the massive reservoirs to the east and west of Lake Okeechobee that will hold a combined 71 billion gallons of freshwater.

They are preparing for construction on the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir project that will hold up to 240,000 acre-feet of water, cleaned by natural treatment areas built by the State so that it can be sent into Everglades National Park where the water is drastically needed. That is why at this critical juncture additional funding is needed.

Now, unfortunately, the Federal Government has fallen behind in that match. They have fallen behind the State of Florida in meeting its half of the agreement with the State investing \$4.5 billion, while the Federal Government has only spent about \$1.7 billion in total.

President Biden's \$350 million request for Everglades Restoration shows a commitment to these projects, no doubt about it, but more funding is needed in order to keep pace with the projects the Army Corps is ready to move forward with and with the investment that has already been made into this by the State of Florida, by those agreements.

That is why the Florida delegation was united, Democrats and Republicans together, in requesting a \$725 million investment for fiscal year 2022.

Now, meeting this full request from our delegation would be a strong statement, to say the least, from this committee that restoring America's Everglades and protecting the public health and water supply of Floridians and visitors to our State is a top priority.

You may ask why the Federal Government is involved in this to begin with, at the onset. And the fact of the matter is the Federal Government has to play a role in the solution, because it created the problems that exist by building the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee that sends water into the Florida Everglades, digging canals all across Florida.

The unnatural flows of water means that the Everglades are starved for water while Florida's east and west coast are sent toxic water that is killing animals, killing seagrass, making people sick, and threatening their lives. And this is all done by the hand of the Federal Government.

So to put an even finer point on it, this is an environmental justice issue on a scale unseen elsewhere in the United States.

Last month, the city of West Palm Beach, home to more than 100,000 people, found their water supply contaminated with toxic algae as a result of that failing water infrastructure that we are trying to fix, and that was just weeks after water tested positive for toxins in one of the nearby watersheds, the Pahokee Marina, 100 times more toxic than the EPA said is safe for human contact. That is the urgency of this construction and the needs here.

So in that, I just want to say that this is one of the most biodiverse ecosystems that we are looking to protect across the entire country, and providing \$725 million for Everglades restoration puts Florida that much closer to making those scenarios that are a nightmare from the past, making them a thing of the past.

So I thank you for your consideration for our delegation's request. And, Chairwoman and Madam Ranking Member, I yield back. Thank you for the time.

[The information follows:]

Congressman Brian Mast (FL-18)

Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and members of the Appropriations Committee, today I am here to advocate for the full funding of Everglades restoration and water quality infrastructure. Specifically, I request that \$725 million be allocated in the United States Army Corps of Engineer's construction account for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration in Fiscal Year 2022.

This committee has continually been supportive of Everglades restoration, and for good reason. The Everglades is a world treasure that has a massive impact on the way of life for millions of Floridians, including those I represent in Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties. Ensuring the preservation of this unique ecosystem is vital to the ecology, economy and public health of Florida, and we are at a critical juncture in the restoration process to do just that.

The Army Corps, after years of planning, studying and designing, has reached a point in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan where they are making significant progress:

- The Corps is nearing completion on massive reservoirs to the east and west of Lake Okeechobee that will hold a combined 71 billion gallons of water, and
- They are preparing for construction on the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir project that will hold 240,000 acre feet of water cleaned by natural treatment areas built by the state so that it can be sent to the Everglades when water is needed.

That's why, at this critical juncture, additional funding is needed.

Unfortunately, the federal government has fallen behind the State of Florida in meeting its half of the agreement with the state investing \$4.5 billion, while the federal government has only spent \$1.7 billion.

President Biden's \$350 million request for Everglades restoration shows a commitment to these projects, but honestly, more funding is needed to keep pace with the projects the Army Corps is ready to move forward with and with the investments made by the State of Florida.

That's why the Florida delegation was united—Democrats and Republicans together—in requesting a \$725 million investment in FY2022. Meeting this full request from our delegation would be a strong statement from this committee that restoring America's Everglades and protecting the public health of Floridians and visitors to our state is a top priority.

You may ask why the federal government is involved in this to begin with...

The Federal government must play a role in the solution because it created the problem by building the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee and digging canals. This unnatural flow of water means the Everglades are starved of water, while the estuaries to the east and west are sent toxic water that is killing animals, making people sick and threatening lives.

To put an even finer point on it, this is an environmental justice issue on a scale unseen elsewhere in the United States. Last month, the city of West Palm Beach – home to more than 100,000 people – found their water supply contaminated with toxic algae as a result of the failing

water infrastructure we are trying to fix. That was just after water tested positive for toxins at the nearby Pahokee Marina more than 100 times more toxic than the EPA says is safe for human contact.

At the current funding level, these water quality issues that have plagued Florida for years will continue for years. So, Everglades restoration isn't just an environmental and ecological necessity, but it is the solution to a massive public health crisis, as well.

Almost every summer, my congressional district sees discharges of sometimes millions of gallons of freshwater that the ecology of our waterways wasn't meant to receive. If that wasn't bad enough, the water sent to us from Lake Okeechobee is poison. It is filled with nutrients that fuel harmful algal blooms that release toxins into the water and the air. These toxins wreak havoc on the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon, America's most species-diverse saltwater estuary, and the water filled with guacamole-like algae shuts down our economy. Who wants to vacation or buy a house in a community whose water looks and smells rotten? And who feels comfortable raising children or retiring near water that if you ingest or breathe around could lead to nausea, liver failure, tumors or even death?

This cannot be allowed to continue. We should not tolerate a government that knowingly poisons its own citizens.

I urge this committee to stand up for the men, women and children in Florida who have been forgotten – who are on the receiving end of toxic discharges that the government knows are poison.

Providing \$725 million for Everglades restoration puts Florida that much closer to making those kind of scenarios a nightmare from the past. So, thank you for the consideration of our delegation's request.

The CHAIR. Thank you for your testimony. And it is a very healthy request, which I know that the ranking member would agree that it is, but you are a good advocate for all of the Florida delegation in this project with the Everglades. So thank you very, very much for your testimony this morning.

Let me recognize Congressman Jason Crow, Colorado, for your testimony. Please begin. And you have 5 minutes. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JASON CROW, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF COLORADO**

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, for the opportunity to participate in the hearing today.

Federal spending is a statement of our Nation's priorities, and I appreciate this opportunity to highlight investments that will benefit Colorado's Sixth District and the Nation as a whole. In particular, I would like to highlight requests that seek to improve health equity and access to care.

For far too long, communities of color and low-income communities have experienced the negative impacts of healthcare inequality. They experience higher rates of disease, disability, and even death, and were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To Build Back Better, we must address the systemic inequalities in our healthcare system. So my first request is for nearly \$500,000 for the Black Health Initiative Infant Prematurity and Infant Mortality Project at Children's Hospital Colorado.

The Black Health Initiative Project aims to combat the maternal and infant mortality racial disparities in Colorado by investing in peer-to-peer support for Black moms and simulated scenario training, which is crucial to identify gaps in provider knowledge and care.

By supporting mothers and training providers, we can combat national trends and improve outcomes for Black mothers and babies.

Second, I am requesting nearly \$1 million for the Underrepresented Minority Pipeline for Health Professions at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

Nationally and in Colorado, our healthcare providers do not reflect the populations they serve. According to the American Association of Medical Colleges, only 2.6 percent of physicians nationwide are Black, and only 3.8 percent are Hispanic.

This funding would help CU Anschutz scale up its collaboration with local communities in Aurora and Denver to help underrepresented minority students pursue health and science professions.

As we emerge from the pandemic and continue efforts to tackle the opioid epidemic, it is important that Congress continue to eliminate barriers to care for individuals struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues.

So I am requesting \$1 million to support planning and design costs for a new health campus for the Aurora Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center. The health campus model will en-

able clients to access mental health, detox services, primary care, and oral health services at a single location, eliminating barriers to care.

Research has shown that we can help stop community violence and the revolving door of violent injuries in emergency departments through hospital violence intervention programs. These programs connect emergency room patients with hospital and community-based resources aimed at addressing an individual's underlying risk factors for violence.

I am requesting nearly \$500,000 to expand the At-Risk Intervention and Mentoring Program operated by UC Health in Colorado. So with this funding, UC Health will be able to continue and expand its pilot program to reduce community violence and improve individual outcomes in the greater Aurora community.

In addition to these requests that address health equity and access to care, I would also like to highlight my additional Community Project Funding requests, including \$750,000 for the 2-1-1 Program to operate the call system connecting Coloradans to 8,000 local service providers.

I am requesting \$948,000 for the purchase of an Immune Monitoring Station to enhance the Crnic Institute's research into Down Syndrome at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

I am requesting \$1 million for the Douglas County Generational Opportunities to Achieve Long-Term Success Program to construct more housing for housing-insecure families.

I am requesting \$1.35 million for the City of Aurora Safe Outdoor Spaces Project. And I am also requesting \$1.7 million for the Village Exchange Center to expand services by renovating its facilities.

And then finally, I am requesting \$2 million to create a Domestic Violence High Risk Team in Adams County, Colorado, to improve services for domestic violence victims.

All of these projects will directly benefit some of the most marginalized communities in Colorado's Sixth Congressional District and promise systemic improvements that will strengthen not just our community, but countless others across the country.

So I urge the committee's support, and I look forward to working closely with all of you to ensure these projects are included in the annual appropriations bill.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify. And, Madam Chair, I yield back.

[The information follows:]

Thank you Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for the opportunity to participate in today's hearing. Federal spending is a statement of our nation's priorities, and I appreciate this opportunity to highlight investments that will benefit Colorado's Sixth Congressional District and the nation.

In particular, I'd like to highlight requests that seek to improve health equity and access to care. For far too long, communities of color and low-income communities have experienced the negative impacts of healthcare inequality. They experience higher rates of disease, disability, and even death, and were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To build back better, we must address the systemic inequalities in our healthcare system.

First is my request for nearly \$500,000 for the Black Health Initiative Infant Prematurity and Infant Mortality Project at Children's Hospital Colorado. The Black Health Initiative Project aims to combat the maternal and infant mortality racial disparities in Colorado by investing in peer-to-peer support for Black moms and simulated scenario training, which is crucial to identify gaps in provider knowledge and care. By supporting mothers and training providers, we can combat national trends and improve outcomes for Black mothers and babies.

Second, I am requesting nearly \$1,000,000 dollars for the Underrepresented Minority Pipeline for Health Professions at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Nationally, and in Colorado, our healthcare providers do not reflect the populations they serve. According to the American Association of Medical Colleges, only 2.6% of physicians nationwide are Black; only 3.8% are Hispanic. This funding would help CU Anschutz scale up its collaboration with local communities in Aurora and Denver to help underrepresented minority students pursue health and science professions.

As we emerge from the pandemic and continue efforts to tackle the opioid epidemic, it's important that Congress continue to eliminate barriers to care for individuals struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues. I am requesting \$1,000,000 to support planning and design costs for a new health campus for the Aurora Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center. The health campus model will enable clients to access mental health, detox services, primary care and oral health services at a single location, eliminating barriers to care.

Research has shown we can help stop community violence and the revolving door of violent injuries in emergency departments through hospital violence intervention programs. These programs connect emergency room patients with hospital and community-based resources aimed at addressing an individual's underlying risk factors for violence. I am requesting nearly \$500,000 to expand the At-Risk Intervention and Mentoring Program operated by UC Health. With this funding, UC health will be able to continue and expand its pilot program to reduce community violence and improve individual outcomes in the greater Aurora community.

In addition to these requests that address health equity and access to care, I'd also like to highlight my additional community project funding requests, including:

- \$750,000 for the 2-1-1 Program to upgrade the call system connecting Coloradans to 8,000 local service providers, such as emergency shelter, transportation assistance, and substance abuse treatment;
- \$948,000 for the purchase of an Immune Monitoring Station to enhance the Crnic Institute's research into Down Syndrome and to potentially benefit the 7-8 million people with Down Syndrome across the world;
- \$1,000,000 for the Douglas County Generational Opportunities to Achieve Long-Term Success Program to construct more housing for housing-insecure families;
- \$1,350,000 for the City of Aurora Safe Outdoor Spaces Project, to provide sheltering options and hygiene facilities for those experiencing homelessness in the Aurora community;
- \$1,700,000 for the Village Exchange Center to expand services by renovating its facilities. This local nonprofit provides workforce training, food services, and other supports for the Northwest Aurora community and serves primarily immigrants and refugees; and
- \$2,000,000 to create a Domestic Violence High Risk Team in Adams County to improve services for domestic violence victims. I was joined in submitting this request by my friends and colleagues, Representatives Perlmutter and Neguse.

These projects directly benefit some of the most marginalized communities in Colorado's Sixth Congressional District, and promise systemic improvements that will strengthen not just our community, but countless others across the country. I urge the committee's support and I look forward to working closely with you to ensure these projects are included in the annual appropriations bill. Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. I want to thank the gentleman. And I think we are also much aware that what this pandemic has done is really to expose—so we have known some of these inequities have existed—but it really has shone a light on the issue of disparities with regard to healthcare and also with the access to care, as you point out, with having a pipeline for health professionals to address under-represented communities.

And thank you for laying out your projects and the thoughtfulness and the efforts with your community to represent their best interests.

So I thank you very, very much this morning and appreciate your testimony this morning. Thank you.

Let me at this juncture, just ask—not ask, but to acknowledge the Members who have joined with us here today for Member Day. This is an opportunity for Members throughout the House to be able to come before us with testimony about those issues that they are a champion of for the appropriations process, whether they are programmatic or language requests or the Community Projects Funding requests.

If Members will just bear with us briefly because we are trying to track down the Members who indicated that they wanted to testify this morning. So if you will just bear with us for a few moments, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

[Recess.]

The CHAIR. What I want to do is be mindful of folks who are on the call while we are waiting. So let us take a brief recess and we will get back to you, so that you can pick up some of the business that you have to be engaged in. But we will get back as soon as possible when we know more about where the Members are who indicated that they were going to testify this morning.

Thank you all very, very much, and I thank you for your patience. This is going to be a 10-minute recess. Thank you.

[Recess.]

The CHAIR. And, with that, let me recognize Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley from Massachusetts.

You are recognized for 5 minutes, Congresswoman Pressley. You are muted.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Here we go. Mike check.

The CHAIR. There we go.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. Madam Chair, I ask that I get those 3 seconds back.

All right. Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro and members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify on my priorities for the fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill. I am grateful for the opportunity to bring needed resources to the Massachusetts Seventh District, their community projects, and I welcome the opportunity to highlight these 10 strong initiatives, which have robust community support.

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the stark inequities in our healthcare system and the disparate health outcomes across demographics. In a wellness assessment in the town of Randolph, a community home to a majority people of color, residents described longstanding barriers to healthcare services, including transportation, long waits, and shortages of providers that accept public insurance. To address this need, I requested funding to cover the cost of construction of a school-based health center at Randolph High School, which would be accessed both by students and community. At one point, Randolph had the third highest rate of infections in the Commonwealth.

With substance use and drug overdoses rising in recent decades and particularly during the pandemic, I have submitted a request for the Dimock Center in Roxbury to increase the availability of critically needed substance use treatment and programming. This project would provide approximately 300 additional people annually with vital step-down services after detoxification and assist patients in sustaining wellness, obtaining jobs, reuniting with loved ones, and leading healthy lives. I recently visited with Dimock and learned, with our recent opioid overdose, that we have seen a 69 percent increase in the last year in opioid overdose of Black men. These treatment beds and this sort of wraparound services are sorely needed.

Every child deserves an education that meets their individual learning needs, whether it is personalized curricula or culturally responsive reading materials. I have put forward projects on behalf of Randolph and Milton Public Schools which will go a long way in ensuring students, including children of color, children from lower income families, English language learners, and children with disabilities receive a quality education that prepares them for college and careers of their choice.

The pandemic had a devastating impact on Black and Latinx youth enrollment in community colleges with some estimating that

their numbers could fall by up to 30 percent by this coming fall. I am requesting funding to expand the Boston tuition-free community college program to cover tuition and related expenses for low- and moderate-income students and one of six partner community and technical colleges in greater Boston.

Last summer, Massachusetts had the highest unemployment rate in the country, and the jobs recovery since then has left Black, Brown, and low-income families behind. This is especially true in the city of Chelsea where additional resources are needed to get people back to work. That is why I am requesting funding to help a local organization, Chelsea Collaborative, launch a pipeline project as part of the city wide workforce development action plan to rapidly reemploy Latinx and immigrant workers who have experienced under and unemployment because of the pandemic.

I am also seeking funding to help a minority-serving institution in my district, the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, to launch a new green jobs building automation systems certification program to meet the needs of the growing clean energy economy and to provide good-paying jobs in the field to their student population.

The Island River area is home to 15,000 low-income residents, who are primarily people of color, as well as the New England Produce Center and major energy facilities. Coastal flooding, resulting from sea level rise and record storms, threaten homes, livelihood, and needed infrastructure. The funding I requested for the Island End River Regional Coastal Flood Resiliency Project would bring Chelsea and Everett, two towns that have been long denied environmental justice, much closer to preventing further climate change-related disaster.

I have also requested funding to advance the Poplar Street Pump Station and Art Farm Project in Somerville to provide critical storm water climate change management infrastructure and to create needed community space.

And, finally, expanding bicycle lanes has many benefits, including improving health and reducing pollution and traffic. I have requested funding to expand the network of separated bicycle facilities across Cambridge, which will improve the safety of cyclists, the connectivity to major employment areas, and promote biking as an alternative to other modes of transportation.

Those in my district closest to the pain will always be my greatest asset. People are our most valuable infrastructure. This is an investment in the people, and I thank the Massachusetts Seventh for their partnership and their counsel as I have worked to advance our priorities in Congress. These community-supported projects, Madam Chair and committee members, would immeasurably improve the lives of my constituents, and I request that you give them your strongest consideration.

[The information follows:]



**CONGRESSWOMAN AYANNA PRESSLEY**  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**  
**MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY**  
June 9, 2021

Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify on my priorities for the Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations bill.

I am grateful for the opportunity to bring needed resources to the Massachusetts 7<sup>th</sup> district through community projects and welcome the opportunity to highlight ten strong initiatives with robust community support that will go a long way in addressing unmet health and education needs, investing in local jobs, ensuring an equitable economic recovery, and addressing the climate crisis.

**Improving Healthcare and Substance Use Treatment Resources**

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the stark inequities in our health care system and in the disparate health outcomes across demographics. In a wellness assessment in the Town of Randolph, a community home to a majority of people of color, residents described longstanding barriers to health care services including transportation, long waits, and shortages of providers that accept public insurance. To address this need, I have requested funding to cover the cost of construction of a **school-based health center at Randolph high school**. This project will bring much needed accessible, trusted, and experienced health care services to residents.

With substance use and drug overdoses rising in recent decades, and particularly during the pandemic, I have submitted a request for **the Dimock Center in Roxbury, to increase the availability of critically needed substance use treatment** and programming by creating a new 16-bed treatment unit. This project would provide approximately 300 people annually with vital step-down services after detoxification and assist patients in sustaining wellness, obtaining jobs, reuniting with loved ones, and leading healthy lives.

**Supporting Educators and Culturally Competent Learning**

Every child deserves an education that meets their individual learning needs, whether it's personalized curricula or culturally responsive reading materials. I have put forward projects on behalf of **Randolph Public Schools** and **Milton Public Schools** which will go a long way in ensuring students, including children of color, children from lower income families, English language learners, and children with disabilities, receive a quality education that prepares them for college and careers of their choice.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on Black and Latinx youth enrollment in community colleges, with some estimating that their numbers could fall by up to 30% by this coming fall. I

am requesting funding to expand the **Boston Tuition Free Community College program** to cover tuition and related expenses for low and moderate-income students to complete certain certificate programs at one of six partner community and technical colleges in Greater Boston. These funds will be used to provide last-dollar funding tuition support, a stipend for books and transportation, and access to a network of academic coaches. This project will increase access to new career paths with increased wages and opportunities for advancement.

#### **Addressing Local Unemployment, Creating Jobs**

Last summer, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had the highest unemployment rate in the country, and the jobs recovery since then has left Black, brown, and low-income families behind. This is especially true in the city of Chelsea, where additional resources are needed to get people back to work. That's why I am requesting funding to help a local organization, Chelsea Collaborative, launch a **pipeline project as part of the city-wide workforce development action plan to rapidly re-employ Latinx and immigrant workers** who have experienced under- and unemployment because of the pandemic.

I am also seeking funding to help a Minority Serving Institution in my district, **the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology**, launch a **new green jobs Building Automation System certificate program** to meet the needs of the growing clean energy economy and provide good paying jobs in the field to their student population, comprised of 74% people of color, 99% receiving financial aid, and 57% first-generation college students, all with an average household income of approximately \$23,000.

#### **Mitigating Local Impacts of the Climate Crisis**

The Island End River area is home to 15,000 low income residents who are primarily people of color, as well as the New England Produce Center and major energy facilities. Coastal flooding resulting from sea level rise and record storms threaten homes, livelihoods, and needed infrastructure. The funding I requested for the **Island End River Regional Coastal Flood Resiliency Project** would bring Chelsea and Everett, towns that have been long denied environmental justice, much closer to preventing further climate change-related disaster.

I have also requested funding to advance the **Poplar Street Pump Station and ArtFarm project** in Somerville, to provide critical stormwater climate change management infrastructure and create needed community space.

Finally, expanding bicycle lanes has many benefits including improving health and reducing pollution and traffic. I have requested funding to expand the network of **separated bicycle facilities** across Cambridge, which will improve the safety of cyclists, the connectivity to major employment areas, and promote biking as an alternative to other modes of transportation.

Those in my district closest to the pain will always be my greatest asset, partner, and counsel as I work to advance our priorities in Congress. These community-supported projects would measurably improve the lives of my constituents and I request that you give them the strongest consideration.

The CHAIR. I thank the gentlelady for her testimony and for the focus on what the pandemic really has brought to light, are the inequities that deal with education, jobs, and infrastructure. And you are accurate that the focus is about the people, your district and districts all over the country. So thank you very, very much for your testimony this morning.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR. Thank you.

And let me recognize Congresswoman Lori Trahan from Massachusetts as well.

Congresswoman Trahan, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. LORI TRAHAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Mrs. TRAHAN. Thank you, Madam Chair and Ranking Member. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you about two of my highest priorities for the fiscal year 2022 budget.

First, thanks to the leadership of this committee, considerable progress has been made over the last 2 years to restore the traditional Federal role in assisting communities to meet their Clean Water Act obligations. I am particularly grateful for the investments that this committee has made since fiscal 2020 in the EPA's sewer overflow control grants program. These grants are used to prevent combined sewer overflows, or CSOs, a product of antiquated sewer systems commonly found in our older cities.

By design, these systems collect both storm water and household wastewater for treatment. However, when the volume of effluent exceeds the combined sewer system capacity, which happens routinely, outfalls empty the waste into nearby bodies of water. Each time CSO events occur, we gamble with exposing our constituents to a toxic stew. A number of years ago, the EPA reported on the health risks associated with allowing untreated sewage to enter our waterways unabated. As one might expect, the CSOs frequently included bacterial pathogens, such as *E. coli*, cholera, salmonella, and the bacteria that causes typhoid fever, as well as several parasites and viruses in CSOs.

Too often, these public health risks fall on the shoulders of communities that have been historically victimized by environmental injustices, people who have already endured the brutal consequences of generations of disinvestment and malignant neglect.

However, stopping CSOs can be extremely expensive. Indeed, according to the EPA's latest clean watershed needs survey, \$50 billion is needed to correct CSOs nationwide. And, unfortunately, there is no single solution to solve our CSO challenges. Each of the 800 or so communities with combined sewer systems is different. In some, full sewer separation or new public wastewater treatment works may be necessary. In others, green infrastructure solutions, such as rain gardens and green roofs, may be sufficient.

In the Third Congressional District of Massachusetts, the district I am honored to represent, a combination of these approaches is underway to protect the Merrimack River. Nevertheless, the common denominator in nearly every case is the need for additional Federal resources, particularly in the form of grants. That is why Representative LaHood and I have filed the Stop Sewage Overflow Act, legislation to double the funding for the Sewer Overflow Control Grants Program, as well as reduce the cost share burden for

economically distressed communities. Elements of our proposal were included in the Moving Forward Act last year, and we can be certain that, as the climate warms and storms increase, our CSO challenge will grow worse. So please build upon the progress of the last 2 years and include the highest possible funding to the Sewer Overflow Control Grants Program.

Second, I would ask that the committee provide a funding boost to the Energy Department's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences consistent with the Energy Act of 2020. Recent breakthroughs in fusion research hold incredible promise for our transition to a clean energy economy, and it led the National Academy of Sciences to recommend in 2019 that the United States foster the R&D necessary for a pilot fusion plant.

To that end, last year, Representative Lamb and I filed an amendment to the Clean Energy Jobs and Innovation Act to increase the Federal investment in fusion R&D. Our amendment was ultimately incorporated into the Energy Act of 2020. Among the most critical and cost-effective provisions is a DOE-supported, milestone-based developed program. This section of the law authorizes Federal aid to support a full scale fusion system, but the aid is conditioned on applicants reaching technical milestones along the way. Commonwealth Fusion Systems, a spin off from MIT, has already begun planning for a proof-of-concept plant in the Third Congressional District, and I am hopeful that America's clean energy revolution will be born within a few miles of the birthplaces of the American Revolution and our Industrial Revolution.

Whatever approach proves to be the most cost-effective and technically feasible, fusion could serve as the foundation for our zero-carbon energy economy of the future. Our need for clean, emissions-free energy is a race against time, not only to prevent the worst effects of climate change but also to ensure that the United States is the global leader in solving this challenge. So I ask that you include robust funding for the newly authorized fusion research and development program. And thank you so much for this opportunity today, Madam Chair. I yield back.

[The information follows:]

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**Member Day Hearing**  
*U.S. Rep. Lori Trahan (MA-3)*

Good morning, Madam Chair and Madam Ranking Member. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you about two of my highest priorities for the fiscal year 20-22 budget.

First, thanks to the leadership of this committee, considerable progress has been made over the last two years to restore the traditional federal role in assisting communities to meet their *Clean Water Act* obligations.

I am particularly grateful for the investments that this committee has made since fiscal 20-20 in the EPA's Sewer Overflow Control grants program.

These grants are used to prevent combined sewer overflows – or C-S-Os – a product of antiquated sewer systems commonly found in our older cities.

By design, these systems collect both stormwater *and* household wastewater for treatment. However, when the volume of effluent exceeds a combined sewer system's capacity – which happens routinely – outfalls empty the waste into nearby bodies of water.

Each time C-S-O events occur, we gamble with exposing our constituents to a toxic stew. A number of years ago the EPA reported on the health risks associated with allowing untreated sewage to enter our waterways unabated. As one might expect, the C-S-O's frequently included bacterial pathogens, such as E. coli, cholera, salmonella, and the bacteria that causes typhoid fever as well as several parasites and viruses in C-S-Os.

Too often, these public health risks fall on the shoulders of communities that have historically been victimized by environmental injustices— people who have already endured the brutal consequences of generations of disinvestment and malignant neglect.

However, stopping C-S-O's can be extremely expensive. Indeed, according to the EPA's latest *Clean Watersheds Needs Survey*, \$50 billion is needed to correct C-S-Os nationwide.

And, unfortunately, there is no single solution to solve our C-S-O challenges. Each of the 800 or so communities with combined sewer systems is different. In some, full sewer separation or new public wastewater treatment works may be necessary. In others, green infrastructure solutions – such as rain gardens and green roofs – may be sufficient.

In the Third Congressional District of Massachusetts, the district I'm honored to represent, a combination of these approaches is underway to protect the Merrimack River.

Nevertheless, the common denominator in nearly every case is the need for additional federal resources – particularly in the form of grants.

That's why Representative LaHood and I have filed the *Stop Sewage Overflow Act* – legislation to double the funding for the Sewer Overflow Control Grants program as well as reduce the cost-share burden for economically distressed communities. Elements of our proposal were included in the *Moving Forward Act* last year.

And we can be certain that, as the climate warms and storms increase in frequency and intensity, our C-S-O challenge will grow worse.

Please build upon the progress of the last two years and include the highest possible funding for the Sewer Overflow Control grants program.

Second, I would ask that the committee provide a funding boost to the Energy Department's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences, consistent with the *Energy Act of 2020*.

Recent breakthroughs in fusion research hold incredible promise for our transition to a clean energy economy – and it led the National Academy of Sciences to recommend, in 2019, that the United States foster the R&D necessary for a pilot fusion plant.

To that end, last year, Representative Lamb and I filed an amendment to the *Clean Energy Jobs and Innovation Act* to increase the federal investment in fusion R&D. Our amendment was ultimately incorporated into the *Energy Act of 2020*.

Among the most critical and cost-effective provisions is a D-O-E supported "milestone-based development program." This section of the law authorizes federal aid to support a full-scale fusion system. But the aid is conditioned on applicants reaching technical milestones along the way.

Commonwealth Fusion Systems, a spinoff from M-I-T, has already begun planning for a proof-of-concept plant in the Third Congressional District. I'm hopeful that America's clean energy revolution will be borne within a few miles of the birthplaces of the American Revolution and our Industrial Revolution.

Whatever approach proves to be the most cost-effective and technically feasible, fusion could serve as the foundation for our zero-carbon energy economy of the future.

Our need for clean, emissions-free energy is a race against time – not only to prevent the worst effects of climate change, but also to ensure that the United States is the global leader in solving this challenge.



I ask that you include robust funding for the newly authorized fusion research and development program.

Thank you, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. I thank the gentlelady.

And I know that Massachusetts has been leading the way in the fusion area, having been able to meet with some of the folks there, so thank you for the information. And having worked in a city government where we deal with trying to separate storm water and waste in sewers, another—you know, both focused on environmental issues here. Thank you very, very much for your testimony this morning. I appreciate it.

And, with that, let me recognize Congressman Andy Levin from Michigan. Congresswoman Levin, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. ANDY LEVIN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF MICHIGAN**

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you so much, Chairwoman DeLauro. It is great to see you and Ranking Member Granger.

I really appreciate all the members of the committee and opportunity to speak to you today.

You know, with Federal funds, community projects in Michigan's Ninth District could improve the lives of Macomb and Oakland County residents tremendously. In my limited time today, I would like to illustrate how that is true and urge you to approve my requests for community project funding.

When choosing projects to put forward, I sought out those that would serve my communities' most vulnerable residents. One great example of such a project is the Individual Development Account Program at Macomb Community College, which will offer workforce development and certification courses, a necessary step in getting Americans back to work post COVID.

And I am happy to report, Madam Chairwoman, that the Secretary of Education Cardona was with me at Macomb Community College yesterday and had a tremendous visit.

More examples are the Eastside Community Hub Revitalization Project to improve public facilities and programming to empower at-risk youth and their families and the Anton Art Center's Artspace Project to provide affordable housing and creative workspace accommodations for working artists in Mount Clemens. All these projects will make a huge difference in the lives of Macomb County residents in need.

I put forward projects to meet urgent needs in Oakland County as well. For example, the city of Hazel Park hopes to create a community meeting space that can serve as a location for job fairs, educational seminars, and crucially, a heating and cooling center for at-risk residents. Madison Heights plans to renovate and expand its public library, ensuring it remains accessible for the most vulnerable residents who depend on the library for tutoring, job hunting, computer use, and more.

In the wake of a crisis that kept Americans apart, I am really excited to see leaders in Michigan's Ninth invest in spaces that bring us together and keep our communities safe. Those investments are being made indoors but also outdoors. The Clinton River Water Trail improvement in Macomb County will make the trail safer and more accessible. Meanwhile, enhancing the tree canopy in the city of Royal Oak will assist with pollution mitigation, cooling in the summer, and storm water mitigation in Oakland County.

The last point is, I think, particularly important in our community. Sadly, Michiganders know the devastating effects of unsafe water and flooding disasters firsthand. I am proud to support a number of projects to address those issues, and I am picking up right where Representative Trahan left off here. The Kensington Water Main and Lead Service Replacement Project would replace a 100-year-old water main and 70 lead service lines in Oakland County. While in Macomb County, the Chapaton Retention Basin In-Storage Expansion would include the water quality of Lake St. Clair, which is a major drinking water supply for southeast Michigan. And also in Macomb County, the St. Clair Shores Pump Station would preserve flooding that has had disproportionate impacts on our area's most vulnerable residents. And I want to point out that the commissioner of the water system over there is your former colleague Candice Miller, so this is a truly bipartisan effort.

My colleagues, I know you have made your decisions ahead as you consider the best uses of a modest portion of Federal dollars. I simply ask that you give these 10 projects the full consideration they merit. They tackle problems I hear about every day when I meet with constituents and chat with my neighbors, and they do so in a way that makes sure no one gets left behind. I am really honored to advocate for them today. Thanks so much for your consideration. And, with that, I yield back.

[The information follows:]

**CONGRESSMAN ANDY LEVIN (MI-09)**  
**TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**MAY 27, 2021**

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Chair DeLauro; Ranking Member Granger; Members of the Committee: thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

With federal funds, community projects in Michigan's 9<sup>th</sup> District could improve the lives of Macomb and Oakland County residents tremendously. In my limited time today, I'd like to illustrate how and urge you to approve my requests for community project funding.

When choosing projects to put forward, I sought out those that would serve my community's most vulnerable residents. One great example of such a project is the Individual Development Account (IDA) Program at Macomb Community College, which will offer workforce development and certification courses—a necessary step to getting Americans back to work post-COVID.

More examples are the Eastside Community Hub Revitalization Project to improve public facilities and programming to empower at-risk youth and their families. And the Anton Art Center's Art Space Project to provide affordable housing and creative workspace accommodations in Mount Clemens.

All of these projects would make a huge difference in the lives of Macomb County residents in need.

I've put forward projects to meet urgent needs in Oakland County as well. For instance, the City of Hazel Park hopes to create a community meeting space that can serve as a location for job fairs, educational seminars, and a heating and cooling center. Madison Heights plans to renovate and expand its public library, ensuring it remains accessible for residents who depend on the library for tutoring, job hunting, computer use, and more.

In the wake of a crisis that's kept Americans apart, I am so excited to see leaders in Michigan's 9<sup>th</sup> invest in spaces that bring us together and keep our community safe.

Those investments are being made indoors *and* outdoors! The Clinton River Water Trail Improvements in Macomb County will make the trail safer and more accessible, while enhancing the tree canopy in Royal Oak will assist with pollution mitigation, cooling in the summer, and stormwater mitigation in Oakland County.

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The Kensington Water Main and Lead Service Line Replacement Project would replace a 100-year old watermain and 70 lead service lines in Oakland County, while in Macomb County, the Chapaton Retention Basin In-Storage Expansion would improve the water quality of Lake St. Clair, the drinking water supply for Southeast Michigan. Also in Macomb County, the St. Clair Shores Pump Station would prevent flooding that's had disproportionate impacts on our area's most vulnerable residents.

My colleagues: I know you have major decisions ahead as you consider the best uses of a modest portion of federal dollars. I ask simply that you give these 10 projects the consideration they merit. They tackle the problems I hear about when I meet with constituents and chat with my neighbors, and they do so in a way that makes sure no one gets left behind. I am honored to advocate for them today.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much for the testimony, and I know your constituents are so proud of your advocacy on their behalf. And you can be sure that the projects will get the highest consideration and really taken by the breadth and scope of the range of projects. And that is gratifying as we went down this road in terms of community project funding. So thank you very, very much for your testimony, Congressman Levin.

Mr. LEVIN. Thanks, Madam Chairwoman.

The CHAIR. Thank you.

And let me now recognize Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill from New Jersey, and you are now recognized for 5 minutes. Thank you.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. MIKIE SHERRILL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the committee for providing me the opportunity to testify today. I also want to extend a special nod of thanks to my good friend and colleague from New Jersey, Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman, for her outstanding work to represent and support our State's priorities on this committee.

I want to speak today about a number of crucial projects I have submitted on behalf of my district and the communities and constituents I represent. You have heard from and will continue to hear from a number of Members today. Many, if not all of us, will be highlighting the community projects we have submitted for consideration by this committee. For this committee, it may seem tedious, but I assure you no matter the size, scale, or issue area that these projects fall under, they will be life-changing to the constituents we are here advocating for.

For every community, the past year has been exceedingly difficult: the pandemic, the economic fallout, the loss, the isolation, the change in daily routine, kids learning remotely, and families prevented from seeing each other in the most troubling times many of us have ever faced. Every part of this Nation was hit hard, but for New Jersey, we were hit hardest, and we were hit first. The impact hasn't been lost on those in my district. Whether it is the trauma of loss or loneliness, the financial hardship of closed businesses, or a lost job that threatens housing security, or the uncertainty of what awaits on the other side of this crisis, reopening and getting back to normal is going to be a challenge. But we are well on our way to making that reopening a reality, and now is the time to be making the types of investments that will make us better and stronger than before. So each of these project requests that I have submitted were chosen because they will make a significant difference in people's lives and livelihoods. That is what we as Members of Congress need to be doing more than anything right now: finding ways to improve the lives of our constituents and the services in our communities to help ease our recovery and pave the way for a more resilient future.

I know that pulls at the heart of every one of you as well, and whether it is the American Rescue Plan, the infrastructure package we are negotiating, or these community projects I am fighting for, our priorities have been in the right place, and I want to extend my thanks to this committee and the members on it for the role they have played in helping make that case.

Now, with that goal in mind, let me name just a few of the projects I have submitted for consideration: \$3 million for Morris Habitat for Humanity's largest affordable housing project to date in Randolph; nearly \$300,000 for suicide prevention services through the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris County; \$250,000 for a park improvements project in West Orange, specifically designed to enhance ADA accessibility and provide exercise options for seniors; nearly \$650,000 in funding for the installation of new lights at a recreation complex in Totowa; \$250,000 for the replacement of a water main in Stanhope; \$3.1 million for the expansion of a collaborative childcare project for United Way of Northern New Jersey; more than \$135,000 for traffic improvements in Morris Plains that provide safe access to public transportation for residents of affordable housing; \$255,000 for the replacement of lead pipes and service lines in Bloomfield; \$800,000 for a water system upgrade to improve the water system in Hopatcong; and, finally, \$500,000 for the preconstruction engineering efforts for a flood mitigation project on the Peckman River.

Some of the benefits of these projects speak for themselves: improvements for clean drinking water and the replacement of lead pipes, aid for a project designed to protect communities' homes and businesses from flooding, or traffic improvements that will increase pedestrian safety and access to public transportation for an underserved population. These aren't the flashiest projects Congress has ever funded, but they are often the most impactful, and there are always projects like these in our communities that need to be addressed.

And then there are those whose importance may have reached a crisis level during the challenges of the last year. Aid to Habitat for Humanity, for example, in my district, they are housing those who may have lost everything during the pandemic. I had the honor of joining as a volunteer on one of their builds just last month. Or a project to expand childcare services that will help rebuild New Jersey's early education and care sector when 71 percent of the family childcare providers in the State have been lost. Or perhaps, sadly, the most lifesaving, the expansion of suicide prevention services when we are in the midst of a mental health crisis only exacerbated by the pandemic.

These are the type of projects we need to be funding right now, and I am proud to be fighting for them here today. Thank you all so much.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and I yield back.  
[The information follows:]

(NOTE: You will have 5 minutes to speak)

#### **06.09.21 Approps Member Day Testimony**

Thank you Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the Committee for providing me the opportunity to testify today. I also want to extend a special nod of acknowledgement and thank my good friend and colleague from New Jersey, Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman for her outstanding work to represent and support our state's priorities on this Committee.

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You've heard from and will continue to hear from a number of members today. Many, if not all, of us will be highlighting the community projects we've submitted for consideration by this committee.

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For every community the past year has been excruciatingly difficult. The pandemic, the economic fallout, the loss, the isolation, the change in daily routine. Kids barred from schools and families barred from seeing each other in the most troubling times many of us have ever faced.

Every part of this nation was hit hard. For New Jersey, though we were hit hardest and hit first. The impact hasn't been lost on those in my district. Whether it's the trauma of loss or loneliness, the financial hardship of a closed business or a lost job that threatens your housing security, or the uncertainty of what awaits on the other side of this crisis – reopening and getting back to normal is going to be a challenge.

But we're well on our way to making that reopening a reality, and now is the time to be making the types of investments that will make us better and stronger than before.

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I know that goal is at the heart of every one of you as well. Whether it's the American Rescue Plan, the infrastructure package we're negotiating, or these community projects I'm fighting for – our priorities have been in the right place. And I want to extend my thanks to this Committee and the Members on it for the role they've played in helping to make that the case.

(NOTE: You will have 5 minutes to speak)

Now with that goal in mind, let me name just a few of the projects I've submitted for consideration.

1. \$3 million for Morris Habitat for Humanity
2. Nearly \$300,000 for Suicide Prevention Services through the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris County
3. \$250,000 for a Park Improvements Project in West Orange, specifically designed to enhance ADA accessibility and
4. Nearly \$650,000 in funding for the installation of new lights at a recreation complex in Totowa
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7. More than \$135,000 for necessary traffic improvements in Morris Plains
8. \$255,000 for the replacement of lead pipes and service lines in Bloomfield Township
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10. And finally, \$500,000 for the preconstruction engineering efforts for a flood mitigation project on the Peckman River

Some of the benefits of these projects speak for themselves. Improvements for clean drinking water and the replacement of lead pipes, aid for a project designed to protect communities, homes, and businesses from flooding, or traffic improvements that will increase pedestrian safety.

These aren't the flashiest projects Congress ever funds, but they are often the most impactful and there are always projects like these in our communities that need to be addressed.

And then there are those, whose importance may have reached crisis levels during the challenges of the past year. Aid to Habitat for Humanity that is housing those who may have lost everything during this pandemic and who I had the honor of joining as a volunteer on one of their builds just last month. Or a project to expand childcare services that will help rebuild New Jersey's early education and care sector when 71 percent of the family childcare providers in the state have been lost. Or, perhaps sadly the most life-saving, the expansion of suicide prevention services when we're experiencing a mental health crisis.

These are the types of projects we need to be funding right now and I'm deeply proud to be fighting for them here today. After such a tough year, in NJ-11, our communities and organizations have come together to lift each other up with such ingenuity, care, and resourcefulness. They need our support now more than ever.

I'm honored to help play a role in delivering it. Thank you to this committee for your work, tremendous leadership, and careful consideration of these requests that I am certain may make a life-changing impact in my district. Thank you to the staff on appropriations for the long nights, and extra attention given to offices for whom this process is new.

(NOTE: You will have 5 minutes to speak)

Thank you, Chairwoman, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. Thank you so much for your testimony, and they are flashy projects. So I really thank you for your—I think what the community projects funding as we are listing to colleagues today have demonstrated that they deal with issues that were in the past, but the issues that were uncovered and exposed by the pandemic, and so that they meet both of those needs. So thank you so much for your testimony this morning.

Let me now recognize Congressman James McGovern from Massachusetts, and you are recognized for 5 minutes, Congressman McGovern.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you, Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the committee. Thanks for having me.

So, before I begin, I want to thank this committee, especially Chair DeLauro, for all the work that you have done combating hunger before the pandemic and then certainly during this pandemic. As you know, for too long, our government's response to hunger is about managing it, not ending it. The pandemic brought the realities of the hunger crisis to kitchen tables and living rooms all across the country. And even before COVID, 35 million Americans faced food insecurity in 2019. Hunger makes it harder for children to grow, harder for students to learn, harder for parents to work and take care of their kids. This isn't an urban or rural problem. It is pervasive and can be found in every single congressional district. It is a crisis that we must not accept.

Congress has come together before and made great, great strides on hunger. Following the first ever Hunger Conference in 1969, my old boss, Senator George McGovern, no relation but great last name, worked with Senator Bob Dole and others to create what we now know as the SNAP, WIC, and school breakfast and lunch program. And in the face of a global pandemic, this Congress, led by this committee, showed that we can dramatically reduce child poverty and food insecurity.

Yet, even with the important work we did, hunger persists. We need permanent solutions so every person in America can feel financially secure, which includes not worrying about how to feed your family. To do this, I will be introducing a bill with Senator Corey Booker to create a White House conference on food, nutrition, hunger, and health to develop a roadmap to end hunger in America by the United Nations global goal of 2030. At the Rules Committee, we are holding hearings and roundtables and traveling to see local innovations that work to bring good ideas back for us to consider both here in Congress and through the conference.

We know hunger is not an issue that breaks down neatly into one department or committee. Rules met recently to discuss hunger among military families and veterans. We learned how high unemployment from military spouses and high childcare costs can strain family budgets and that limited data make understanding the problem harder. We learned how military members are treated differently in SNAP if they live on base or off and that the transition from Active Duty to civilian life creates a host of destabilizing challenges.

To the veterans, we learned that homelessness impacts all other issues, including hunger, and we heard how food banks, one in West Virginia specifically, have been working with local VA hospitals to bring food to vets in need. As VA hospitals grapple with how to add onsite food pantries, civilian hospitals like Boston Medical Center, who testified before the Rules Committee in April, have been doing this for years, both to better serve the community and to stem rising costs. We also learned that limited access to reliable broadband in rural communities makes everything from talking with vets in need to collecting and analyzing data to collecting and rerouting food much, much harder. So many of these issues lie between committee and departmental jurisdictions, making it harder to address problems that are one, solvable and, two, deserve a solution. So Rules will work to build the momentum, but only Appropriations can provide the resources.

So, first, I ask you to set aside \$2.5 million to fund the second White House conference in 50 years to focus on food, nutrition, hunger, and health. Second, help us better connect the dots and break down silos. To ensure that this conference is a substantive, policy-oriented effort, we need information from Federal departments and agencies immediately. Because the members of this committee can see across the whole field, require the departments and agencies you oversee to think critically about the role they can play in ending hunger. Ask them to identify the challenges and opportunities that exist, examine authority, limitations they face, and identify opportunities for better collaboration across government silos. If that sounds like a good, commonsense idea, it is because it came out from a member of this committee, Congressman Cole, who is our ranking member on the Rules Committee.

Finally, across the fiscal year 2022 appropriations, look for ways each subcommittee can reduce food insecurity so we can start making things better immediately. Senator Bob Dole wrote Congressman Cole and me recently saying, and I quote: I remain proud of the work Senator McGovern and I did then, and I endorse your effort to secure a second White House conference to identify the next frontier of programs to finally end hunger in America, end quote. Like Senator Dole, I believe we can still do big things together. So help us in this next and hopefully final frontier to end hunger once and for all. And I thank you and yield back my time.

[The information follows:]



**Chairman James P. McGovern (MA-2)**  
**House Committee on Rules**  
**Testimony before the Committee on Appropriations**  
**Member Day Hearing**  
**June 9, 2021**

Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the committee, thank you for having me.

Before I begin, I want to thank this committee, and especially Chair DeLauro, for combatting hunger before the pandemic and during this past year.

As you know, our government's response to hunger is about managing it, not ending it. The pandemic brought the realities of the hunger crisis to kitchen tables and living rooms across the country.

Even before COVID, 35 million Americans faced food insecurity in 2019.

Hunger makes it harder for children to grow, harder for students to learn, harder for parents to work and take care of their kids.

This isn't an urban or rural problem. It is pervasive and can be found in every Congressional district.

It's also a crisis we must not accept.

Congress has come together before and made great strides on hunger.

Following the first-ever hunger conference in 1969, my old boss, Senator George McGovern, worked with Senator Bob Dole and others to create what we now know as the SNAP, WIC, and the School Breakfast and Lunch programs.

And in the face of a global pandemic, this Congress, led by this committee, showed that we can dramatically reduce child poverty and food insecurity.

Yet, even with the important work we did, hunger persists.

We need permanent solutions so every person in America can feel financially secure, which includes not worrying how to feed your family.

To do this, I will be introducing a bill with Senator Cory Booker to create a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health to develop a roadmap to end hunger in America by the United Nation's global goal of 2030.

At Rules, we're holding hearings and roundtables, and travelling to see local innovations at work to bring good ideas back for us to consider – both here in Congress and through the conference.

We know hunger is not an issue that breaks down neatly into one department or committee.

Rules met recently to discuss hunger among military families and veterans. We learned how high unemployment for military spouses and high child care costs can strain family budgets, and that limited data make understanding the problem harder. We learned how military members are treated differently in SNAP if they live on-base or off, and that the transition from active duty to civilian life creates a host of destabilizing challenges.

For veterans, we learned that homelessness impacts all other issues, including hunger. And we heard how food banks – one in West Virginia, specifically – have been working with the local VA hospitals to bring food to vets in need.

As VA hospitals grapple with how to add on-site food pantries, civilian hospitals – like Boston Medical Center, who testified before Rules in April – have been doing this for years, both to better serve the community and to stem rising costs.

We also learned that limited access to reliable broadband in rural communities makes everything – from talking with vets in need, to collecting and analyzing data, to collecting and rerouting food – harder.

Many of these issues lie between committee and departmental jurisdictions, making it harder to address problems that are 1) solvable, and 2) deserve a solution.

Rules will work to build the momentum, but only the Appropriations Committee can provide the resources.

First, I ask you to set aside \$2.5 million to fund the second White House conference in 50 years to focus on Food, Nutrition, Hunger, and Health.

Second, help us better connect the dots and break down silos.

To ensure this conference is a substantive, policy-oriented effort, we need information from federal departments and agencies immediately.

Because the Members of this committee can see across the whole field, require the departments and agencies you oversee to think critically about the role they can play in ending hunger. Ask them to identify the challenges and opportunities that exist, examine authority limitations they face, and identify opportunities for better collaboration across government silos.

If that sounds like a good, common-sense idea, it's because it came from a member of *this committee*...Congressman Cole, who is also our ranking member at Rules.

Finally, across the FY 2022 appropriations, look for ways each subcommittee can reduce food insecurity so we can start to make things better immediately.

Senator Dole wrote Congressman Cole and me recently saying:

“I remain proud of the work Senator McGovern and I did then, and I endorse your effort to secure a second White House Conference to identify the next frontier of programs to finally end hunger in America.”

Like Senator Dole, I believe we can still do big things together. Help us in this next – and hopefully final – frontier to end hunger once and for all.

Thank you.

The CHAIR. I thank the gentleman. And let me just say how proud I am to work with you on the issues that you have been a guiding light, a beacon on the issue of hunger. And the term "food insecurity" just needs to translate into hunger, and the United States is a land of plenty. No one in this country, particularly children, should go to bed hungry at night, so thank you for all of your efforts in this area. And, again, I am proud to work with you.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you.

The CHAIR. Let me introduce Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher from Texas. Congresswoman Fletcher, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. LIZZIE FLETCHER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF TEXAS**

Mrs. FLETCHER. Well, thank you so much, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, for the opportunity to testify before the committee today about how the appropriations process this year can best support our communities.

In particular, I want to highlight the importance of community project funding and ensuring that vital resources reach the communities they are intended to serve by focusing my remarks on a few of the projects in my direct that I have submitted to the committee this year. They are a real example of why this funding matters.

And this particular point takes us back just a few years. First, as you may recall, my district in Houston was devastated during Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Hurricane Harvey was one of the worst disasters in our country's history with \$125 billion in damages, more than any other disaster in U.S. history other than Hurricane Katrina. And across my district, people suffered tremendous damage during Harvey. For some people, it was the second time their homes flooded in as many years. And for some, it was the third after floods in 2015 and 2016.

During and after the storm, we saw our neighbors come together to help one another, and it wasn't just our neighbors here at home. It was our neighbors across the country, including the United States Congress. The 115th Congress voted to appropriate funds in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to help in our recovery efforts, both immediate assistance and also funds to mitigate future damage by investing in and improving our infrastructure to make our community more resilient. Through the work of this committee, Congress responded by appropriating \$2.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant funding to the Texas General Land Office, the GLO, entrusting the State office to set up a competitive grant program to fairly distribute these funds for mitigation, Federal funds.

Two weeks ago, the GLO announced that neither Houston nor Harris County would be awarded any of the \$2 billion in disaster mitigation funds that the Congress sent to Texas after Harvey. Out of more than \$1 billion in awards announced, Houston and Harris County, the epicenter of Harvey. And the site of tens of billions in damage and the site of three 500-year floods in 3 years would get zero. And it is clear that the program that GLO designed uses a formula that makes it virtually impossible for Houston and Harris County to get the funds.

This is the opposite of what Congress intended. We need these funds. Harvey isn't the only storm we faced. In the past decade, the

Gulf Coast region has suffered increasingly dangerous and destructive hurricanes, and the funding Congress appropriated was intended to help bolster our infrastructure to mitigate the risk and the damage from potential storms. And this is why community project funding is so important, and it is against this backdrop that I want to convey to you how important this specific community project funding I have submitted to the committee is needed at this time.

The Meyergrove Detention Basin, one of the projects that I submitted on behalf of my district, and projects like it are critical to mitigation efforts, ensuring safety and resiliency in my district. The proposed detention basin would be a 7.5-acre storm water detention basin for the conveyance of more than 50 million gallons of storm water away from nearby residential, commercial, and medical investments. The basin would also protect the downstream Texas Medical Center, the largest medical complex in the world, with the largest children's hospital in the world, the Texas Children's Hospital, and the largest cancer hospital in the world at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

The lifesaving treatment and research capacity of the Texas Medical Center for the region is essential for planning and response during public health emergencies. Access by patients, medical professionals, and suppliers to TMC is critical, but the road network for access to it lies in an area prone to flooding. And four times in the last 6 years, street flooding has completely cut off access to the medical facility except by boat or high water vehicle. For critical patients, this can result in a loss of life. This much needed project is one of our community's needs.

Likewise, critical wastewater and water distribution projects for local municipalities in my districts, like the city of Bellaire and the city of Jersey Village that I submitted are also vitally important projects. In recent years ago, the original sanitary sewer lines have been failing, allowing storm water to infiltrate the collection system. And during these weather conditions, storm water can fill up the collection system, overloading the wastewater treatment plant and forcing the discharge of untreated wastewater into the bio drainage system. This creates a public health crisis during flooding events.

It is critical that Congress fund these important projects and that the Members of Congress who know their districts best can ensure that the critical projects can be identified and that congressionally appropriated funds can serve their intended purpose. Unfortunately, we have seen the opposite here in Houston recently with the GLO's announcement. That is why I thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today, and I urge the committee to include these three projects I have identified as well as all of my submissions to the committee in the fiscal year 2022 funding bills. Thank you, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. Thank you for your testimony, and thank you for your emphasis on disaster relief and the issue of flooding, et cetera, I think a critically important area. And you are accurate. It is gratifying, I think, for Congresswoman Granger and myself to understand that the community projects are working in a way with

regard to the best interests of our communities, and thank you for representing that this morning. I appreciate your testimony.

Now, with that, I am going to ask my colleague, Congressman Pete Aguilar, who has agreed to just chair the meeting for the next hour or so, and then I will be back. But I am grateful to you, Congressman Aguilar, for, you know, stepping in and helping with this morning and listening to the testimonies, great testimony, from our colleagues. So Congressman Aguilar will take it from here.

Mr. AGUILAR [presiding]. Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate your leadership, and we will see you shortly.

Next on the list, do we have Congresswoman Steel from California? We will then go to—oh. There we go. Congresswoman Steel, are you there?

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. MICHELLE STEEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Mrs. STEEL. Thank you. Thank you very much, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, members of this community, for the opportunity to testify today on the importance of Surfside-Sunset and Newport Beach Replenishment Project in my congressional district. I represent California's 48th Congressional District, which includes the Orange County coastline and our incredible beaches. Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, Laguna Beach, and Newport Beach are all in the 48th District. More than 50 million people visit Orange County and our beautiful beaches, these cities, every year. We are proud of our community, our wildlife, and our reputation as one of the most beautiful places in the whole country.

Our coastline has historically been replenished with sand from the San Gabriel and Santa Ana Rivers. This was a naturally occurring process until the 1940s when the—until the Federal Government widened Anaheim Bay and constructed breakwater and jetties to serve the new military bases that opened to boost efforts for the Pacific Fleet. The Army Corps also created flood control projects along three local rivers, and breakwaters were constructed to create and protect the Los Angeles Long Beach Harbor. The new construction by the Federal Government created narrowed beaches that are now susceptible to extreme erosion.

In 1962, the Army Corps conducted a study and presented their finding to Congress. In that study, the Department of the Army proposed measures to mitigate adverse effects of previously constructed projects and its views concerning responsibility for such mitigating measures. House Document 602 acknowledged that the Federal Government was responsible, responsible for the disruption to the naturally occurring replenishment process.

Congress accepted the findings from the study and passed Public Law 87-874, which approved and authorized the Orange County replenishment. The law also declared that there would be periodic beach nourishment with no time limit on Federal aid authorized. The Army Corps began replenishing sand in 1964, placing approximately 18 million cubic yards of sand at Surfside and Sunset Beach over 12 construction stages, which occurred in 5 to 7 years intervals.

In 1995, after planning Stage 10, the Army Corps abandoned their responsibility to Orange County and decided to stop providing congressionally mandated shoreline protection. In 2000, the Army Corps stated that it was no longer budgeting for future stages. Stage 13 is long overdue and has a non-Federal cost-to-share agree-

ment with local stakeholders. They stand ready with over \$7 million in funding.

As this project continues to be delayed, it is only adding more cost to taxpayers. Had Stage 13 been constructed in 2017 when the designs were completed, the total cost would have been approximately \$16 million. Now the Federal Government's cost alone: \$15.5 million. Local stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Seal Beach, and the Surfside Stormwater District.

Before serving in Congress, I was Orange County supervisor during my tenure. I approached Congress and Army Corps to fund complete this vital project that is required by U.S. law. I am here today to urge once again for the funding for this project. It is imperative that Army Corps immediately move forward on this project. The Federal Government needs to fix the problem it caused: manmade sand erosion. It is a no-brainer. The safety, security, and health of our community is depending on it.

Thank you for your time today to address the urgent need for Surfside-Sunset and Newport Beach Replenishment Project. I have local resolutions and support letters from Orange County, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Seal Beach, orders from July 2020 flood, from Newport Beach I would love to submit for the record. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. AGUILAR. Without objection, we will take those for the record.

[The information follows:]

Rep. Michelle Steel (CA-48) Testimony June 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and Members of this Committee, for the opportunity to testify today on the importance of the Surfside-Sunset & Newport Beach Replenishment Project in my congressional district.

I represent California's 48<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which includes the Orange County coastline and our incredible beaches. Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, Laguna Beach, and Newport Beach are all in the 48<sup>th</sup> District. More than 50 million people visited Orange County and our beautiful beach cities in 2019. We are proud of our community, our wildlife and our reputation as one of the most beautiful places in the whole country.

Our coastline has historically been replenished with sand from the San Gabriel and Santa Ana Rivers. This was a **naturally** occurring process until the 1940's when the federal government widened Anaheim Bay and constructed breakwaters and jetties to service the new military bases that opened to boost efforts for the Pacific Fleet. The Army Corps also created flood control projects along three local rivers, and breakwaters were constructed to create and protect the Los Angeles/Long Beach harbor. This new construction by the federal government created narrowed beaches that are now susceptible to extreme erosion.

In 1962, the Army Corps conducted a study and presented their finding to Congress. In that study, the Department of the Army proposed measures to "mitigate adverse effects of previously constructed projects" and "its views concerning responsibility for such mitigating measures."

House Document 602 acknowledged that the Federal government **was responsible** for the disruption to the naturally occurring replenishment process. Congress accepted the findings from the study and passed Public Law 87-874 which approved and authorized the Orange County replenishment. The law also declared that there would be “periodic beach nourishment with no time limit on federal aid authorized.”

The Army Corps began replenishing sand in 1964, placing approximately 18 million cubic yards of sand at Surfside and Sunset beach over 12 construction stages which occurred in 5–7-year intervals. In 1995, after planning Stage 10, the Army Corps abandoned their responsibilities to Orange County and decided to stop providing congressionally-mandated shoreline protection. In 2000, the Army Corps stated that it was no longer budgeting for future stages.

Stage 13 is long overdue and has a non-federal cost share agreement with local stakeholders. They stand ready with over \$7 million in funding. As this project continues to be delayed, it’s only adding more costs to taxpayers. Had Stage 13 been constructed in 2017, when the designs were completed, the total cost would have been approximately \$16 million. Now the Federal government’s cost share alone is \$15.5 million. Local stakeholders include the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Seal Beach, and the Surfside Stormwater District.

Before serving in Congress, I was an Orange County Supervisor. During my tenure, I pushed Congress and the Army Corps to fund and complete this vital project that is required by U.S. law. I am here today to urge, once again, for the funding of this project. Our community cannot

afford to wait any longer for these projects to restart. Every major and minor storm subsequently diminishes the protective buffer. Some areas have less than 100 feet of sand protecting them from the Pacific Ocean. Sadly, in July 2020 the area saw a flood event that caused a natural disaster. Newport Beach saw strong ocean waves overpower the coastline and flood surrounding areas including neighborhoods and automobiles. Officials had to rescue over one hundred people and worked fast to limit the destabilizing impacts. Had the beaches not been closed due to COVID, the outcome could have been more severe.

It is imperative that the Army Corps immediately move forward on this project. The federal government needs to fix the problem it caused — it is a no-brainer. The safety, security and health of our communities depend on it.

Thank you for your time today to address the urgent need for the Surfside-Sunset & Newport Beach Replenishment Project. I have local resolutions and support letters from Orange County, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Seal Beach and photos from the July 2020 Flood I would like to submit for the record.

Mr. AGUILAR. We thank you for talking about that important project, and we know that it was the only project that you submitted for the community funding project programs.

With that, we will go to Representative Darren Soto from Florida.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. DARREN SOTO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF FLORIDA**

Mr. SOTO. Thank you, Chairman Aguilar, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the Appropriations Committee. I wanted to take a few minutes to give you some impressions about the new budget process. Our new community budget funding request program is an open and transparent process poised to fund key local priorities in fast-growing central Florida and across the Nation. The new rules, as we have seen them in working fashion, are paving the way for an ethical and transparent process worthy of the Congress and our constituents. Hosting website notices and applications, requiring Members to sponsor these requests, making the requests public, banning requests from for-profit businesses and allowing the public enough time to scrutinize these requests are key reforms, and they are instilling integrity, process, and trust into our budget process again.

The day that the Appropriations Committee announced the CBFs, we immediately put out our notices on our official website and social media and e-newsletter. We hosted a townhall with local officials and administrators. We provided application tips and deadlines, answered questions, and took suggestions. We gave applicants several weeks to apply but also enough time for a meaningful review of these projects. We ended up selecting mostly local government proposals since they were well vetted, demonstrated strong support from the community, and had the sophistication and wherewithal to spend said Federal funding and complete projects in a timely manner. We also sent out public notice of all the selected projects, which were well received by our local press.

Central Florida grew approximately 20 percent from 2010 to 2020, according to the U.S. Census. Our community has a great need for higher-paying jobs, affordable housing, transportation projects, among others. And, for years, these decisions were made by D.C. bureaucrats, far removed from our community and rarely accessible to elected Members of Congress. They never knew our communities like Members do. As a result, this grant process was a far cry from what our Founding Fathers anticipated when they drafted article I, and I know you all feel the same.

We are starting to see our constituents understand the direct value again between the taxes they pay and the local projects being federally funded, and it is critical to a healthy Republic to keep our constituents well informed on Federal spending locally and ensure they see the value of their taxes and real progress made in our communities.

I hope you will give full and fair consideration to a couple key projects that we put forward for our fast-growing region. First, higher paying jobs. We put forward two solar projects at our local high tech high school and our local community college that will not only help with renewable energy, but students will learn how to operate and construct solar panels and solar projects. Lake Wales, a historically African-American town from the southern rural part of my district, has had a rundown downtown for quite a while. This project would allow for downtown streetscapes to be upgraded to help small businesses there. In Winter Haven, we have an inter-modal station where so many different goods come in. This would allow for them to connect directly to the fiberoptic cable deep underground to be able to speed up the technology to move goods.

Combating homelessness. Many in the tourism corridor who work at the hotels and motels, they are home-insecure, and so the Hope Center's motel conversion would allow for rapid rehousing to occur.

Protecting clean water. St. Cloud, another rural community in our district, had issues with resin building up in their water systems, and this would help provide an alternative water supply for this growing rural community.

Improving healthcare and public safety with a behavioral outreach mobile crisis unit to help those with mental health issues in rural Cook County, as well as a new fire station in the historic African-American area of Oakland and Haines City, one that has eluded us for many years.

And, lastly, to promote arts and recreation, the Berlinsky House, which they perform community theater in Kissimmee as well as the Lake Nona Community Center in Orange County, a fast-growing area that lacks that sense of community without being able to have public spaces for people to come together.

Thank you, everyone, for this opportunity, and I yield back.

[The information follows:]



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9<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, FLORIDA



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

June 7, 2021

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

Our new community budget funding request (CBFR) program is an open and transparent process poised to fund key local priorities in fast growing Central Florida and across the nation.

New rules are paving the way for an ethical and transparent process worthy of the Congress and our constituents. Hosting website notices and applications, requiring members to sponsor these requests, making the requests public, banning requests for for-profit businesses, and allowing the public enough time to scrutinize requests, are key reforms instilling integrity, progress and trust into the budget process.

The day that the Appropriations Committee announced CBFR's, we immediately put out notices on our official website, social media and e-newsletter. We hosted a town hall with local officials and administrators. We provided application tips and deadlines, answered questions and took down suggestions. We gave applicants several weeks to apply, but also enough time for our meaningful review of these projects. We ended up mostly selecting local government proposals since they were well-vetted, demonstrated strong support from the community and had the sophistication and wherewithal to spend said federal funding and complete projects in a timely manner. We also sent out a public notice of all the selected projects, which was well-received by the local press.

Central Florida grew approximately 20% from 2010 to 2020 according to the US Census. Our community has a great need for higher paying jobs, affordable housing and transportation projects. For years, these decisions were made by DC bureaucrats far removed for our community, and rarely accessible to elected members of congress. They never knew our communities like members do. As a result, this grant process was a far cry from the vision of our Founding Fathers, when they drafted Article I of the US Constitution. These new jobs, affordable housing and transportations projects have been desperately needed for years, were selected by a local member with close insight, and now finally have a chance to be funded.

In addition, TIGER Grants, Community Development Block Grants, and other federally funded initiatives have been spent for years locally without any reference to their federal source. This left a disjoint among my constituents between the roughly 1/3 of their pay they send to Washington as income taxes, and the funding that actually returned to our community. In short, constituents paid their taxes but were kept in that dark on how these funds were spent locally. These new CBFR's have been highlighted in the press, and are now well-known to our local communities.

Constituents are once again starting to see the direct value between the taxes they pay and the local projects being federally-funded. It is critical to a healthy Republic to keep our constituents well-informed on federal spending locally, and ensure they see the value of their taxes and real progress made in our communities.

Sincerely,



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Mr. AGUILAR. I thank the gentleman from Florida, and we know that you worked diligently with your local government partners to come up with those projects, so I appreciate the advocacy of you and your district staff in order to submit those requests. Thank you so much.

With that, we will go to the gentlewoman from Michigan, Ms. Tlaib.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF MICHIGAN**

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you so much, Chair Aguilar, and thank you to Chairwoman DeLauro for always being accessible to all of us and of course, our ranking member of the committee, Ranking Member Granger.

Many of you always wonder where my passion comes from, and I always remind folks that I grew up in the most beautiful Blackest city in the country, in the city of Detroit. You don't only have one mother in Detroit; you have what you call community mothers watching over you, making sure that you are safe, fed and the loved. And today I am not only just serving as their Congress Member but as one of those community mothers, hoping that you will all please help my neighbors.

I represent the third poorest congressional district in the country, and this means as a member, I am getting calls from mothers asking me to help them find an early childhood education program, not only for the development of their child but a place where their child can eat twice a day.

I fight so hard to get to the root causes of water shutoffs. Up to 17,000 homes in my district faced water shutoffs alone. And it is because when a mother gets her water shut off, Mr. Chair, not only does she have no access to water, her children are taken away from her, and this is simply wrong. This shouldn't be happening, especially when in our State, in the State of Michigan, a multibillion dollar corporation like Nestle is paying only \$200 a year to extract 1 million gallons of water a day for profit. Since 2012, colleagues, water bills have surged 31 percent across the Nation. This increase in the cost of water is a faster increase than the price of groceries and gasoline. An average American, our neighbors, our residents, households will pay more for their water in 2 months than Nestle will pay for a year, and this is outrageous and simply disgusting.

So, Mr. Chair, when I read about a retired couple—and this is a true story in my district—they had to collect snow in a bucket to allow it to melt so they can use it to flush their toilet. I knew when I read that story that this was a major crisis, and later I found out this is a national crisis across our country. Water is a human right, and no American should be too poor to live in basic comfort. I ask that you include language preventing all utility shutoffs: water, power, broadband. As many communities are still struggling to recover from the pandemic, we cannot allow these essential services to be ripped away.

I can ask also please to support at the highest level of funding for our clean water and drinking water State revolving funds. This

is so critically important. These funds are critical to delivering clean water to communities like ours and provides long overdue improvements to water infrastructure. Over 60 schools in one of my cities placed garbage bags over their school drinking fountains because the water is too contaminated, just full of lead. Our children deserve us to be bold and aggressive on addressing water crisis. What happened to Flint, y'all, that experience, which still has not truly been fixed, is happening across the country. The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program is another program that needs continued support at a higher level. But please know this: We can't just support what we call LIHWAP if we don't also require reconnection services and allow us to use some of that funding for public plumbing services, which helps us get to the root causes of the high water costs.

What is even worse about our continued support of LIHWAP is that we cannot have a situation, this is exactly what we have, where we have neighbors applying for assistance through LIHWAP, and we fought really hard to get money in there, and then the Water Department and the utility companies are not required to reinstate access to water. Over 100 community advocacy organizations and public health organizations estimate that we need \$4 billion to truly have a dent into helping our neighbors access water.

We cannot continue, y'all, to throw money at a crisis of this size and not attach, again, requirements for reconnection services and also provisions that ensure our residents are protected and that the program gets again to the root causes of the high cost of water.

With that, Mr. Chair, and again, Ranking Member Granger, I hope that you will look to me as a resource in the city of Detroit and my district rebirth movements, not only labor rights movements, the civil rights movement, but this movement on access to water. It was birthed right here. And we hope that you look to us not only as a resource but also to tell the human stories behind what is happening in doing nothing about the water crisis. Thank you, and I yield.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you so much, Representative Tlaib. We know that you are a passionate advocate for your communities and have been such a thought leader on the issues about water and food security and poverty programs within our communities, so thanks so much.

With that, we will go to Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee from Texas.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF TEXAS**

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Good morning. It is still morning here. Thank you so very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the ranking member for your leadership and, of course, our chairman's leadership, Rosa DeLauro. Collectively, the Appropriations Committee is working very hard, and I am very grateful for that.

This time that we have is really a hand up and not a handout. Our communities want hands up. They want to be able to self-help. And the idea of the new transparent and very effective opportunity for community projects is crucial to languishing communities. I want to applaud my mayor, who has established something called the Communities Projects or Complete Communities, which is to work on these inner city communities, as well areas that are almost rural, to be able to say, "You count."

I want to share with you the structure that we use. This is show and tell. I think you can see it. We have something called accounts eligible for community project requests. We went right to our website and made sure all of our community was aware. We engaged with our partners and discussed with them how best to be effective in their presentations, and now I come to you hopefully to secure your consideration of these very important projects.

One that we are really invested in is our young people. I chair the Congressional Children's Caucus, and so the Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Project, and I have been very modest in my request, \$1 million, that has a court system in the inner city that will support a juvenile justice diversion program right in the inner city where Barbara Jordan was born, working with Pleasant Hill Ministries in partnership with the Harris County District Attorney's Office, a critically needed community program that has assisted an average of 100 children each year. It will provide for a diversion as opposed to going in, quotes, "downtown" and winding up in the juvenile jail or maybe in the Harris County jail. It has saved so many lives in diversion, and this would help us do even more.

The East End recipient, the funding would construct the Bethune Empowerment Center and the East End, a facility for Latino arts, merging the Black and Brown community, which is so crucial, building up an arts center in one area and building up an empowerment center, an incubator for businesses in another historic community called Acres Home. What a perfect matching to come together, and that is my project for \$4 million.

Then, of course, the historic program at the historic Booker T. Washington High School. We know Booker T. Washington is one of

our leaders in the idea of working with one's hands and building up. This school has a great idea, getting with climate change, teaching our children about our food education and production, working with a garden, helping to raise beds that will deal with carbon dioxide, a wind farm. What a wonderful and important responsibility for our children.

The Houston Independent School District Program, again project engagement, that is a million dollar project dealing with emotional learning for our children, which is so very important. The city of San Jacinto, one of my small cities. Again, what do they need? Water. And so this project will allow water distribution lines that are at least 75 years old to——

[Audio difficulty]

[The information follows:]



**CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE (TX-18)**

**STATEMENT BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
FULL COMMITTEE**

**VIRTUAL MEMBER DAY HEARING ON  
APPROPRIATIONS ACTS FOR FY 2022**

**9**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021**

**10:00 A.M.**

**CISCO WEBEX**

*(SIL requested to be online at 12:20 p.m. and scheduled to testify at 12:30 p.m.)*

*Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and distinguished  
Members of the Committee:*

- As a senior member of the Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, let me offer my appreciation and thanks to Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for the difficult work and choices that must be made to produce truly bipartisan spending bills, and for their commitment to producing bills that fairly reflect the interests and priorities of the American people.
- I especially wish to thank Chairwoman DeLauro for her leadership in establishing a process for the Committee to consider, guided by important reforms that build on existing House Rules and prioritize accountability, transparency, and strong community support, Community Funding Projects – and thereby take advantage of Members' deep knowledge of the pressing needs in their districts.
- As you pointed out Madam Chair, "Community Project Funding is a critical reform that will make Congress more responsive to the people" and help restore the balance between the legislative and executive branches on important decisions about how and where to spend taxpayer dollars."
- I understand that my entire statement will be made part of the record so I will keep my remarks brief and in the few minutes allotted I wish to highlight the Community Projects Funding requests that I have submitted for the Committee's consideration.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUNDING REQUESTS****1. Recipient: Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corp.**

Amount: \$1,000,000

Description: The requested funding will support a Juvenile Justice Diversion program created by the Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation and Pleasant Hill Ministries, in partnership with the Harris County District Attorney's Office and Juvenile Probation, a critically needed community program that has assisted on average 100 children each year. The funding will allow expansion of the program to expand and provide services to at-risk youth who live outside the Fifth Ward.

**2. Recipient: City of Houston, (HISD)**

Amount: \$4,000,000

Description: This funding will be used to construct the Bethune Empowerment Center and the East End Facility for Latino Arts (Talento Bilingue de Houston). The City of Houston is developing a sustainable long-term plan for the city-owned facility in the East End Cultural District. The theater needs tech upgrades, an updated ticketing system, rest room and dressing room updates, fly system repairs, seating and HVAC improvements and repairs. This project is a foundation of the cultural landscape of Houston's East End over the next ten years.

**3. Recipient: Houston Independent School District HISD**

Amount: \$1,060,000

Description: This funding will be used to construct "The Vison" Community Statue Project on the historic Booker T. Washington High School campus, which will become a sustainable growing environment that will provide a living laboratory food education center as well as a production facility. The grounds will feature raised beds gardens for food production. The raised beds gardens will act as a carbon sink to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in soil and plants. A wind farm will be installed that can supply electrical energy to the entire project and the football field. There will also be two container houses to be used for the display of historical and engineering artifacts and a container house for use as a Plant Factory with Artificial Lighting (PFAL).

**4. Recipient: Houston Independent School District HISD**

Amount: \$1,000,000

Description: This funding will be used for Project Engagement, an initiative to provide social and emotional learning services to high-needs students, and will provide funding for Project Engagement at Houston ISD's eight early childhood centers, 160 elementary schools, and 40 middle schools, and 10 K-8 schools (218 schools) for one academic year.

The communities served by HISD are comprised of African Americans (24%) and Hispanic (61.84%) students. HISD is the seventh largest school district in the nation with over 214,000 children served by 278 campuses. These challenges are exacerbated by the fact that HISD has 74.72% of its students who meet the federal criteria for free and reduced lunches; 71.63% of the students served are considered at-risk, and 31.47% of students have limited English proficiency. The onset of COVID-19 brought additional hardship when schools closed due to the health crisis and tens of thousands of students lost critical services and support provided by local schools.

HISD does not have the resources needed to provide these critical services and the Texas state government has refused to spend the nearly \$19 billion in federal funding provided to address local K-12 education needs of schools, educators, children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

##### **5. Recipient: City of Jacinto City**

Amount: \$1,950,000

Description: The funding will be used to replace aging water and delivery infrastructure to a large portion of Jacinto City's residential and business districts. The current water distribution lines are at least 75 years old and are unable to provide adequate volume or the required pressure needed to serve our residents or to provide adequate fire flows. The most recent ISO inspection cited poor water infrastructure as a key problem in the area due to the system's inability to deliver the volume of water needed to protect several of the larger structures including a three-story hotel, an event center and several large strip centers.

The project area includes the city's only library and only major grocery store. Also included are several hundred residents and dozens of restaurants and other small businesses. There is also a large life safety concern due to the area containing two kidney dialysis centers which are fully dependent on a constant flow of potable water at an

adequate pressure. Recent water distribution failures in this area have impacted both of the dialysis centers, restaurants and the city's only hotel, theater and shopping centers.

**6. Recipient: Harris County, Texas**

Amount: \$22,760,000

Description: This funding will be used for three flood projects, the Stormwater Detention Basin and Culvert Improvement; the Aldine Westfield Stormwater Detention Basin; and the Blue Bell Regional Stormwater Detention Basin.

**7. Recipient: City of Houston, (Houston Police Dept.)**

Amount: \$975,000

Description: This funding will be used to support the employment of nine (9) crime victim advocates via the BYRNE Justice Assistance Grants Program. These advocates help the department provide a trauma-informed response for victims of violent crimes.

**8. Recipient: Texas Southern University**

Amount: \$10,000,000

Description: This will fund the Urban Public Health Initiative - Health Professions Education and Workforce Development and Health Facilities Construction and Equipment Program.

**9. Recipient: Houston Community College**

Amount: \$7,913,050

Description: This funding will be used to fund a Regional Resiliency Operations Center (RROC) for program development, training and certification of disaster and mitigation professionals.

**10. Recipient: Port of Houston Authority**

Amount: \$1,500,000

Description: This funding will be used to begin a sedimentation study concurrent with the deepening and widening of the Houston Ship Channel.

**HOUSTON METRO & THE PRESIDENT'S AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN**

- The President's American Rescue Plan could speed the delivery of METRO's transit plan which includes the following:
  - \$2.10 billion for Light Rail extensions to Hobby Airport, the North Shepherd Park and Ride as well as across Buffalo Bayou in Downtown,

- \$3.23 billion for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT),
  - \$1.56 billion for new and improved High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV lanes),
  - \$179 million for the enhancement of high frequency bus routes throughout the METRO service area, and
  - \$414 million for new and improved Park & Ride facilities and transit centers.
- METRO Next is a \$7.5 billion, 20-year, transit plan that was approved by the voters in the METRO area along with \$3 billion in bonding authority. The plan generally assumed a 50/50 split on federal grants however if the American Rescue Plan ensures at least 80 percent federal shares as was once the norm METRO could vastly accelerate all of the projects envisioned in the plan.
  - The plan enables METRO to serve more people and more places, provides better access to the underserved and disabled, and implements innovation to keep the Houston region moving and well positioned for the future.

**REQUESTED REPORT LANGUAGE:**

- Finally, Madam Chair, I would request the Committee to include the following language in the report:

**Anti-White Nationalist Domestic Terrorism Actions**

“The Committee is cognizant of the vulnerabilities to the safety and security of persons, property, and interests working or located in the U.S. Capitol and its environs.

“The insurrection that occurred on January 6, 2021, when an incited mob of domestic terrorists, white nationalists and supremacists laid siege to the Capitol Building in order to disrupt a constitutionally mandated duty of the Congress is a dark stain on the nation’s history, and exacerbated by the fact that a large number of the marauders had previously taken oaths – as law enforcement officers, as members of the military, and as civil servants and contractors - to uphold and defend the Constitution, and to do so with true faith and allegiance.

“The U.S. Intelligence Community has assessed that domestic terrorism, particularly white supremacy and white nationalist organizations, is the greatest and most imminent threat to our nation and democratic form of government. The Committee applauds the service and sacrifice of the

men and women who serve the American people in the civilian and military sectors of government.

“The Committee, however, cautions and directs the Secretary to exercise vigilance and take decisive action to identify, isolate, and remove from service individuals whose actions of January 6 2021 at the U.S. Capitol or whose connections, actions, or affiliations with white nationalist organizations pose a threat to the security of the United States.

“Actions the Secretary should take include undertaking an immediate review of a clearance when a security clearance holder is reported to have engaged in violent acts against individuals, property, or public spaces based on the security clearance holder’s association or sympathy with persons or organizations that advocate, threaten, or use force or violence, or any other illegal or unconstitutional means, in an effort to prevent others from exercising their rights under the Constitution or laws of the United States or of any State, based on factors including, at a minimum, race, religion, national origin, or disability.”

#### **CONCLUSION**

- Madam Chair, I thank you and the Ranking Member for your leadership and for extending me this opportunity to share my major priorities with the Subcommittee.

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Wilson, we are waiting on Representative Jackson Lee to see if she can join us back. She had some tech issues. On deck we have Ms. Schrier, but if we can figure out your issues and get your video, then you will be after that, if that is okay.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. That will be fine. Thank you.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you so much. But let's see if we can sort out the video as well.

Ms. Schrier, why don't we go to you. We will pause and give Representative Jackson Lee her 90 seconds back when she joins us, but feel free to start. Thanks for joining us.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. KIM SCHRIER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

Ms. SCHRIER. Thank you, Chairman Aguilar, and Ranking Member Granger as well. I appreciate the opportunity to share my priorities on behalf of Washington State's Eighth Congressional District. I am proud of all the community projects and programmatic appropriations requests I submitted this year. However, with today's time constraints, I just want to highlight a few.

So, as you consider funding for fiscal year 2022, I would love to express my strong support to improve our Nation's recycling system with a specific focus on plastics recycling. The 2020 study by the EPA found that the current U.S. recycling system faces several challenges, including confusion about what materials can be recycled and recycling infrastructure that has not kept pace with today's diverse and changing and increasing waste stream.

And to help address some of these challenges, my letter to appropriators asked for more funding for two of the EPA's recycling grant programs. One, the Post-Consumer Materials Management Infrastructure Grant Program provides Federal funding to help strengthen local recycling programs. Local government serves as the backbone for our Nation's recycling system, assuming nearly full responsibility for the cost of residential recycling education, collection, and operation, and these funds will provide local governments with the resources they need.

The other is the trash-free water drinking water infrastructure and wastewater infrastructure grant programs. Debris, particularly plastic pollution, is a global crisis. Now, these grant programs provide the needed funds to keep plastic waste and other post-consumer materials out of landfills and waterways, helping to protect our health, well-being, and the environment. The need for us to manage our own waste has become especially urgent since foreign recycling operations no longer accept U.S. plastics. Strengthening recycling infrastructures and markets for recycled products within communities across the Nation is imperative to increasing the economic and viability of a recycling system.

The next priority I would love to bring to your attention is funding within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, or ASPR, to continue development of rapid, at-home COVID-19 tests as well as support for interagency coordinated testing strategy. Even as vaccines are rolling out and offer a light at the end of the tunnel, we know that COVID-19 continues to circulate and mutate. And, without widely available, inexpensive rapid testing, this will continue to be a difficult disease to control. So easily accessible tests with a fast result that can be taken at

home, school, the workplace, without a prescription can help Americans minimize the risk of infection, whichever course this disease takes. This is especially important now for families with younger children who don't yet have access to the vaccine. Large scale surveillance and use of rapid testing will allow childcare facilities and schools to open and stay open and will reassure many parents.

Finally, I would like to highlight two of my community project funding submissions. The month of May marks the beginning of traditional wildfire season. However, my State has already had well over 200 fires this year. If funded, the Cle Elum Ridge phase 1 wildfire protection plan will initiate a series of forest management interventions to help prevent wildfires from getting out of control.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources identified the city of Roslyn within the Cle Elum as one of our State's communities at greatest risk. In 2017, the Jolly Mountain fire threatened the City of Roslyn and the surrounding communities, and the suppression cost for the Jolly Mountain fire exceeded \$35 million. Had the proposed forest health work been done, Jolly Mountain would likely have been a managed fire with far less threat to the community and firefighters and far reduced suppression costs. So please consider the critical role this will play and an example for other communities.

Another project is the school-based health clinic at Graham-Kapowsin High School. This construction will help provide a health clinic to support the medical, dental, and behavioral health needs of approximately 3,500 students on campus. The proposed clinic would serve a rural population in great need of care, and having a facility like this on campus will help reach students quickly.

Lastly, I was incredibly excited to see President Biden's budget that includes two of my other priorities, the Legacy Roads and Trails Program, and also proposed extension to the increase in the WIC cash value vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables. So thank you for your consideration, and I yield back.

[The information follows:]

**Written Remarks for Congresswoman Kim Schrier, M.D. of WA-08:**

I appreciate the opportunity to share my priorities on behalf of Washington state's 8th congressional district. I'm proud of all the Community Projects and programmatic appropriations requests I submitted this year. However, with today's time constraints, I will highlight just a few.

As you consider funding for fiscal year 2022 I would like to express my strong support to **improve our nation's recycling system with a specific focus on plastics recycling.** A 2020 study by the EPA found that the current U.S. recycling system faces several challenges, including confusion about what materials can be recycled and recycling infrastructure that has not kept pace with today's diverse and changing waste stream. To help address some of these challenges, **my letter to appropriators asks for more funding for two of the EPA's recycling grant programs. One, the Post-Consumer Materials Management Infrastructure Grant Program** provides federal funding to help strengthen local recycling programs. Local governments serve as the backbone of our nation's recycling system – assuming nearly full responsibility for the cost of residential recycling education, collection, and operation. These funds will provide local governments with resources to build a more resilient U.S. recycling system.

**The other is the Trash-Free Waters, Drinking Water Infrastructure, and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Programs.** Debris, particularly plastic pollution, is a global crisis. These grant programs provide the needed funds to help keep plastic waste and other post-consumer materials out of landfills and waterways, helping to protect our health, wellbeing, and environment. The need for us to manage our own waste has become especially urgent, since foreign recycling operations no longer accept US plastics.

Strengthening recycling infrastructure and markets for recycled materials within communities across the nation is imperative to increasing the economic and environmental viability of our recycling system.

The next priority I would like to bring to your attention is dedicated funding within the **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to continue development of rapid, at-home COVID-19 tests, as well as support for an inter-agency coordinated testing strategy.** Even as vaccines offer a light at the end of the tunnel, we know that COVID-19 continues to circulate and mutate. Without widely available, inexpensive rapid testing this will continue to be a difficult disease to control

Easily accessible tests with a fast result that can be taken at home, school, or in the workplace, without a prescription, can help Americans minimize the risk of infection while allowing our communities to return to sustained normalcy. This is especially important for families with younger children, who do not yet have access to the vaccine. Employing large-scale surveillance use of rapid testing will allow childcare facilities and elementary schools to open safely and stay open, and will allow many parents concerned about safety, particularly mothers, to return to the workforce.

Finally, I'd like to highlight two Community Project Funding submissions. The month of May marks the beginning of "traditional" wildfire season. However, my state has already fought off over 200 fires just this year. If funded, the **Cle Elum Ridge Phase 1 Wildfire Protection Plan** will initiate a series of forest management interventions to help prevent wildfires.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources identified The City of Roslyn, within the Cle Elum Ridge, as one of our state's communities at greatest risk of catastrophic wildfire. In 2017 the Jolly Mountain Fire threatened the City of Roslyn and surrounding communities. The

suppression cost for the Jolly Mountain Fire exceeded \$35 million. Had the proposed forest health work been done, Jolly Mountain would have likely been a “managed fire” with far less threat to communities and firefighters, and reduced suppression costs. Please consider the critical role this project will play in saving lives, ecosystems, property, and taxpayer dollars.

Another project that is critical to my district is the **School-Based Health Clinic at Graham-Kapowsin High School**. This construction will provide a health clinic to support the medical, dental, and behavioral health needs of approximately 3,500 students on campus. The proposed clinic would serve a rural population in my district with limited access to medical services. Ultimately, having this facility on campus will improve underserved students’ physical and mental health, provide immunizations, prevent unintended pregnancies, and improve educational outcomes.

Lastly, I was incredibly excited to see that President Biden’s budget request includes two of my other priorities: first, \$8 million for the Legacy Roads and Trails Program and, second, a proposed extension to the increase in the WIC cash value vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration of these requests.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thanks so much, Dr. Schrier. We appreciate your advocacy. We saw the project list on water, wastewater, wildfire management, all representative of your district, and we appreciate it. So thanks so much for joining us.

Dr. SCHRIER. Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. AGUILAR. Committee members, we are going to—I thought we had Representative Jackson Lee. If she comes back, we will give her her 90 seconds.

Next on the list we have Representative Wilson for 5 minutes, Joe Wilson.

And then, Miss González-Colón, you are on deck.

Go ahead, Mr. Wilson.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JOE WILSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Acting Chairman Pete Aguilar and Ranking Member Kay Granger, thank you for your leadership on the committee. I am representing the Second District, and grateful of South Carolina, and the home of the historic Savannah River Site.

The Savannah River Site was constructed during the early 1950s to support national defense programs for victory in the Cold War. The site maintains the responsibility 70 years later through its National Laboratory, NNSA missions, and environmental cleanup.

I ask the committee to consider the following for the site:

To support the President's budget for the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility and the Savannah River Plutonium Operations.

As part of the two-site solution to plutonium pit production, the facility will provide the capability of producing no fewer than 80 plutonium pits per year by 2030.

With pits in our national nuclear inventory aging over 60 years, our Nation cannot afford to reach a point where we question whether or not the nuclear weapons work.

I support the President's No. 2 request for the Tritium Finishing Facility. The site is home to the Savannah River Tritium Enterprise, which prepares the Nation's only tritium supply for our national defense.

This new facility will replace an aged facility constructed in the 1950s that currently faces age-related problems and maintenance costs that could jeopardize tritium production operations necessary to maintain the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

Three, support the President's budget request for the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Project. This project at the site will safely dispose of 24 metric tons of surplus plutonium through the dilute-and-dispose process.

This project requires the installation of three new gloveboxes, ventilation, fire protection, and other support equipment to expand the existing facility.

Four, \$11.549 million for the Savannah River Site community and regulatory support. This secures payment in lieu of taxes for Aiken, Barnwell, and Allendale Counties, where the site is located, which I represent with Congressman Jim Clyburn.

This funding request matches what has been appropriated in prior years, and payments go to support local school districts, emergency services, and county operations.

Number 5, \$543,784 for the Savannah River Risk Management Operations. This request will allow critical missions, like H-Canyon at the SRS, to proceed uninterrupted and continue processing of spent nuclear fuels.

These funds will also maintain operations aligned with the Liquid Waste Life Cycle Program, cover necessary replacements to aged equipment, and provide critical infrastructure improvements.

Six, \$1.046 billion for the Savannah River Radioactive Liquid Tank Waste Stabilization and Disposition. This request includes continuation of hot operations of the Solid Waste Processing Facility, the Defense Waste Processing Facility, as well as continued construction of saltstone disposal units to accommodate the increased amount of waste being processed.

Seven, \$80 million for the Savannah River Nuclear Laboratory Radiological Facilities. The Savannah River National Laboratory operates a suite of RAD facilities that provide technical and operations support for NNSA missions.

And effective June 2021, the lab will become a separate Management and Operations contract. To cover the high cost of operating and maintaining radiological facilities, the lab overhead rate would increase significantly, making the laboratory uncompetitive for numerous nonradiological programs at the laboratory.

By creating a control point for the lab, it should prevent this problem and allow the Savannah River Nuclear Laboratory to safely operate the radiological facilities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your consideration of the requests. And, again, thank you, Acting Chairman Aguilar, for being so accommodating, along with Ranking Member Kay Granger.

[The information follows:]



**Appropriations Committee Testimony****Rep. Joe Wilson (SC-02)****June 9, 2021 at 11:20am**

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Kay Granger:

Thank you for your leadership on the committee. I am here today representing the Second District of South Carolina, the home of the Savannah River Site.

The Savannah River Site was constructed during the early 1950s to support our national defense programs during the Cold War. The site maintains that responsibility 70 years later through its national lab, NNSA missions, and environmental clean-up.

I ask the committee to consider the following for the Site:

1. \$30,000,000 for the Tritium Finishing Facility - The Site is home to the Savannah River Tritium Enterprise, which prepares the nation's only tritium supply for our national defense. This new facility will replace an aged facility constructed in the 1950s that currently faces age-related problems and maintenance costs that could jeopardize tritium production operations necessary to maintain the U.S. nuclear deterrent.
2. \$495,000,000 for the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility and \$200,000,000 for Savannah River Plutonium Operations - As part of a two-site solution to plutonium pit production, this facility will provide the capability of producing no fewer than 80 plutonium pits per year by 2030. With pits in our nuclear inventory aging, our nation cannot afford to reach a point where we question whether or not our nuclear weapons work.

3. \$115,000,000 for Surplus Plutonium Disposition project – This project at the Site will safely dispose of 24 metric tons of surplus plutonium through the dilute and dispose process. This project requires the installation of three new gloveboxes, ventilation, fire protection and other support equipment to expand the existing capability.
4. \$11,549,000 for Savannah River Site Community and Regulatory Support - This request secures Payment in Lieu of Taxes funding for Aiken, Barnwell, and Allendale counties of which the Site is located. This funding requests matches what has been appropriated in previous years and payments go to support the local school districts, emergency services, and county operations.
5. \$543,784,000 for Savannah River Risk Management Operations - This request will allow critical missions, like H-Canyon, at the SRS to proceed uninterrupted and continue processing of spent nuclear fuel. These funds will also maintain operations aligned with the Liquid Waste Life Cycle Program, cover necessary replacements to aged equipment, and provide critical infrastructure improvements.
6. \$1,046,000,000 for Savannah River Radioactive Liquid Tank Waste Stabilization and Disposition - This request includes continuation of hot operations of the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF), the Defense Waste Processing Facility, as well as continued construction of saltstone disposal units to accommodate for the increased amount of waste being processed through SWPF.
7. \$80,000,000 for the Savannah River National Laboratory Radiological (RAD) Facilities - The Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) operates a suite of RAD facilities that provide critical technical and operations support to the EM and NNSA missions. Effective June 2021, the lab will become a separate Management and Operations (M&O)

contract. To cover the high costs of operating and maintaining radiological facilities the lab overhead rate would increase significantly, making the laboratory uncompetitive for the numerous non-radiological programs at the laboratory. By creating a control point for the lab, it should prevent this problem and allow SRNL to safely operate the RAD facilities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these requests.

Mr. AGUILAR. Of course, of course. Thank you. And it doesn't surprise anyone on this committee your advocacy for the Savannah River National Lab. As someone who served on the Armed Services Committee with you, I know your passion about these issues and a strong national defense and protecting our country with the work that the labs do. So thank you so much.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you.

Mr. AGUILAR. Representative González-Colón, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER  
FROM PUERTO RICO**

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Thank you for allowing me. And I want to thank Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for the opportunity to testify on some of Puerto Rico's priorities for the next fiscal year.

I would like to focus my testimony today on the ten Community Project Funding requests I submitted on behalf of my constituents for the committee's consideration. These span a variety of issues crucial for both low-income and rural communities on the island, including water infrastructure improvement, food security, public safety, services for underserved populations, and projects to spur economic development.

First, I am requesting the committee provide the necessary funding to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to finally begin the construction phase of the Cano Martin Pena Ecosystem Restoration Project.

This is an authorized project that will help address detrimental conditions currently challenging the health and well-being of approximately 26,000 residents across eight communities in San Juan, the area's economic development, and critical infrastructure, like the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport in San Juan.

I am also requesting funding for the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Barranquitas Campus, to build the Center for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, which will expand their laboratory capabilities and maximize agriculture production by developing in vitro seeds to be used by local farmers and researchers.

These will in turn support food security, agricultural research, and crop production in Puerto Rico, all while assisting the economies of our rural municipalities on the island's mountainous central region.

To improve public safety in the rural municipality of Utuado, I requested assistance under the Byrne JAG account to help purchase law enforcement equipment for the municipal police force, including bulletproof vests and technological equipment.

I also have submitted a request on behalf of SER of Puerto Rico, a nonprofit organization on the island that is seeking funding to finance a program to support the comprehensive development of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Puerto Rico from the ages of 18 months to 6 years based on the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis.

Lastly, I submitted six requests under the Economic Development Initiative account to address pressing needs in some of our low-income communities.

For instance, funding to build stormwater infrastructure in the only public landfill in the municipality of Lajas and help extend its use by 25 years.

Assistance to the municipality of Yauco to fund construction of a new well and other improvements for the community water system in Rubias sector, a low-income rural community that has historically lacked reliable water service.

Funding for the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture to rehabilitate and address some of the infrastructure needs of the Jarealito Fishing Village in Arecibo. This will be crucial to ensure it complies with appropriate food safety standards and can continue to support fishing activities, which are one of the main economic drivers of nearby low-income coastal communities.

Financial assistance to the Boys and Girls Club of Puerto Rico to rehabilitate an unused public school they acquired to build their new community facility in the municipality of San Lorenzo, and thus make it suitable to serve students, residents, and their employees.

On behalf of the municipality of Patillas, funding to rehabilitate the Bosque Forestal, a forest recreation area. And on behalf of the municipality of Vega Alta, a request to fund the construction of an agritourism complex. Both projects seek to promote tourism and generate economic growth in these areas.

I respectfully ask the committee to consider all ten of these requests, which have strong community support and will help address important issues on the island.

So thank you, and I yield back.

[The information follows:]

**CONGRESSWOMAN JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN**

PUERTO RICO - AT LARGE

**Appropriations Full Committee Member Day Hearing  
FY 2022 Appropriations Bills  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
Rep. Jenniffer González-Colón  
Thursday, May 27, 2021**

Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for the opportunity to testify on some of Puerto Rico's priorities for the FY 2022 Appropriations bills.

I would like to focus my testimony today on the 10 Community Project Funding requests I submitted on behalf of my constituents for the Committee's consideration. These span a variety of issues crucial for both low-income and rural communities on the Island, including water infrastructure improvements, food security, public safety, services for underserved populations, and projects to spur economic development.

First, I'm requesting that the Committee provide the necessary funding to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to finally begin the construction phase of the Caño Martín Peña Ecosystem Restoration Project, an authorized project that will help address detrimental conditions currently challenging the health and wellbeing of approximately 26,000 residents across 8 communities, the area's economic development, and critical infrastructure like the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan.

I'm also requesting funding for the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Barranquitas Campus to build the Center for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, which would expand

their laboratory capabilities and maximize agricultural production by developing in vitro seeds to be used by local farmers and researchers. This will in turn support food security, agricultural research, and crop production in Puerto Rico, all while assisting the economies of our rural municipalities in the Island's mountainous, central region.

To improve public safety in the rural municipality of Utuado, I requested assistance under the Byrne JAG account to help purchase law enforcement equipment for the municipal police force, including bulletproof vests and technological equipment.

I also submitted a request on behalf of SER de Puerto Rico, a nonprofit organization on the Island that is seeking funding to finance a program to support the comprehensive development of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Puerto Rico from the ages of 18 months to 6 years, based on principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis.

Lastly, I submitted 6 requests under the Economic Development Initiative account to address pressing needs in some of our low-income communities. For instance, funding to build stormwater infrastructure in the only public landfill in the Municipality of Lajas and help extend its use by 25 years.

Assistance for the Municipality of Yauco, to fund the construction of a new well and other improvements for the community water system in Barrio Rubias, a low-income, rural community that has historically lacked reliable water service.



Funding for the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture to rehabilitate and address some of the infrastructure needs of the Jarealito Fishing Village in Arecibo. This will be crucial to ensure it complies with appropriate food safety standards and can continue supporting fishing activities, which are one of the main economic drivers of nearby low-income, coastal communities.

Financial assistance to help the Boys and Girls Club of Puerto Rico rehabilitate an unused public school they acquired to build their new community facility in the Municipality of San Lorenzo and thus make it suitable to serve students, residents, and their employees.

On behalf of the Municipality of Patillas, funding to rehabilitate Bosque Forestal, a forest recreation area. And on behalf of the Municipality of Vega Alta, a request to help fund the construction of an agritourism complex. Both projects seek to promote tourism and generate economic growth in these areas.

I respectfully ask that the Committee consider all ten of these requests, which have strong community support and will help address important issues in Puerto Rico.

Thank you

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you, Representative González-Colón, for your advocacy on behalf of the island. We appreciate it and we have those items that you submitted.

With that, we will go to Representative Fitzpatrick from Pennsylvania, followed by Representative Sherman from California.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, you have 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for convening this Member Day hearing, and I would like to speak briefly about my top appropriations requests.

Mr. Chairman, our country is currently facing an array of challenges relating to infrastructure, relating to immigration, relating to healthcare, as well as the ongoing struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic.

And despite these realities, most Members of Congress currently receive an annual salary of approximately \$170,000 a year, which is more than approximately 90 percent of American households.

A question we should all be asking: Why should Members of Congress whose job it is to serve the American people receive a pay raise when our constituents are struggling to pay their bills? The answer is clear: We shouldn't.

And I commend the Legislative Branch Subcommittee for including language during fiscal year 2021 that prevented Members of Congress from receiving a pay raise. And I hope that we can push this issue even further by adding that language to the appropriations bill for fiscal year 2022.

Specifically, Mr. Chairman, I would ask that the language be written into the appropriations bill to state that no adjustment be made under Section 601(a) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 related to the cost of living adjustments for Members of Congress.

Representing our communities in Congress, as we all know, is all about public service, and that is why including this language is vital to moving our country forward in a bipartisan, bicameral way.

Another issue, Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring to your attention is the impact that PFAS chemicals are having on so many of our communities, including ours in suburban Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania.

These forever chemicals, which are used in everyday items, have been found in high concentrations in sources of drinking water and other sites around the country.

Mr. Chairman, in my own district, I have been actively working with local officials to address PFAS contamination experienced by communities surrounding the former Naval Air Warfare Center in Warminster and the former Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, as well as the Horsham Air Guard Station.

We need to crack down on these harmful chemicals to keep our constituents safe from contaminated water. Earlier this year, alongside my colleagues on the Congressional PFAS Task Force, we

sent a letter to the President with nearly 100 cosigners asking to work with the administration on these PFAS issues, and specifically we raised the need to institute a national drinking water standard and designate even more PFAS chemicals as hazardous.

There are more than 700 active military installations around the country with PFAS contamination, and on March 24 of 2021, Paul Cramer, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, testified that it would cost approximately \$2 to \$3 billion to fully clean up PFAS contamination at and around current and former military bases.

And I ask that there be an increased funding for PFAS cleanup. This is a necessary step to ensure that a vigorous and successful cleanup is actually carried out. And as the co-chair of the Congressional PFAS Task Force, we are going to continue to fight for our communities' rights to safe and clean drinking water.

Mr. Chairman and the Ranking Member, I appreciate your consideration of these important priorities that I have spoken about here today, and I yield back.

[The information follows:]

Appropriations Testimony 6/9/21:

Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for convening this member day hearing. I would like to speak about my top appropriation requests.

Our country is currently facing an array of challenges relating to infrastructure, immigration, healthcare, and the ongoing struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these realities, most members of Congress currently receive an annual salary of 174,000 dollars a year, which is more than approximately 90 percent of American households.

Why should we as Members of Congress, whose job it is to serve the American people, receive a pay raise when our constituents are struggling to pay their bills? The answer is clear—we shouldn't.

I commend the Legislative Branch subcommittee for including language during fiscal year 2021 that prevented Members of Congress from receiving a pay raise. I hope we can push this issue even further by adding language to the appropriations bill for fiscal year 2022.

Specifically, I ask that language be written into the appropriations bill to state that no adjustment be made under 601(a) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946

relating to the cost of living adjustments for Members of Congress.

Representing our communities in Congress is about public service and that is why including this language is vital to moving our country forward in a bipartisan, bicameral way.

Another issue I would like to bring to your attention is the impact that PFAS chemicals are having on our communities.

These forever chemicals, which are used in everyday items, have been found in high concentrations in sources of drinking water and other sites around the country.

In my district, I have been actively working with local officials to address PFAS contamination experienced by communities surrounding the former Naval Air Warfare Center in Warminster, the former Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, and the Horsham Air Guard Station. We need to crack down on these harmful chemicals to keep our constituents safe from contaminated water.

Earlier this year, I alongside my colleagues on the Congressional PFAS Task Force, sent a letter to the President with nearly 100 cosigners asking to work with the administration on these PFAS issues. Specifically, we raised the need to institute a national drinking water standard and designate even more PFAS chemicals as hazardous.



There are more than 700 active military installations with PFAS contamination. On March 24, 2021, Paul Cramer, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, testified that it would cost approximately 2-3 billion dollars to fully clean up PFAS contamination at and around current and former military bases. I ask that there be increased funding for PFAS cleanup. This is necessary to ensure that a vigorous and successful cleanup is carried out.

As a co-chair of the Congressional PFAS Task Force, I will continue to fight for our communities' right to safe and clean drinking water.

I appreciate your consideration of these important priorities that I have spoken about here today. I yield back.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you so much, Representative Fitzpatrick. We appreciate your work on the PFAS Task Force, and I know this committee does not take that issue lightly. Chairwoman DeLauro and Defense Chairwoman McCollum have been having conversations with committee members about this topic. So thanks for your continued work on this.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you.

Mr. AGUILAR. Of course.

Representative Sherman from California, you have 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you.

I may start by taking just a minute to disagree with Mr. Fitzpatrick. I do not think—the decision is not whether Members of Congress get a pay raise, but whether we get an inflation adjustment. We have passed up the inflation [audio malfunction.]

Mr. AGUILAR. We lost your audio there, Brad.

Mr. SHERMAN. Can I be heard?

Mr. AGUILAR. Yes, we can hear you.

Mr. SHERMAN. As I was saying [audio malfunction.]

Mr. AGUILAR. We are going to go to—Brad, I am sorry. We are going to start you over and sort that out.

If we could go to Representative Cloud, and then we will come right back to you, Brad. You will be on deck. I am sorry about that.

Representative Cloud.

Mr. CLOUD. Well, thank you, Chair, and if I have similar issues, you can count it up probably from both of us as just a good strong case for rural broadband.

Thank you, Chair, thank you, Ranking Member, for allowing us to come and speak to you today [audio malfunction] Important power of the purse, of course, with Congress.

Spending taxpayer dollars is a weighty responsibility that we all take seriously, and that is why at the end of April I sent [audio malfunction.]

Mr. AGUILAR. Representative Cloud, I am sorry. We are having some of the same—

Mr. CLOUD. OK. Well—

Mr. AGUILAR. But it is working now, so let's go with it, but I will interrupt you if we have some issues.

Mr. CLOUD. [audio malfunction] Direct the Congressional Budget Office and [audio malfunction.]

Mr. AGUILAR. We are going to have to pause that. I am sorry. I just want to make sure that the committee can hear your testimony.

Mr. CLOUD. Yes, sir. I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Mr. AGUILAR. So we will pause that and sort it out and get a little bit of technical help.

We are working to get the next Member in, colleagues. As a reminder, we have got two folks sorting out audio issues in the breakout room, and I think we still have Ms. Jackson Lee with 90 seconds remaining that we will offer to give her back. But I believe we also have another colleague that is joining us here shortly. So appreciate your patience and sticking with us.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chair, while we are waiting, I just want to congratulate you on your dream catcher in the background. I have got two great Choctaw pieces behind, and I should tilt this, because

they are like cattle horns with, again, the appropriate feather accompaniment. But it pleases me to see you have a restful atmosphere where you are at.

Mr. AGUILAR. Yeah. We need it in this line of work, don't we, Mr. Cole?

Mr. COLE. I think every office should have a dream catcher.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, am I on now, or I need to wait?

Mr. AGUILAR. If we can get your video working, then we can proceed.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. OK. I can see myself, but you are saying you can't see me.

Mr. AGUILAR. We cannot see you, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Mr. SHERMAN. Can I do an audio check here? Can I be heard?

Mr. AGUILAR. Yeah. Mr. Sherman, we can hear you, but we cannot see you.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Oh, I see. So we have to wait, Mr. Chairman, on your side, your tech side? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. AGUILAR. Correct. Let me get the OK and see where we are going next. Apologies. But we can hear you both clearly. And I know Mr. Cloud also put in the chat that he was having some bandwidth issues as well. So let me get a little bit of clarity, and we will come back.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. We are very appreciative. Thank you so very much.

Mr. AGUILAR. Of course. No, thanks for your patience. We appreciate it.

Oh, Ms. Jackson Lee, there you go. We can see you.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And can you hear me?

Mr. AGUILAR. We can hear you and we can see you. So my recollection was you had 90 seconds, but please feel free to finish your testimony to the committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. First of all, thank you for the courtesies of this committee. I think you have all seen me over the years, how much I value the opportunity.

So let me quickly, I think I know where I was, I will just start again with Texas Southern University, historically Black college. And, again, I try to emphasize to be as fiscally responsible as possible. But this will fund the urban public health initiatives dealing with health professions, education and workforce development, sort of overlaying the inner cities' impact by COVID-19.

My request for the funding for the Houston Community College is a regional resiliency operations center, again for training. That is a major issue dealing with our community.

And as I see on the screen the chair of the committee dealing with homeland security, we are the epicenter of disaster and the need for mitigation. And so we need these kinds of trained professionals and we appreciate your consideration.

The Port of Houston, this is our economic engine. In Hurricane Harvey it suffered extensively. It is a manmade port, and this funding will help to begin the sedimentation study which happens all the time, the increased sedimentation.

Let me bring my remarks to a close as I mention the President's American Rescue Plan that needs to help speed the delivery of

METRO's transit plan, which includes the following dollars for light rail, for bus rapid transit.

These are dollars within your purview, \$2.10 billion, which will impact the growth of my Houston METRO, which is a young transit system in a city that is overwhelmed by traffic.

\$3.23 billion for bus rapid, \$1.56 billion for a new and improved high occupancy rate, \$175 million for enhancement of high frequency, and \$414 million for new and improved Park and Ride. I support all of that. And the METRONext is a \$7.5 billion, 20-year transit plan that was approved by the voters.

We are in need of the ending of our excessive carbon and air pollution, and we appreciate it.

I am concluding on this. The committee is cognizant of the vulnerabilities of the safety and security of persons, property, and interests working or located in the U.S. Capitol and its environments.

The insurrection that occurred on January 6, when an incited mob of domestic terrorists, White nationalists and supremacists laid siege to the Capitol building in order to disrupt a constitutionally mandated duty of the Congress, was a dark stain on the Nation's history, exacerbated by the fact that we saw our brave law enforcement, but tragically we heard, and reports show, that those who took the oath—law enforcement officers, members of the military, and civil service and contractors—were part of that mob.

The U.S. intelligence community has assessed that domestic terrorism, particularly White supremacy and White nationalist organizations, is the greatest and most imminent threat to our Nation and democratic form of government.

The committee applauds the service and sacrifice of men and women who serve the American people in the civilian and military sectors of government.

However, I would appreciate language being considered by this committee that cautions and directs the Secretary of all agencies to exercise vigilance and take decisive action to identify, isolate, and remove from service individuals whose actions on January 6, 2021, at the U.S. Capitol, or whose connections, actions, or affiliations with White nationalist organizations pose a threat to the security of the United States.

Actions the Secretary should take include undertaking an immediate review of a clearance when a security clearance holder is reported to have engaged in violent acts against individuals, property, or public spaces based on the security clearance holder's association or sympathy with persons or organizations that advocate, threaten, or use force or violence or any other illegal or unconstitutional means in an effort to prevent others from exercising their rights under the Constitution.

I would appreciate it if this language would be considered because people in service to this Nation who have taken an oath should not be, in contrast, fighting against this Nation and participating in an insurrection.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I appreciate your consideration of my projects. And we work very hard to interact with our community, and they

are sitting on their chairs with bated breath as to whether or not they will have an opportunity to receive these funds.

I thank you for your courtesy in this great, great effort that we have.

Mr. AGUILAR. We thank the Congresswoman from Texas. And, again, thanks for your patience and apologies for that delay.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you.

Mr. AGUILAR. We are going to go to Representative Bowman from New York, and then we will circle back to Mr. Sherman after Mr. Bowman.

Mr. Bowman, you have 5 minutes. Thanks for joining us.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JAMAAL BOWMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Mr. BOWMAN. Thank you so much for having me. Thank you, Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, for the opportunity to testify before the Appropriations Committee today.

I recently had the opportunity to testify before the Labor, HHS, Education Subcommittee and at this time would like to expand on that testimony, now that we have President Biden's complete budget request for the upcoming fiscal year.

I deeply appreciate the incredible work this committee carries out under your leadership, not only for our regular fiscal year spending but for the COVID relief packages and the anticipated infrastructure package.

I am here to testify in support of robust investments in programs that directly impact children and families in my district, which covers parts of the Bronx and Westchester County, New York.

I will start off by noting my support for President Biden's budget request, which reflects an understanding of the moment we find ourselves in as a Nation. Modest, incremental plus-ups to historically underfunded programs will never match the care and repair our communities need due to compounding crises, such as COVID-19, racial injustice, gun violence, growing wealth inequality, and the climate crisis.

This is not a disparate list. These are all interconnected and extremely traumatic. Without meaningful aid to our communities, our children and families can very quickly find themselves isolated and unsupported.

I commend this budget request for recognizing the need for substantial investments. We need to build upon it, not whittle it down further. I strongly urge that we don't negotiate ourselves out of finally securing a healthy and safe future for all our children, communities, and the planet.

I previously testified in support of strong investments for all early childhood education programs, such as Head Start and the Child Care Development Block Grant, as well as full-service community schools, IDEA, and Title II-A funding.

I would like to build on that testimony and address two more priorities for the committee's consideration as it writes the spending bills for fiscal year 2022.

As a former teacher, school counselor, and middle school principal, I think it is only right that the subcommittee responsible for education funding at the Federal level enjoys the largest share of nondefense spending.

I am encouraged to see that the Biden administration clearly understands we need to substantially invest in Title I. What we really ought to do is quadruple Title I funding, which would make a meaningful impact for students, teachers, and families in my district and many others across the country. A significant down payment towards that is the next best thing.

However, I am cautious about the proposal to carve out \$20 billion under Title I with a new formula that we have limited details about. I am concerned that this funding could be available for charter schools at a time where we need, at minimum, more oversight over charter schools, not additional funding sources when they already access a multitude, including through the New Market Tax Credit.

This is particularly concerning to me with respect to charter schools that contract with for-profit entities. I would strongly recommend that the committee include the funding level requested for Title I but maintain its current funding formula.

I want to commend this budget proposal for investing in broadband and would urge that we build upon it. Inequitable access to broadband took a substantial impact on students and families during the pandemic. We saw students trying to use the WiFi in local restaurants and trying to complete homework on a cell phone. People struggled to apply online for jobs. Families couldn't reliably communicate with loved ones.

This is a particularly limiting hardship for HARP-assisted households who often receive inadequate access to the internet.

We need to rethink broadband as a basic utility, which is why I introduced the Broadband Justice Act earlier this Congress to establish a new grant program that would expand affordable broadband access to millions of families living in subsidized housing.

My bill would further update utility allowance definitions used by HUD, Treasury, and the USDA to include broadband as a subsidized utility, in addition to retrofitting subsidized housing with the necessary wiring for high quality broadband.

My district includes Co-op City in the Bronx, which is the largest affordable housing community in the country. I strongly urge the committee to direct HUD to analyze this topic specifically and make their findings available 1 year after enactment and that we further explore mechanisms for providing high quality subsidized broadband to assist households, including through the expansion of monthly utility subsidies, to include broadband.

Thank you, and I yield back my time.

[The information follows:]



**Appropriations Full Committee FY22 Member Day****Wednesday June 9, 2021****Testimony of Congressman Jamaal Bowman Ed.D.****INTRO**

Thank you Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for the opportunity to testify before the Appropriations Committee today. I recently had the opportunity to testify before the Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee and at this time would like to expand on that testimony now that we have President Biden's complete budget request for the upcoming fiscal year.

I deeply appreciate the incredible work this committee carries out under your leadership, not only for our regular fiscal year spending, but for the COVID relief packages and the anticipated infrastructure package.

I'm here to testify in support of robust investments in programs that directly impact children and families in my district, which covers parts of the Bronx and Westchester.

I'll start off by noting my support for President Biden's budget request, which reflects an understanding of the moment we find ourselves in as a nation. Modest, incremental plus ups to historically underfunded programs will never match the care and repair our communities need due to compounding crises such as COVID-19, racial injustice, gun violence, growing wealth inequality, and the climate crisis. This is not a disparate list. These are all interconnected and extremely traumatic. Without meaningful aid to our communities, our children and families can very quickly find themselves isolated and unsupported. I commend this budget request for recognizing the need for substantial investments. We need to build upon it, not whittle it down further. I strongly urge that we don't negotiate ourselves out of finally securing a healthy and safe future for all our children, communities, and planet.

I previously testified in support of strong investments for all early childhood education programs such as Head Start and the Child Care Development Block Grant, as well as full service community schools, IDEA, and Title II-A funding. I would like to build on that testimony and address two more priorities for the Committee's consideration as it writes the spending bills for Fiscal Year 2022.

As a former teacher, school counselor and principal, I think it's only right that the subcommittee responsible for education funding at the federal level enjoys the largest share of non-defense spending.

I am especially supportive of the \$20 billion increase the President proposes for Title I with the creation of a new 'equity grant' program to meaningfully close the resource gap between richer and poorer districts. This would be particularly meaningful for students, teachers, and families in my district. This funding would equip our communities to teach students using a rigorous curriculum, finally pay teachers better, increase access to preschool, and overall improve equitable funding for schools.

This \$20 billion proposal is long overdue, but I would strongly urge that this funding not be available for charter schools. As this Committee has expressed itself, there is a serious concern with the lack of oversight over charter schools. This is particularly concerning with respect to charter schools that contract with for-profit entities.

I want to commend this budget proposal for investing in broadband and would urge that we build upon it. Inequitable access to broadband took a substantial impact on students and families during the pandemic. We saw students trying to use the WiFi at local restaurants and trying to complete homework on a cell phone. This is a particularly limiting hardship for HUD-assisted households who often receive inadequate access to the internet. I strongly urge that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development analyze this topic specifically and make their findings available one year after enactment, and that we further explore mechanisms for providing high-quality, subsidized broadband to assisted households, including through the expansion of monthly utility subsidies to include broadband.

Thank you.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you, Representative Bowman. We appreciate it.

And for those scoring at home, they know we have Members from all over the country have our own broadband issues here as well. So we know that many investments are needed. But thanks for your work on behalf of your constituents related to that.

The committee has your request, and we appreciate your time here today.

Representative Sherman, I think we have you.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. Can I be heard?

Mr. AGUILAR. Yes, yes, you may. If you could start at the top again, Representative Sherman, that would be great.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. BRAD SHERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Mr. SHERMAN. I will start by just taking a minute to disagree with one of the former speakers—I think it was Mr. Fitzpatrick—who argued against any cost of living increase for Members of Congress.

First, this isn't a pay increase. It is keeping up with inflation, and inflation has been modest, I realize.

Second, over the last 20 years, the purchasing power of what Members of Congress get paid has dropped by over 20 percent. I, for one, don't think I am 20 percent less valuable now than I was when I first arrived.

People in Congress tend to have some talents that the private sector would prize, and if we are in a situation where the differential between what someone makes in the private sector and what one makes in Congress is enormous, then the only people who will serve in Congress are people so wealthy that the congressional salary is an irrelevancy to them.

I want to thank this committee for, since 2012, including in its base text the War Powers Act enforcement provision. This was added in 2011 due to a floor vote, and the committee has included it in every bill since then.

It provides that no money shall be spent in contravention of the War Powers Act, and in the opinion of many constitutional scholars, is the thing that would make the War Powers Act, which is the only limit on the President just sending troops anywhere, anytime, for any reason, it is the only thing that would make it enforceable on a President.

So I urge you to continue to do what you have been doing, and that is including it in the base text.

I want to urge you to provide \$2 million in funding for the people of Artsakh, particularly mine removal, and to include language preventing any aid to Azerbaijan until it changes its policies.

I request that you provide \$2 million for Sindhi language outreach by the Voice of America so that we can reach the people of southern Pakistan. We are talking about 30 million people for whom Sindhi is their primary language, and reaching these people is so important. And the amount I am suggesting here is \$2 million.

I also have a request for the Middle East, which is both the smallest and the least controversial item involving the Middle East, and that is \$6 million for the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation Agreement, and an additional \$2 million for bilateral cooperation on COVID and developing treatments and vaccines.

Keep in mind that these programs are paid half by Israeli taxpayers and half by American taxpayers, and therefore we get double the bang for the buck.

Two issues that relate to the quality of life in my part of the world but other parts of the world as well.

The first is, the whole Quiet Skies Caucus has urged you to include language telling the FAA to prioritize airport noise as an important issue in making its decisions. I think it is critical that that language be included.

And then second, we have, immediately adjacent to the city limits of Los Angeles, the Santa Susana Field Lab, a site with both chemical and nuclear waste that needs to be cleaned up, and that I hope that you will provide the highest possible funding, both to NASA and the Department of Energy, who both have toxic nuclear waste at that location, to make it so that they will do the cleanup that they have promised to do and contracted to do.

And with that, I yield back.

[The information follows:]

**House Appropriations Committee Member Day FY22 Appropriations  
Prepared Testimony  
Brad Sherman**

Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for holding today's hearing and for the opportunity to testify before you in favor of inclusion of a few important provisions in the FY2022 appropriations bill. I would like to highlight again what may be the most important provision that you can include in this year's appropriations bill. This is an item that comes at no cost.

Since 2012, the Appropriations Committee has continuously and on a bipartisan basis included language relevant to the War Powers Act. I have previously testified that the War Powers Act is the only effective restraint on presidents sending our troops into battle without congressional approval. Every president since the 1970s has claimed that they are not bound constitutionally by the War Powers Act.

I first offered the War Powers Act fiscal enforcement provision on the House floor in 2011. The House of Representatives passed this provision, and it has been in every appropriations bill since then. Many Constitutional scholars who believe that the War Powers Act is not binding on a president have also come to the conclusion that this provision makes the War Powers Act binding on the Executive Branch because of Congress' near absolute power of the purse.

I want to thank this Committee for its sustained support of the U.S.-Armenia relationship. I urge the committee to include \$2 million in funding to continue the mine removal efforts in Artsakh. I further urge the committee to include language that would bar U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan until the Executive Branch formally determines that Government of Azerbaijan is taking demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses against Armenia and Artsakh.

I also request that you include \$2 million for Sindhi language outreach by Voice of America (VOA). Pakistan is an important partner in U.S. efforts to combat extremism and global terrorism. Outreach efforts have in the past focused on Urdu language speaking communities while failing to also reach out to the more 30 million Sindhi speakers in Pakistan. In FY 21, the committee has supported funding for these efforts. However, the funding was not ultimately included in the final bill which became law. As we have the full support of VOA to establish a Sindhi language service, I urge the committee to include this funding in the FY22 bill.

Finally, I urge that we continue support for the cooperative research effort between the United States and Israel. I request that you provide at least \$6 million in funding for the U.S. Israel Energy Cooperative Agreement and \$2 million to continue support for a bilateral cooperative program with the Government of Israel for the development of treatments, vaccines, and other life-saving developments in the fight against COVID.

Mr. AGUILAR. We appreciate your testimony, Representative Sherman, and thanks so much for your patience in letting us navigate that. So the committee appreciates the time.

With that, we will go to Representative Cloud from Texas. I think we have things sorted out.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. MICHAEL CLOUD, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF TEXAS**

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you. We will give it another go. And I appreciate yours and the committee's patience on this. Basically, I wanted to take a moment to bring the committee's attention to some language we submitted back in April.

We all know that our responsibility to manage the power of the purse [audio malfunction]. Spending taxpayer dollars is a weighty responsibility. That is why, at the end of April, I submitted a language request to the Legislative Branch Subcommittee that I hope will be included in the final bill.

This language request would direct the Congressional Budget Office, in coordination with the Joint Committee on Taxation, to study the feasibility of including in their cost estimates the associated costs of debt servicing and a list of duplicate programs.

Without these two pieces of information, Members of Congress are left to evaluate legislation based on an incomplete or even inaccurate understanding of the facts.

Folks back home understand this. If you were to purchase a car, for example, and only looked at the list price without calculating the interest, you would find out that the car costs a lot more than you were expecting.

And that happens with bills here in Congress. In essence, we do the same thing by not considering the comprehensive budgetary impact of spending and taxing proposals. This distorts congressional decisionmaking in favor of more spending and debt accumulation that might otherwise be the case.

Simply put, including the debt servicing cost and legislation cost estimates will better equip us to make informed spending decisions.

This language request does one other important thing that would help us make better spending decisions. It requires cost estimates to include a list of duplicative programs within the covered legislation.

If cost estimates were required to point out duplication, it would give Members helpful direction in knowing how to better use taxpayer dollars.

Thankfully, this is not a Republican or Democrat issue. Last Congress, Representative Ed Case and I worked closely together to lead a bicameral, bipartisan letter to the chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Budget Committees requesting they direct the CBO to include debt-servicing costs in all legislative cost estimates produced.

Lastly, on May 12, 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that inflation had grown by 4.2 percent over the last year, the largest 12-month increase since September 2008.

Well before the inflation announcement was made, CBO had been estimating the net interest costs “would exceed other mandatory spending by 2030, exceed all discretionary spending by 2043, and surpass spending for Social Security by 2045.”

If this inflation is sustained interest rates will rise and rapidly advance the timeline in which debt servicing eclipses all other spending. Reining in our debt and deficits only gets harder the longer we wait. That is in part because our interest rates have been historically low.

Again, this isn’t a red or blue, Republican or Democrat issue. This is simply a good governance issue that hopefully we can all get behind. I hope we will consider including the language in the final bill to begin the process moving forward on this issue.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today. Thank you for your time.

[The information follows:]

**Congressman Michael Cloud (TX-27)  
Testimony Before Appropriations Full Committee: Member Day  
Including Servicing the Debt in Cost Estimates Provided to Congress  
May 27, 2021**

Good Afternoon, Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and members of the committee, thank you for having us here today.

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 places the important “power of the purse” Constitutional obligation on Congress.

Spending taxpayer dollars is a weighty responsibility that we all take seriously.

That is why at the end of April, I submitted a language request to the Legislative Branch Subcommittee that I hope will be included in the final bill.

This language request would direct the Congressional Budget Office, in coordination with the Joint Committee on Taxation, to study the feasibility of including in their cost estimates the associated costs of debt servicing and a list of duplicative programs.

Without these two pieces of information, Members of Congress are left to evaluate legislation based on an incomplete or even inaccurate understanding of the facts.

The folks back home understand this:

If they were budgeting for monthly car payments and only considered the list price of the car itself—excluding the extra

cost of interest payments—they might discover later that the actual total cost was more than they could afford.

In essence, Congress does the same thing by not considering the comprehensive budgetary impact of spending and taxing proposals. This distorts congressional decision-making in favor of more spending and debt accumulation than might otherwise be the case.

Simply put, including debt servicing costs in legislative cost estimates will better equip lawmakers to make informed spending decisions.

The language request also does one other important thing that would help lawmakers make better spending decisions. It requires cost estimates to include a list of duplicative programs with the covered legislation.

If cost estimates were required to point out duplication, it would give members helpful direction in knowing how to better use taxpayer dollars.

Thankfully, this is not a Republican or Democrat issue.

Last Congress, Rep. Ed Case and I worked closely together to lead a bicameral, bipartisan letter to the Chairs and Ranking Members of the House and Senate Budget Committees requesting they direct CBO to include debt servicing costs in all legislative cost estimates produced.

Lastly, on May 12, 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that inflation had grown by 4.2 percent over the last year, “the largest 12-month increase since...September 2008.”

Well before the inflation announcement was made, CBO had been estimating that net interest costs “Would exceed other mandatory spending by 2030, exceed all discretionary spending by 2043 and surpass spending for Social Security by 2045.”

If such inflation is sustained, interest rates will rise and rapidly advance the timeline in which debt servicing eclipses all other spending.

Reigning in our debt and deficits only gets harder the longer we wait. That is, in part, because our interest rates have been historically low.

This isn’t a red or blue — Republican or Democrat issue — this is a good-governance issue.

I hope you will consider including my request in the final bill, to begin the process of moving this issue forward.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to appear here today.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you so much for your patience, Representative Cloud, and we appreciate your work on that and the submissions that you have to Leg Branch. Thanks so much.

With that, I will hand it back over to Chairwoman DeLauro.

The CHAIR [presiding]. Thank you so much. I want to thank you, my colleague and friend, for picking up the baton here and getting us through. It is exciting that we have so many Members who are participating today, but I am really grateful for your work here.

And I also think I see Congressman Cole, who is on as well, who recently underwent surgery. So he really is a trooper here.

And thank you, thank you, thank you. Looking for a speedy recovery for you.

But thank you very, very much, Congressman Aguilar.

And with that, I will recognize Congressman Lamb from Pennsylvania.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

HON. CONOR LAMB, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. LAMB. Thank you, Madam Chair, for all of your hard work on this and for opening up this process for us. I am just going to run through these very quickly because I know how many people you have waiting.

My first two Community Projects under Commerce, Justice, and Science both relate to police departments here in my district.

The first is the Communication System Improvement Project. It is a \$223,000-odd request. People have commented on rural broadband during this hearing. In a lot of places the issue is actually connectivity more broadly, so it kind of incorporates bad internet and difficult cell phone service. And this is really part of that problem with we have a lot of small police agencies trying to communicate with each other, and this would really help.

We also have a request for about \$550,000 for body-worn cameras. Obviously, given the events of last summer and the daily struggle for transparency and accountability for law enforcement, but also the ability of law enforcement to show the actual truth of encounters, it kind of benefits both sides, and it is a very important thing for our county.

A couple of water-related projects under Interior, Environment that I just wanted to highlight. One in particular, Center Grange Road Waterline Replacement for a little less than a million dollars.

This is a great example of why these community projects are such a good idea, because I know from representing this area that this is an economic hotbed right now. We have one of the largest construction sites in the country essentially right next to this town, and they are building a giant factory, and yet their water infrastructure is really designed for a time when it was all farmland.

So that would be a hard thing to communicate to bureaucrats in Washington, but hopefully the committee can support these water projects that we need.

I also just wanted to talk briefly about a couple of other important requests. We have one for the Coraopolis Train Station, which is kind of the center, geographically, of my district.

Again, it would be hard to communicate on paper to a bureaucrat what this means to the community, but it is an old train station, like a hundred years old, that kind of sits right in the center of the town. And volunteers with their own sweat equity have gone in and removed rubble and cobblestones, and they have unearthed all these great old historical artifacts from a time when trains were the dominant mode of transportation. And it is just really a big grand old building.

And because of all the volunteer labor that everybody in the town has put in, they really have their hopes invested in it. And they have drawn funding from a whole lot of sources, so they really have a plan to develop this into community space, economic development projects, and this could be the key final piece.

Wanted to say something lastly about the Neighborhood 91 equipment fund. Again, this is under Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, et cetera.

Neighborhood 91 is, as far as I know, the only program like it in the country. It sits on land owned by Pittsburgh International Airport, and it intends to become an advanced manufacturing ecosystem where any startup company interested in any phase of advanced manufacturing, specifically for metals, would be able to come there and some of the basic infrastructure would already be in place.

And there are very specific gases that you need in this process. And then, of course, a 3D printer that actually prints metals is a pretty novel and expensive thing. And so we are trying to help establish this ecosystem.

This is the basic model on which economic development has always worked. It is a particular part of our heritage, obviously, in Pittsburgh, the Steel City, to be working with metals.

And we think that if we make the right investments today, the government, foundations, private sector working together, that decades from now we will have jobs and entire companies in this region that are making things, the 21st century version of the steel mills we had at the height of the 20th century.

So those are just a few of our projects. We have submitted all of them. I thank you very much for your time and attention.

This will mean a lot to the people of western Pennsylvania who have never really recovered, as a whole community, from the collapse of the steel industry, and this is a great role that our government could play to help us get back up on our feet after a difficult year.

So thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and I yield.

[The information follows:]



Good afternoon members of the Appropriations committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today and highlight the importance of the community project funding requests I submitted on behalf of Pennsylvania's 17<sup>th</sup> Congressional district. These requests cover a broad range of important priorities.

It is critical we keep our communities, and those protecting them, safe. Within the Commerce, Justice, Science bill I have requested two community project funding requests. This includes funding to improve the communications system for South Beaver Township Police Department that would allow these officers to communicate amongst each other and with other personnel during an emergency, which is not always possible. Additionally, I have requested funding for body worn cameras for a number of municipal police departments within my congressional district. These cameras help increase transparency and accountability and are frequently mentioned when I talk with police chiefs and officers back home.

Water infrastructure is critical to ensuring Pennsylvanians have safe water to drink and protecting our roads and homes from potentially damaging water line breaks. My CPF requests for this year include two proposals that would bolster the security of my constituents' water, including upgrading filter material in Creswell Heights and new treatment plant basin covers for the Borough of Midland. Additionally, I have requested funding to replace a faulty waterline in my district that frequently breaks, endangering homes and the local community. This waterline serves a number of public facilities, including an elementary school and the Center Township municipal complex, housing the police department and other emergency services.

I have submitted five Economic Development Initiative projects for the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development projects for consideration as well. These include the rehabilitation of a train station into a community center in Coraopolis, which would help increase development of main commercial corridor and serve as a nexus between multiple trail systems. A burgeoning economic strength for Western Pennsylvania is additive manufacturing and Neighborhood 91 – a coalition of companies, universities, and Pittsburgh International Airport – is leading the way. I have submitted a request for seed money to help provide a shared equipment fund to bring in additional companies and train more workers. Another important project in my district is the Millvale Ecodistrict Clean Energy Initiative, building out commercial properties with an emphasis on worker development and renewable energy. As our communities and local economies continue to recover from the pandemic, it is imperative we provide for the least fortunate, and I have submitted a proposal to complete rehabilitation work on a men's shelter in Beaver County. Lastly, the pandemic has emphasized the importance of public outdoor spaces. That is why I have submitted a proposal to finish construction on the Franklin Avenue Park in Aliquippa, PA. This is a historically underserved community, and this scenic park will not only provide recreational opportunities for children but also educate them about our region and environmental issues as well.

This range of projects enjoys strong support with their communities and local leaders and represent a few key areas of agreement: the importance of fostering economic opportunity, keeping our communities safe, and improving our infrastructure. I urge the committee give these projects their due consideration and would be happy to provide any additional or supplementary materials that may be helpful.

The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much, and thank you for the thoughtful testimony.

And I have really been so pleased to listen to Members on both sides of the aisle today talk about what are the kinds of projects that are coming directly out of their communities, whether it is water or whether it provides for law enforcement or childcare, et cetera.

It really has been gratifying to see the level of communication people have had with their communities about what those needs are.

So I thank you very, very much for your testimony this morning.

And with that, if I can recognize Congressman Van Drew from New Jersey.

You are recognized for 5 minutes, Congressman Van Drew.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Chairwoman. It is a pleasure to see you and the ranking member, I am sure, and I really thank you for providing the opportunity to testify before the House Committee on Appropriations.

Over the past weeks I have testified before many Appropriations subcommittees to advocate for projects of great importance to my district. I hope that the committee considers each of these projects and provides as much funding as the committee is able to do.

These community projects are worthwhile investments that not only benefit the whole community, but will strengthen the United States as a whole.

Today I am here to speak about a special project, much larger in scope and of great national importance. I respectfully request that the committee provide \$55 million to the United States Coast Guard to initiate Phase One of the Training Center Cape May Barracks Recapitalization Project through the Construction and Improvements Accounts.

This project is included—and this is important—this project is included in the Coast Guard's fiscal year 2020 budget request as the number one project in the Major Shore and Housing category.

Training Center Cape May is the Coast Guard's sole accession point for its enlisted workforce. Eighty percent of the Coast Guard's total workforce is absorbed through the Training Center in Cape May in my district.

The existing barracks were constructed in the early 1960s, and they are in serious need of modernization. The proposed four-phase project will reconstruct the entire barracks infrastructure and truly provide phenomenal benefits for the Coast Guard.

The request, \$55 million, is to execute the first phase of the project, which will demolish the oldest barracks in the facility and construct a brand-new 66,000 square foot barracks.

Three benefits to the project.

The project will expand the Training Center's throughput by 15 to 20 percent, which means that 15 to 20 percent more recruits will go through.

The project will modernize classrooms with digital infrastructure, which is very much needed.

The project will allow the Coast Guard to achieve its objective—and this is important too—this project will allow the Coast Guard to achieve its objective of 50–50 gender parity.

The U.S. Coast Guard is expanding operations across the country and across the world. Whether executing freedom of navigation op-

erations in the South China Sea or conducting research and rescue operations off the U.S. coast, the Coast Guard has a lot to do and plans on doing even more in the coming decades.

The United States can build all the cutters in the world—and they are important—but you need personnel to operate those vessels.

Most of the personnel come through the Training Center in Cape May. The proposed barracks recapitalization will increase the Training Center's throughput by 15 to 20 percent or up to an additional thousand servicemembers each year.

This investment ensures the Coast Guard has the workforce it needs to accomplish its mission at home and abroad.

The newly constructed barracks will include classrooms equipped with the digital infrastructure necessary. We need not only more Coasties, we need them to be as prepared as possible to execute the Coast Guard mission.

A major objective of the Coast Guard is to achieve 50–50 gender parity in the Coast Guard—50 percent men, 50 percent women. As it stands, the Training Center is only able to accommodate about 30 percent female recruits.

Again, over 80 percent of the Coast Guard's enlisted workforce entered, they all enter through the Training Center. To meet the Coast Guard's objective of 50–50 gender parity, this project must be funded.

This project is the Coast Guard's number one housing infrastructure priority. It will provide phenomenal benefits to the Coast Guard and to the United States of America.

I urge you to provide the requested funding so that our Coast Guard men and women have access to every tool possible to prepare themselves to execute the Coast Guard mission.

Thank you so much for your time.

[The information follows:]

Rep. Van Drew (NJ-02) - Full Committee on Appropriations Testimony

Good Afternoon Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger. Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify before the House Committee on Appropriations.

Over the past weeks I have testified before many Appropriations subcommittees to advocate for projects of great importance to my district. I hope that the committee considers each of these projects and provides as much funding as the committee is able. These Community Projects are worthwhile investments that will not only benefit the local community but will strengthen the United States as a whole.

Today, I am here to speak about a project much larger in scope and of great national importance. I respectfully request that the Committee provide \$55 million to the U.S. Coast Guard to initiate Phase One of the Training Center Cape May Barracks Recapitalization project through the Construction and Improvements Accounts. This project is included in the Coast Guard's Fiscal Year 2022 budget request, as the #1 project in the Major Shore and Housing category.

Training Center Cape May is the Coast Guard's sole accession point for its enlisted workforce. 80% of the Coast Guard's total workforce is absorbed through Training Center Cape May. The existing barracks were constructed in the 1960's and are in serious need of modernization. The proposed Four-Phase project will reconstruct the entire barracks infrastructure and provide truly phenomenal benefits for the Coast Guard. The requested \$55 million is to execute the first phase of the project, which will demolish the oldest barracks facility and construct a brand new 66,000 square foot barracks.

There are 3 Key benefits to this project:

- 1) This project will expand the Training Center's throughput by 15-20%.
- 2) This project will modernize classrooms with digital infrastructure.
- 3) This project will allow the Coast Guard to achieve its objective of 50-50 gender parity.

The U.S Coast Guard is expanding operations across the country and across the world. Whether executing freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea or conducting search and rescue operations off the U.S. Coast, the Coast Guard has a lot to do and plans on doing even more in the coming decades.

The United States can build all the cutters in the world, but you need personnel to operate those vessels. Most of those personnel come through Training Center Cape May. The proposed barracks recapitalization will increase the Training Center's throughput by 15-20%, or up to 1,000 additional service members a year. This investment ensures that the Coast Guard has the workforce it needs to accomplish its mission at home and abroad.

The newly constructed barracks will include classrooms equipped with the digital infrastructure necessary to ensure the highest quality training. We not only need more Coasties, we need them to be as prepared as possible to execute the Coast Guard mission.

A major objective of the Coast Guard is to achieve 50-50 gender parity in the Coast Guard, 50% men and 50% women. As it stands, the Training Center is only able to accommodate about 30% female recruits. Again, over 80% of the Coast Guard's enlisted workforce enters through the Training Center. To meet the Coast Guard's objective of 50-50 gender parity, this project must be funded.

This project is the Coast Guard's #1 Housing infrastructure priority. It will provide phenomenal benefits to the Coast Guard and the United States. I urge you to provide the requested funding, so that our Coast Guard men and women have access to every tool possible to prepare themselves to execute the Coast Guard mission. Thank you for your time.

The CHAIR. I thank my colleague for your time as well and for your interest, both on the quality of life in terms of the Coast Guard and for the workforce itself.

I have a Coast Guard facility in my district, so I know very, very much about what they do and how they do it. So thank you so much for your testimony this morning.

And if I can now, let me recognize Representative Buddy Carter from Georgia.

And you are recognized for 5 minutes. Thank you.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF GEORGIA**

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate this opportunity to share my concerns and priorities for the First Congressional District of Georgia.

It is an honor to represent a district rich in history and home to tens of thousands of Active-Duty military personnel and veterans.

I am here today to discuss my appropriations priorities, both defense and nondefense.

As the home of the Atlantic ballistic missile submarine fleet at Kings Bay, I have seen the dedication of our sailors and their families firsthand. The Ohio-class submarines play a critical role in nuclear deterrence but will soon be reaching the end of their life cycle.

With growing threats around the globe, it is important to maintain the undersea leg of a nuclear triad. I fully support full funding for the Columbia-class program to ensure the timely development and deployment of our nuclear submarine fleet.

Additionally, we are looking at the retirement of the SSGNs, which currently provide the largest undersea strike capability for non-nuclear launches. They will soon be replaced, leading to a gap in our nonnuclear undersea strike capabilities.

The Virginia Payload Module is a cost-effective way to preserve our capacity and offset the loss of our guided missile submarines. For that reason, I am submitting language to understand the future of the program and basing decisions.

Our soldiers have always been able to depend on the close air support provided by the A-10s. I was there last week, by the way, to see the A-10s again. What a great piece of machinery.

Those are operated out of Moody Air Force Base in the First District. The A-10's capabilities and survivability continue to be showcased as these platforms are deployed around the world in support of our combat troops.

Their role in supporting our ground forces and servicing search and rescue operations cannot be overstated. I am requesting full funding for the A-10 platform and any upgrades.

Lastly, the STARBASE program and the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program have helped to better the lives of thousands of kids across the country. These programs help our youth pursue new opportunities in their lives and help them get their lives back on track.

For that reason, I support robust funding to ensure these programs continue to benefit future generations.

For nondefense, I have a number of priorities.

Under the Energy and Water Committee continued funding for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is a top issue for me. Once completed, it will provide over \$200 million in additional economic benefits for the region and the country.

As one of the most significant Corps of Engineers projects underway in the United States, it is critically important this project is funded to completion.

Under the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee, I have several priorities. Funding for Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education, the National Institutes of Health, and several research programs are included in my submission.

In addition to these, requests for the CDC, ASPR's BARDA programs, and the Strategic National Stockpile are also included. There are a number of significant critical programs that fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction and I urge your support for their inclusion.

Finally, military construction and veterans projects are significant priorities within my district. That is why I have submitted several requests for military construction and mental health programs.

With the recent release of the unfunded requirements list, I have included several requests addressing impacted installations in the First Congressional District of Georgia. Our installations need the funding to meet the goals and objectives associated with our warfighters.

Additionally, we must take care of those who have served our Nation in our military.

Madam Chair, I appreciate your attention to these requests, and I thank you for the opportunity to provide input and thank the committee for their diligent work on all of these important subjects that we are discussing here today.

[The information follows:]

**Members' Day Testimony (Full Committee) - Rep. Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter (1<sup>st</sup> District of Georgia)**

Thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns and priorities for the First Congressional District of Georgia. It's an honor to represent a district rich in history and home to tens of thousands of active duty military personnel and veterans. I'm here today to discuss my appropriations priorities, both defense and non-defense.

As the home to the Atlantic ballistic missile submarine fleet at Kings Bay, I've seen the dedication of our sailors and their families firsthand. The Ohio-class submarines play a critical role in nuclear deterrence but will soon be reaching the end of their life cycle. With growing threats around the globe, it's important to maintain the undersea leg of the nuclear triad. I fully support full funding for the Columbia-class program to ensure the timely development and deployment of our nuclear submarine fleet.

Additionally, we are looking at the retirement of the SSGNs, which currently provide the largest undersea strike capability for non-nuclear launches. They will soon be replaced, leading to a gap in our non-nuclear undersea strike capabilities. The Virginia Payload Module (VPM) is a cost-effective way to preserve our

capacity and offset the loss of our guided missile submarines. For that reason, I am submitting language to understand the future of the program and basing decisions.

Our soldiers have always been able to depend on the close air support provided by A-10s, such as those operated out of Moody Air Force Base. The A-10's capabilities and survivability continue to be showcased as these platforms are deployed around the world in support of our combat troops. Their role in supporting our ground forces and servicing search and rescue operations cannot be understated. I am requesting full funding for the A-10 platform and any upgrades.

Lastly, the STARBASE program and the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program have helped to better the lives of thousands of kids across the country. These programs help our youth pursue new opportunities in their lives and help them get their lives back on track. For that reason, I support robust funding to ensure these programs continue to benefit future generations.

For non-defense, I have a number of priorities. Under the Energy & Water Committee, continued funding for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is a top issue for me. Once completed, it will provide over \$200 million in additional economic benefits for the region and the country. As one of the most significant Corps of Engineers projects underway in the United States, it is critically important this project is funded to completion.

Under the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee, I have several priorities. Funding for Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education, the National Institutes of Health, and several research programs are included in my submissions. In addition to these, requests for the CDC, ASPR's BARDA programs, and the Strategic National Stockpile are also included. There are a significant number of critical programs that falls under this subcommittee's jurisdiction and I urge your support for their inclusion.

Finally, military construction and veterans projects are significant priorities within my district. That is why I have submitted several requests for military construction and mental health programs. With the recent release of the unfunded requirements list, I have included several requests addressing impacted installations in the First Congressional District of Georgia. Our installations need the funding to meet the goals and objectives associated with our warfighters. Additionally, we must take care of those who have served our nation in our military.

I appreciate your attention to these requests and thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

The CHAIR. Thank you for your testimony, Congressman Carter, and thank you. I will reiterate the real thoughtful process of Members on both sides of the aisle in making their requests on Community Projects Funding, which addresses the very specific needs of communities as well as national security issues, as well as what you are interested in, in your Children's Hospital and so forth.

So it is rewarding to think that we can be able to look at these and see if we can provide some help and support on these very critical issues for your community.

Thank you very much.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Thank you.

The CHAIR. Thank you.

Let me recognize now Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia from Texas.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF TEXAS**

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to you and all your subcommittee chairs for having us today to talk directly to you about our 2022 packet.

As you know, I am Sylvia Garcia. I just want to make sure everybody understands that I represent more than Houston. I know I am known as the Congresswoman from Houston, but I also represent South Houston, Pasadena, Jacinto City, and Galena Park.

My district is about 78 percent Latino and includes about 22 percent low-income households made up of children and seniors.

All about 33 percent of my district is uninsured. That is why I want to flag and advocate for several of the projects that we have submitted which directly improve the quality of life for our constituents.

I submitted ten projects across the Labor, HHS, Education Subcommittee and the Transportation, HUD Subcommittee, but for the sake of time I am only going to highlight a few.

One is for a COVID long-haul research project offered by the prominent institution Baylor College of Medicine. This important program will benefit my community by providing healthcare access and COVID research across a diverse patient population, including low-income and minority populations.

Madam Chairwoman, you know how difficult it is sometimes to get the data, and we have got to make sure that the data comes from across the sector, not just those few that can show up to the institutions to do some of this research. So this project would look at the long-haulers to see the long-term effects of COVID.

So we have seen the impact of healthcare inequality during this pandemic, and this is an important time to correct some of these injustices.

Also related to healthcare is a request for flood mitigation, structural improvements to El Centro de Corazon, which is an FQHC clinic in my district.

As you can imagine, flooding and heavy rainfall are a huge problem here in Houston. It is important that this FQHC clinic get the proper structural updates to keep water out and keep their doors open to patients in the community during a disaster.

I also requested funds for a local partnership which provides physical and mental health services for the youth in one of my local high schools. The project would be a partnership between MacArthur High School, a part of the Aldine Independent School District, and the HOPE Clinic, also an FQHC.

This mental health clinic will be available to eligible adults as well in a community that faces inequity in healthcare resources.

And as you know, Madam Chair, we have all tried to do more in the mental health arena. This is a great partnership that is already there. This FQHC just needs some extra dollars to be able to do the outreach and work that they need to do at this high school.

I also want to quickly note a couple of requests from some of my smaller cities. The following requests were sent to the Transportation and HUD Subcommittee.

Jacinto City requested funds to improve the city's water supply lines. This will help the local fire department deliver stronger, more reliable water supply should a fire emergency arise.

I made a similar request on behalf of the city of Galena Park. Galena Park seeks assistance to improve their potable water lines in particular.

The availability of potable water became a huge issue after the winter storm that hit us earlier this year. The storm busted pipes and water lines across the State, including Galena Park, causing major disruptions in water accessibility for households and cities alike.

Access to drinking water is, as you know, Madam Chair, a basic human right, and this request will ensure that for my constituents.

From healthcare to COVID recovery to mental health and infrastructure, granting these requests would go a long way to help some of my local communities, especially those small cities outside of the city of Houston who struggle the most. They have smaller budgets, they don't quite have the resources.

And all of these cities, Madam Chair, they are probably at about 75 to 80 percent Latino, very Spanish-speaking, and have the least access.

So I strongly urge consideration. I do want to thank you for your time and thank you for putting this community projects initiative on the table.

I think this is a great way for Members to bring home the bacon, if you will, because that is really what we should be doing, is reflecting the needs of our communities and reflecting the priorities in the fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill.

So I would be happy to answer any questions or if you need any detail and any of the others. We have given everything to your staff.

But with that, Madam Chair, thank you again, and I yield back.  
[The information follows:]



- **Chair/Chairwoman \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **First of all, thank you to the Chair and committee members for hosting this Member Hearing Day for non-committee members to express their Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations priorities.**
- **I am Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia, representing Texas' 29<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which includes Houston, South Houston, Pasadena, Jacinto City, and Galena Park.**
- **My district is about 78% Latino and includes many low-income households made up of children and seniors.**
- **Therefore, it is important for me, as their representative, to speak here today about the importance of equitable federal investments and dollars in my district.**

- **That is why I want to flag and advocate for several of my Community Project Requests, which would directly improve the quality of life of my constituents.**
- **I requested 10 community project requests this year across the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee and the Transportation-HUD Subcommittee.**
- **But for the sake of time, I will only speak to a few here today.**
- **One of my requests is for a COVID Long Haul research project offered by the prominent Baylor College of Medicine.**
- **This important program would benefit my community by providing healthcare access and COVID research across a diverse patient population, including low income and minority populations.**

- **We have seen the impact on healthcare inequality during this pandemic, and this is an opportunity to correct those injustices.**
- **Also related to healthcare, is a request for flood mitigation structural improvements to the El Centro de Corazon clinics in my district.**
- **As you can imagine, flooding and heavy rainfall is a huge problem in Houston.**
- **It is important this clinic get the proper structural updates to keep water out, and keep their doors open to patients in the community during a disaster**
- **I also requested funds for a local partnership, which provides physical and mental health services for the youth in one of my local high schools.**

- **The project would be a partnership between MacArthur High School, a part of the Aldine Independent School District, and the HOPE Clinic.**
- **This mental health clinic would be available to eligible adults as well in a community faces inequity of healthcare resources**
- **I also want to quickly note a couple of requests for some of my smaller cities.**
- **The following requests went through the Transportation-HUD Subcommittee.**
- **On behalf of the city of Jacinto City, I requested funds to improve the city's water supply lines.**

- **This will help the local Fire Department deliver a stronger, more reliable water supply should a fire emergency arise.**
- **I made a similar request on behalf of the city of Galena Park.**
- **Galena Park sought assistance to improve their potable water lines, in particular.**
- **The availability of potable water became a huge issue after the winter storm that hit Texas earlier this year.**
- **The storm busted pipes and water lines across the state, causing major disruptions in water accessibility for households and cities alike.**
- **Access to drinking water is a basic human right and this request will ensure that for my constituents.**

- **From healthcare, to COVID recovery, to mental health and infrastructure—granting any and all of these requests would go a long way to help my local communities and address the injustices and inequities that have for too long plagued communities of color**
- **I want to say thank you for consideration of these requests, as each are very important, as are the remaining community projects I was not able to mention here today.**
- **I sincerely appreciate the time and the hard work of the Committee as you consider Member priorities while drafting the FY22 Appropriations bills.**

- **I am happy to answer any questions you might have, and I yield any remaining time.**

The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much for the testimony. And I think you make a very, very good point that the small cities, often cities that have not had the opportunity for resources in the past, and it is really critical. And, really, one of the prime movers in the community projects funding was to be able to reach out beyond larger cities, but your issues and the long haulers, I think we know not where that will go. The research will help us. I also think that we don't know what is going to occur with the consequences of COVID and mental health. We don't know that yet. We just know that they will be substantial. And it is critical with regard to insurance for folks. And, as well, the public health issues that surround water are a national issue and not just in one location in the country. So thank you for your testimony. Much, much appreciated. And thank you for providing the staff with the information.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Thank you.

The CHAIR. And, with that, let me recognize Congressman Tom Suozzi from New York. Thank you.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Mr. SUOZZI. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and thanks to all the members of the committee. You must have a marathon day, and I really appreciate you taking this opportunity to spend this time with us.

I am happy to testify in favor of three capital improvement projects, one of which is a normal programmatic request, I guess, and the other two are community funded projects. First, \$70 million for the United States Merchant Marine Academy; second, \$4 million for the Northwell Health Geriatric Center of Excellence; and, third, \$300,000 for shellfish seeding on the North Shore of Long Island.

First, I serve as chairman—or the acting chairman—of the Board of Visitors of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, which is located in my district in Kings Point, Long Island, and I am seeking \$70 million for the academy's really long ignored and woefully inadequate infrastructure. It is really an embarrassment. Everyone agrees that the Merchant Marine Academy, one of our five service academies which trains our Nation's mariners and is vital to our Nation's defense, has embarrassingly bad facilities. The new head of MARAD, Acting Administrator Lucinda Lessley, who I recently met with, the Department of Transportation, the National Academy of Public Administration, the Parents and Alumni Association, and the academy leadership itself all agree that the facilities, many of which are 80 years old, are decaying. And its buildings, its electric grid, its information technology system, or lack thereof, are thwarting the institution's recruiting capabilities and its mission to properly train the next generation of our Nation's mariners.

Compared to the other service academies, the Merchant Marine Academy's infrastructure is woefully subpar. Decades of inequity and, probably more important, bureaucracy have left the United States Merchant Marine Academy as an orphan. And I would like to submit for the record an 8-year infrastructure plan created by a group of experts and alumni who are so concerned—these are parents and alumni—so concerned about the academy's declining infrastructure that they formed the United States Merchant Marine Academy Maritime Security Infrastructure Council, and they prepared this report.

The academy and the Board of Visitors are committed to restoring the United States Merchant Marine Academy to its proper place in the pantheon of service academies. However, the academy cannot wait to get started without your help. That is why I have

specifically and respectfully requested an initial investment of \$70 million in infrastructure funding, \$25 million which I hope will be used for design and engineering costs and \$45 million which I hope will be used for shovel-ready projects. The Midshipmen Activity Center is the focus. The academy really needs this money to move forward to the 21st century.

Second, I respectfully request \$4 million for the Northwell Health Geriatric Center of Excellence, my highest priority for a community funding project. Our goal is to create a national model for senior citizen healthcare. Growing up, all four of my grandparents lived at my home. Three of them were very sick. My mom was an operating nurse, helped to take care—we all helped take care of them, quite frankly. And over the past few years, my mom and dad have passed away. They were 95 and 93.

As the committee is well aware, there is a storm coming in our country: 10,000 Americans are turning 65 every day, and the number of Americans over 65 will almost double in the next 25 years. Our current health system does not properly account for the growing number of seniors and their special needs in dealing with the complexity of our healthcare system. That is why it is so important to standardize and implement best practices for eldercare. The Northwell Health Geriatric Center for Excellence located at Glen Cove Hospital will serve as a hub of education and research as well as advocacy for older adults that I think can be modeled throughout the Nation. I am excited about this project, not just because of the benefit it will provide to my constituents but because it could be replicated throughout the country and become a model for geriatric centers throughout the Nation.

Third and finally, as you know, Madam Chairwoman, I serve as co-chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus, and I am seeking \$300,000 for my community funding project to seed the North Shore of Long Island with shellfish, oysters, and clams. This project will help restore shellfish populations and, as importantly, reduce nitrogen, bacteria, and harmful algae blooms in our bays and harbors. Unsewered homes, businesses, storm water runoff increases nitrogen loading and the potential for algae growth. When these algae blooms die off, their decomposition uses up oxygen in the water, causing hypoxia and threatening many species.

Fortunately, with a large enough population, shellfish are able to help control this excess nitrogen as they are filter feeders. A single adult oyster can filter 50 gallons of sea water every day. This project aims to restore and enhance our valuable waterways under threat due to nitrogen runoff by seeding our harbors with shellfish.

Water quality is critical to our local economies. I see that I am running out of time, so I will just give it up and just say you know how important the Long Island Sound is. The Long Island Sound is our national park for those of us that live in Connecticut and Long Island and New York, and we want to try and save it. So thanks so much, everybody. I know you have a long day. I hope that you found some of my projects interesting.

[The information follows:]

**Appropriations Full Committee Member Day Hearing****Testimony from Congressman Thomas R. Suozzi****Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of funding for three capital improvement projects. 1) \$70 million for the United States Merchant Marine Academy, 2) \$4 million for the Northwell Health Geriatric Center of Excellence, and 3) \$300,000 for shellfish seeding on the North Shore of Long Island.

First, as the acting Chair of the Board of Visitors (BOV) at the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, in my district on Long Island, I respectfully request \$70 million dollars for the Academy's long-ignored and now woefully inadequate infrastructure.

Everyone agrees that the Merchant Marine Academy, one of our five service academies, which trains our nation's mariners and is vital to our nation's defense, has embarrassing facility deficiencies. The new head of MARAD, Acting Administrator Lucinda Lessley, the Department of Transportation, the National Academy of Public Administration, the Parents and Alumni Association, and the Academy's leadership itself all agree that the facilities, many of which are 80 years old, are decaying and its buildings, its electric grid, its information technology systems (and lack there of) are thwarting the institution's recruiting capabilities and its mission to properly train the next generation of our nation's mariners.

Compared to the other service academies the Merchant Marine Academy's infrastructure is woefully subpar. Decades of neglect and bureaucracy have left the United States Merchant Marine Academy and orphan. I would like to submit for the record an eight-year infrastructure plan created by a group of experts and alumni who were so concerned about the Academy's declining physical condition that they formed the "USMMA Maritime Security Infrastructure Council."

The Academy and BOV are committed to restoring the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy to its proper place in the pantheon of service academies, however the Academy cannot wait to get started without your help. That is why I have respectfully requested an initial investment of \$70 million in infrastructure funding, \$25 million of which I hope will be used for design and engineering costs and \$45 million of which I hope will go towards shovel-ready projects.

The Academy needs this meaningful initial monetary investment to modernize its academic and training environments, including technology, information science, collaborative learning, and physical readiness to bring them up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century standards.

Second, I respectfully request \$4 million dollars for the Northwell Health Geriatric Center of Excellence, my highest priority for a Community Funding Project. Our goal is to create a national model for senior citizen healthcare.

Growing up all four of my grandparents lived in our home. Three of them were very sick. We all took care of them but my mother, a former operating room nurse at Glen Cove Hospital in my hometown, provided the bulk of the care. Over the past few years, my mom and dad passed away. They were 95 and 93 years old.

As the Committee is well aware, we have a storm coming in this country. 10,000 Americans are turning 65 every day, and the number of Americans over 65 will almost double by 2050. Our current health system does not properly account for the growing number of seniors and their special needs dealing with the complexities of healthcare.

That is why it is so important to standardize and implement best practices for elder care. The Northwell Health Geriatric Center of Excellence, located at Glen Cove Hospital, would serve as a hub of education and research as well as advocacy for older adults.

I am so excited about this project not just because of the benefit it would provide to my constituents, but because of how it could be replicated throughout the country and become a model of Geriatric Centers of Excellence throughout the nation.

Third, as the Co-Chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus, I respectfully request \$300,000 for my Community Funding Project to seed the North Shore of Long Island with shellfish.

This project would help restore shellfish populations and reduce nitrogen, bacteria, and harmful algal blooms in our bays and harbors.

Un-sewered homes and businesses and stormwater runoff, increases nitrogen loading and the potential for algae growth. When these algae blooms die off, their decomposition uses up oxygen in the water, causing hypoxia and threatening many species. Fortunately, with a large enough population, shellfish are able to control this excess nitrogen as they are filter feeders. A single adult oyster can filter 50 gallons of seawater each day. This project aims to restore and enhance our valuable waterways under threat due to nitrogen runoff by seeding our harbors with shellfish.

Water quality is critical to local economies, especially in coastal regions like Long Island. They not only provide employment opportunities (such as commercial fishing, shellfishing, bait shops, marinas, water-side restaurants, sailing schools, and sporting goods stores) but recreational opportunities that are critical to our way of life (such as swimming, boating, kayaking, fishing, and recreational shellfishing). They also improve property values and spur new business opportunities.

This project will help protect our “national treasure” the Long Island Sound, which we consider to be our national park.

Thank you for your consideration for these issues critical to communities in my district. I look forward to working with you on these projects. Thank you.

The CHAIR. More than interesting, and I am so proud to co-chair the Long Island Sound, you know, Caucus with you and our Republican colleagues as well. So we are all committed to that and to a shellfish industry. It has been a lifeblood for the State of Connecticut, as I know it is for New York as well. But no. Thank you very, very much for the projects at law enforcement—not law enforcement, but the Merchant Marine Academy, as well as the geriatric program. It shows the range of efforts and needs that are in our communities. So thank you very much this morning for your testimony—or this afternoon, now. Wow. Thank you.

Mr. SUOZZI. Thank you, Chairwoman.

The CHAIR. OK. You take care.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce Congresswoman Robin Kelly from Illinois.

And you are recognized for 5 minutes, Congresswoman Kelly.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. ROBIN L. KELLY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, for allowing members to share their appropriations priorities. As you know, I represent Illinois' Second Congressional District, which consists of urban, suburban, and rural communities. We often think of gun violence as an urban or city issue, but this issue affects people in all communities. According to the Gun Violence Archive, over 19,000 people have died from gun violence this year, 258 from mass shootings. Just this year, 10 people were killed at a supermarket in Colorado, 9 killed at a San Jose rail yard 2 weeks ago, and 4 injured by gun violence during a softball tournament in San Angelo, Texas.

The Chicagoland area is also experiencing a surge in gun violence. In Chicago, 60 people were shot this past weekend, including an 11-year-old girl. Though we are hardly halfway through the year, nearly 1,500 people have been shot in Chicago so far, putting us on track to have another tragic record year of gun violence.

We are battling a public health epidemic, but we are not treating it that way. Gun violence disproportionately affects people of color and is now one of the leading causes of death of children and teenagers. We must fight. We must address this far-reaching health risk of gun violence and the systemic racism that normalizes the death of young Black men and women. Each life lost to gun violence is tragic and unfortunate. Deaths are not the only impact, but every shooting, countless people are traumatized, left to grieve a loved one, angered by the event, and increasingly anxious about the safety of their communities. The mental health impacts of gun violence are both a cause and effect of this tragedy. Without addressing the generations of trauma some communities have experienced, we will not be able to pull ourselves out of this epidemic.

Of course, there are also the physical and financial costs that we must address. People injured by gun violence often face challenging and expensive recoveries, including surgeries and physical therapy. Many live with disabilities for the rest of their lives. For decades, the biggest threat to the lives and safety of children and teenagers was automobile accidents. In response, we mandated the use of seat belts and car seats and created stricter safety guidelines for automobile manufacturers. Deaths by vehicle crashes declined significantly and have remained relatively low.

Today, firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teenagers with an estimated 1,800 children and teens shot to death each year. That means 1,800 empty school desks and chairs at fam-

ily dinner tables. Black children and teenagers are 14 times more likely to be killed by a gun than White children.

There is no one program or solution to gun violence, but there are steps we can take now to save lives. Many communities require increased support for gun violence intervention and prevention programs, focus on interrupting cycles of violence and facilitating mentorships to individuals at high risk of engaging in gun violence. Research shows that sustained funding for evidence-based programs tailored for specific local contexts and working in partnership with the affected communities can achieve significant and long-term reductions in firearm violence. That is why I led an appropriations letter with 39 of my colleagues calling for an investment in community violence intervention programs.

For the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, we requested \$100 million for the Office of Justice Programs to develop a grant program to support community-based violence intervention programs and report language for prioritizing discretionary grants for community-based violence intervention programs and directing the Office of Victims of Crime to make Victims of Crime Act funding available for gun violence victims service programs.

For the Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education, we requested \$100 million for the CDC to develop a public health centered grant program to support community-based programs that prevent violence and \$10 million to establish the Resource Center at HHS to coordinate funding opportunities across relevant agencies, oversee research into effective programs, and provide technical assistance to local offices for violence prevention and community-based organizations.

Additionally, we requested report language directing HHS to support community-based violence intervention programs through relevant grant programs and language directing the Department of Labor to prioritize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Funding like the Young Adult Reentry Partnership and YouthBuild to support reintegration, transitional employment, long-term impactful positions, union positions, and limiting wages for systems involved with youth and older adults in cities disproportionately impacted by gun violence.

I know I have run out of time, but you know how I feel about this topic. And I have been—I am in my ninth year talking about it, and it is not getting any better. I mean, 60 people shot last weekend. You know, we have got to do something, Madam Chair. Thank you for listening.

[The information follows:]



**House Appropriations Committee Testimony**

**Rep. Robin L. Kelly (IL-02)**

Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger for allowing Members to share their appropriation priorities.

I represent Illinois' Second Congressional District which consists of urban, suburban and rural communities. We often think of gun violence as an urban or city issue, but this issue affects people in all communities. According to the Gun Violence Archive, over 18,000 people have died from gun violence this year, 224 from mass shootings. Just this year, 10 people were killed at a supermarket in Colorado, 9 killed at a San Jose rail yard 2 weeks ago, and 4 injured by gun violence during a softball tournament in San Angelo, Texas.

We are battling a public health epidemic, but we are not treating it that way. Gun violence disproportionately affects people of color and is now one of the leading causes of death for children and teenagers. We must address the far-reaching health risks of gun violence, and the systemic racism that normalizes the deaths of young Black men and women. Each life lost to gun violence is a tragedy and unfortunately, deaths are not the only impact. For every shooting, countless people are traumatized, left to grieve a loved one, angered by the event, and increasingly anxious about the safety of their communities.

The mental health impacts of gun violence are both the cause and effect of this tragedy. Without addressing the generations of trauma some communities have experienced, we will not be able to pull ourselves out of this epidemic. Of course, there are also the physical and financial costs we must address. People injured by gun violence often face challenging and expensive recoveries including surgeries and physical therapy. Many live with disabilities for the rest of their lives.

For decades, the biggest threat to the lives and safety of children and teenagers was automobile accidents. In response we mandated the use of seatbelts and car seats and created stricter safety guidelines for automobile manufacturing. Deaths by vehicle crashes declined significantly and have remained relatively low.

Today, firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teenagers, with an estimated 1,800 children and teens shot to death each year. That means 1,800 empty school desks and chairs at family dinner tables. Black children and teenagers are 14 times more likely to be killed by a gun than white children.

There is no one program or solution to gun violence, but there are steps we can take now to save lives. Many communities require increased support for gun violence intervention and prevention programs, focused on interrupting cycles of violence, and increased funding for direct services including mentorship to individuals at high risk of engaging in gun violence. These types of cost-effective programs have proven to be highly effective at reducing gun violence and saving lives.

Research shows that sustained funding for evidence-based programs, tailored for specific local contexts, and working in partnership with the affected communities, can achieve significant and long-lasting reductions in firearm violence.

This is why, I led an appropriations letter with thirty-nine of my colleagues calling for an investment in community violence intervention programs. For the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, we requested \$100 million for the Office of Justice Programs to develop a grant program to support community-based violence intervention programs and report language for prioritizing discretionary grants for community-based violence intervention programs and directing the Office for Victims of Crime to make Victims of Crime Act funding available for gun violence victim services programs.

For the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we requested \$100 million for the CDC to develop a public health centered grant program to support community-based programs that prevent violence and \$10 million to establish a resource center at HHS to coordinate funding opportunities across relevant agencies, oversee research into effective programs, and provide technical assistance to local Offices of Violence Prevention and community-based organizations. Additionally, we requested report language directing HHS to support community-based violence intervention programs through relevant grant programs and language directing the Department of Labor to prioritize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity funding, like the Young Adult Reentry Partnership and YouthBuild, to support reintegration, transitional employment, long-term impactful positions, union positions, and living wages for systems involved youth and older adults in cities disproportionately impacted by daily gun violence.

Taking these critical steps to reduce and prevent firearm homicides is not only good for our communities, it will also reduce the economic burden on our health care and criminal justice systems, quickly paying dividends for taxpayers and communities.

With so many communities ravaged by COVID-19 and spiking homicide rates, it is critically important that proven strategies that reduce violence and increase community health receive the funding that is necessary. Thank you for your time.

The CHAIR. Thank you have very, very much for your testimony, and I am going to say thank you for your leadership. You have been—I know it is a long time, and it is a long slog, you know, but you need to continue on with your leadership in this effort. And I think you said something very clear, which should be understood, which is that this is a public health emergency, and that is what we need to focus on is the public health aspects of this effort. And I think everyone is—we need to look to what is happening around our Nation with the increasing of the violence and so forth. So thank you so much for taking the lead, and thank you for your support of the gun violence prevention research which we are undertaking both at the NIH and the CDC, so thank you very, very much.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR. Thanks. Let me recognize Congressman Greg Meeks from New York.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Mr. MEEKS. Good afternoon, and first, let me just thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro, for all the hard work that you have been doing on this great Appropriations Committee and holding this hearing today.

The CHAIR. Thank you.

Mr. MEEKS. And I also want to thank my friend, Barbara Lee, for being an excellent partner in our new—you know, we both share new roles now. She is the chair of SFOPS and the subcommittee, and I am chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and so I am here in that capacity today. I am not here to advocate for some of my local programs. But, you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that many of the most pressing challenges facing the world today are global in nature and require a global response, and so that is why, as chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I firmly believe that Foreign Affairs budget must reflect that reality. So this means that we must first invest in our workforce.

So, following years of neglect, it is past time that we commit to building a strong Civil and Foreign Service that not only represents this country abroad but reflects our diversity here at home. And so, thus, I applaud President Biden for more than doubling the amount of money dedicated to broadening recruitment, diversity, and inclusion programs at the State Department in his fiscal year 2022 budget requests. We should answer the President's commitment with our own action.

And I am proud that, last month, the House passed the State Department authorizing legislation that addresses barriers to diversity from the entry level to Senior Executive Service. While this is an important milestone, we must continue this work by making robust investments in programs to increase the diversity of our national security workforce, like the Gilman International Scholarship Program or the Rangel and Pickering Fellowship Programs.

As the United States reengages with the world, multilateral engagement is critical. This starts with fully funding America's commitments to the United Nations, including paying down our arrears. The U.N. has long served as a force multiplier for the United States, helping to protect our interests and promote democracy and peace and stability. And I urge the committee to support the \$2.7 billion for the contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities account.

The United States also has a responsibility to receive and to revive efforts to address those areas in which it has historically

underinvested to include advancing our economic ties in the continent of Africa. So I fully support of President's request for \$80 million in support Prosper Africa, an initiative that aims to promote and facilitate two-way trade and investment with the continent of Africa. I look forward to working with the administration to further develop and strengthen these efforts.

I am heartened by President Biden's commitment to renew U.S. leadership in Central America through a 4-year, \$4 billion infusion of funds to address the root causes of migration. This represents a long overdue recognition that we cannot thrive without secure and stable neighbors. We must also recognize that we cannot thrive, we cannot do these efforts, and that they depend upon the stability of the entire region, and we have to redouble our work to support efforts like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, which has been critical in helping our Caribbean partners combat violence and crime.

We must also make investments to strengthen health systems around the world to ensure we are able to better address future global health threats. And I hope this committee will robustly support proven programs, such as the President's Malaria Initiative, which improved the lives of millions while helping partner countries develop more robust help infrastructure. And I encourage you to increase funding for the PMI to \$902.5 million in fiscal year 2022.

I also urge you to make a greater commitment to funding family planning and reproductive health programs, which are so important to ensuring better health outcomes and more equitable development around the world. Funding UNFPA, a critical multinational partner in supporting maternal and child health, access to comprehensive healthcare, and combating child marriage is crucial to this approach.

And, finally, last month, I unveiled the Ensuring America Global Leadership and Engagement Act, or we call it the EAGLE Act. This bill will reinvigorate our institutions and diplomatic efforts to effectively respond to the China challenge. I hope to work hand in hand with you as we move forward with the EAGLE Act and the appropriations process and other legislation to ensure that America can rise to meet the challenge of leading and reengaging the world.

Thank you so very much. I know I am out of time.

[The information follows:]



**CHAIRMAN GREGORY W. MEEKS**  
**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS**  
**WASHINGTON, DC**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021**

Good morning. Before I get started, I want to thank Chairwoman DeLauro, and the members of this committee for allowing me to testify before you today. I would also like to thank my friend Barbara Lee for being an excellent partner in our new roles as Chairs of the SFOPS subcommittee and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, respectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that many of the most pressing challenges facing the world today are global in nature and require a global response. As Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I firmly believe foreign affairs budget must reflect that reality.

This means, first, investing in our workforce. Following years of neglect, it is past time that we commit to building a strong civil and foreign service that not only represents this country abroad, but reflects all of our diversity here at home.

I applaud President Biden for more than doubling the amount of money dedicated to broadening recruitment, diversity, and inclusion programs at the State Department in his FY 2022 budget request. We should answer the President's commitment with action of our own.

I am proud that last month, the House passed State Department authorizing legislation that addresses barriers to diversity from the entry level to the Senior Executive Service. While this is an important milestone, we must continue this work by making robust investments in programs to increase the diversity of our national security workforce, like the Gilman International Scholarship Program and the Rangel and Pickering fellowship programs.

As the United States re-engages with the world, multilateral engagement is critical. This starts with fully funding America's commitments to the United Nations, including paying down our arrears. The UN has long served as a force multiplier for the United States, helping to protect our interests and promote democracy,

peace, and stability. I urge this committee to support \$2.7 billion for the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities account.

The United States also has a responsibility to revive efforts to address those areas in which it has historically underinvested, to include advancing our economic ties to Africa. I fully support the President's request for \$80 million to support Prosper Africa, an initiative that aims to promote and facilitate two-way trade and investment with Africa. I look forward to working with the Administration to further develop and strengthen these efforts.

I am heartened by President Biden's commitment to renew U.S. leadership in Central America through a four-year, \$4 billion infusion of funds to address the root causes of migration. This represents a long overdue recognition that we cannot thrive without secure and stable neighbors. We must also recognize that the success of these efforts depends on the stability of the entire region and redouble our work to support efforts like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, which has been critical in helping our Caribbean partners combat violence and crime. We must also make investments to strengthen health systems around the world to ensure we are better able to address future global health threats. I hope this Committee will robustly support proven programs such as the President's Malaria Initiative, which improves the lives of millions while helping partner countries develop more robust health infrastructure. I encourage you to increase funding for PMI to \$902.5 million in FY 2022.

I also urge you to make a greater commitment to funding family planning and reproductive health programs, which are so important to ensuring better health outcomes and more equitable development around the world. Funding UNFPA, a critical multilateral partner in supporting maternal and child health, access to comprehensive health care, and combatting child marriage, is crucial to this approach.

Finally, last month, I unveiled the Ensuring American Global Leadership and Engagement, or EAGLE, Act. This bill will reinvigorate our institutions and diplomatic efforts to effectively respond to the China challenge. I hope to work hand-in-hand with you as we move forward with the EAGLE Act, the appropriations process and other legislation to ensure that America can rise to meet the challenge of leading and reengaging with the world.

Thank you for your time.

The CHAIR. Thank you. Thank you very, very much for your testimony, and thank you for your leadership in making sure that the U.S. is reengaging and taking its role as a leader in the world. And you mentioned several other, you know, issues that have to do with peacekeeping. I think we have much to do in the area of global health. It is really a space, I think, where we can take leadership, particularly now with regard to this pandemic and making sure that other countries have access to the vaccines. And so that we can make sure that—it is a humanitarian issue, but it is our own national security as well. So, again, thank you for taking the lead and making sure that the U.S. is a leader in the world community as we go forward. So thank you for your testimony.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR. And, with that, let me recognize Congressman Kahele from Hawaii.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. KAIALI'I KAHELE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF HAWAII**

Mr. KAHELE. Aloha, Chairman DeLauro and members of the committee. Thank you so much for allowing me this opportunity to speak on behalf of Hawaii's Second Congressional District, and specifically, the community funded project requests that I have submitted.

Chair, Hawaii's Second Congressional District, which contains all eight of the main Hawaiian islands from Hilo to Hanalei, is a unique district in that the communities that I represent live in the most isolated population center in America. These communities are rural. They are underserved and need additional support from the Federal Government to address the lack of upward mobility and the persistent gap in unemployment rates and poverty rates between urban and rural communities.

My family comes from the last native Hawaiian fishing village in Hawaii called Miloli'i, and I understand firsthand how rural communities often struggle to access Federal resources. Small towns and rural communities across the United States are looking for ways to strengthen their local economies, to provide a better quality of life and increase access to opportunities for their children, and they need assistance from the Federal Government to leverage these resources. And this is why I have focused my community funded projects and programs that will increase economic investment and educational opportunity while still preserving the rural landscape.

Rural communities have been hit hard by changing economic trends, and we must ensure that rural communities have the resources and support they need to create a new future for themselves so that they can produce high-quality sustainable jobs for the future. In Hawaii and across the country, too many Native and local families are forced to move to urban centers due to high cost of living and low job opportunities in their hometowns. And so we need to invest in programs and institutions that will continue to build and provide for future generations.

My community funded projects are focused on areas of high need. These include access to educational opportunities for our keiki, our children, diversifying our economy through agriculture and protecting our environment. The funding of these projects would be a step in the right direction for building resilient rural communities that can invest in people.

The projects I have chosen not only benefit rural communities but are also led by local community leaders. With additional funding, we can empower these local organizations by leveraging their

existing assets and knowledge to promote home grown opportunities. For example, one of the areas I represent, Puna, is the fastest growing area in Hawaii, yet lacks the critical community resources like a community center in their district. Puna has the second highest poverty rate in the State. Nearly half its residents live at or below 130 percent of the poverty rate. This region was most heavily impacted by the Kilauea lava flow of 2018, which greatly affected this once thriving agriculture industry, creating losses of \$30 million throughout the tropical fresh cut flowers and papaya industries. Two of my community funded projects would address the needs to explicitly this rural area by establishing a Boys and Girls Club, which would serve as a community center, and providing funding to rebuild the local agricultural community. The establishment of a Boys and Girls Club would provide many families with basic necessities such as supplemental nutrition, childcare, youth development, and disaster relief aid. Most children living in Puna go unattended after the school day is finished. And, currently, there is no building facilities that can be accessed and utilized to host out-of-school kids with programming and childcare services. The dearth of childcare access in rural communities creates a unique challenge for rural working parents, which, in turn, eliminates job opportunities for those parents. We need to invest in rural community infrastructure to assist these communities to recover and thrive.

Fortifying community-based organizations in distressed communities can help to build inclusive, vibrant communities. Community centers are critical, multifaceted establishments that can provide skills and training and further perpetuate cultural practices.

And, Chair, being a proud native Hawaiian, I know how important it is to pass along our traditions and cultural values from generation to generation, and this is why I have also included funding for the Miloli'i Community Enrichment and Historical Center, a convenient space for the entire community, the Village of Miloli'i can have a gathering place for public meetings, culture activities, and recreational programs.

Finally, economic inequality between urban and rural areas has been increasing rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, while rural communities face unique challenges, they also have distinctive assets that with the help of government infrastructure, they will be able to build capacity and thrive. The Nature Conservancy, MA'O Organic Farms, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, and, finally, the DLNR's conservation resource enforcement are all organizations we can work with.

So I thank you for your allowing me to speak today, and I ask for your support for these critical funding projects for the people of Hawaii's Second Congressional District. Mahalo nui, Chair. Aloha from Hawaii. Thank you, and I yield back.

The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much. I think both Congressman Cole and I, you know, want to reciprocate with Mahalo to you as well. You are just—you are so eloquent. It is really wonderful. But I just want to say very, very quickly, thank you for your emphasis on rural communities, local community leaders. That is the direction that we need to try to move forward and to serve those underserved communities like Puna and others that have been

without the resources to be able to move forward. So thanks so much for your testimony this morning—this afternoon. I keep forgetting. It is afternoon.

And, with that, let me recognize Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers from Washington State. Congresswoman.

Mrs. RODGERS. Good morning from Washington State.

The CHAIR. I just might add that we had a couple of Washington State folks early. That means it was 7 o'clock in the morning. So welcome, welcome.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Well, thanks for fitting me in late morning here in Spokane, Washington. Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to testify before the committee today on some of eastern Washington's priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. This year's community project funding process has really allowed Congress to bolster Article I power of the purse, and I appreciate the commitment to transparency that the committee has brought to this process, and I think it allows for Congress to do a better job in directing how hardearned taxpayer dollars are spent, ensuring that the resources go where the need is the greatest.

Based on the community project funding request that my office has received, it is clear that many areas in eastern Washington have major water infrastructure needs. You will see that my community project submissions include drinking water projects in Airway Heights, in the town of Cusick, and wastewater projects in Stevens County, in the city of College Place, in the town of Malden. As you have seen by the submission information and the letters of support, all of these projects would help meet a critical need.

Today, I would like to share more information on the challenges facing the town of Malden. You may not know, but over Labor Day last year, the Babb Road fire devastated the towns of Malden and Pine City in eastern Washington. I visited these towns days after the fire was still being extinguished, and the devastation took my breath away. The City Hall, the post office, the fire station were all gone. Eighty-five homes and surrounding farmland had been destroyed. Miraculously, the community church up on the hill stood despite the fire damage.

In the days and weeks that followed the fire, the residents of Malden and Pine City rolled up their sleeves and got to work on assessing the damage, piecing their lives back together, and focusing on long-term recovery. The level of devastation met the threshold for Federal disaster declaration, but it wasn't declared until February 2021, months after these towns had lost nearly everything.

As Malden has worked to rebuild, it has become clear that a large, onsite sewer system is needed to help advance the recovery efforts. Many of the residential lots in Malden are small and do not have the required space for a modern septic system. And much of the town is built on gravel soils with pine tree vegetation, which further complicates sewer system installation. A large, onsite sewer system that serves the whole town is critical for Malden's recovery.

It would also protect the nearby Pine Creek and all the aquatic life living in it and the riparian zone. Pine Creek flows year round. It is a natural catchment area for winter's snow and spring run rainoff, so the upgraded sewer system is critical for protecting the local environment as well as the tributary waters.

The Malden sewer project has been deemed eligible for EPA STAG grant funding under section 601(c)(1) of the Clean Water Act. I believe it is exactly the type of project the STAG grant program was designed to support. And as Malden Mayor Dan Harwood said in his letter of support for the project, quote: I cannot stress how important the sewer system is to Malden's future. It is essential if the town is to rebuild, grow, and thrive.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to testify today, I appreciate your consideration on behalf of the important projects I have submitted on behalf of Best Buddies Eastern Washington, city of Airway Heights, city of College Place, city of Spokane, Spokane County, city of Cusick, the Columbia Basin Development League, Stevens County Public Utility District, and the town of Malden. And I yield back the remainder of my time.

[The information follows:]

**Testimony before the House Committee on Appropriations  
Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
May 27, 2021**

Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the committee today on some of Eastern Washington's priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

This year's Community Project Funding process has allowed Congress to bolster its Article I "power of the purse." I appreciate the commitment to transparency that the committee has brought to this process, and I think it allows for Congress to better direct how taxpayer dollars are spent...ensuring resources go where needed the most.

Based on the Community Project Funding requests that my office received, it is clear that many areas in Eastern Washington have major water infrastructure needs. You'll see that my Community Project submissions include drinking water projects in Airway Heights and the Town of Cusick, and wastewater projects in Stevens County, the City of College Place, and the Town of Malden.

As you've seen by the submission information and letters of support, all of these projects would help meet a critical need. Today, I'd like to share more information on the challenges facing the Town of Malden.

You may not know that over Labor Day of last year, the Babb Road Fire devastated the Towns of Malden and Pine City in Eastern Washington. I visited Malden and Pine City soon as the fire was still smoldering, and the devastation took my breath

away. The city hall, post office, and fire station were all gone. Eighty-five homes and surrounding farmland were destroyed. Miraculously, the community church up on the hill stood despite fire damage.

In the days and weeks following the fire, the residents of Malden and Pine City rolled up their sleeves and got to work on assessing the damage, piecing their lives back together, and focusing on long-term recovery. The level of devastation met the threshold for a federal disaster declaration, which was not granted until February 2021... months after these towns lost nearly everything. As Malden has worked to rebuild, it has become clear that a large on-site sewer system is needed to help advance the recovery efforts.

Many of the residential lots in Malden are small and do not have the required space for a modern septic system, and much of the town is built on gravel soils with pine tree vegetation, which further complicates sewer system installation. A large on-site-sewer system that serves the whole town is critical for Malden's recovery. It would also protect the nearby Pine Creek and all aquatic life living in it and the riparian zone. Pine Creek flows year-round. It is a natural catchment area for winter snow and spring rain runoff, so the upgraded sewer system is critical to protecting the local environment and tributary waters. The Malden sewer project has been deemed eligible for EPA STAG Grant funding under Section 601(c)(1) of the Clean Water Act. I believe it is exactly the type of project the STAG Grant program was designed to support, and as Malden Mayor Dan Harwood said in his letter of support for the project, "I cannot stress how important the sewer system is to Malden's very future...It is essential if the town is to rebuild, grow, and thrive."

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I appreciate your consideration of the important projects I have submitted on behalf of Best Buddies Eastern Washington, the City of Airway Heights, City of College Place, City of Spokane, Spokane County, City of Cusick, Columbia Basin Development League, Stevens Public Utility District, and the town of Malden. I yield back the remainder of my time.

The CHAIR. What great advocacy. And it has been really interesting today to listen to the number of—whether they are drinking water, wastewater projects, sewer systems, it seems it is a crying need nationwide in these areas. And so many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle really are introducing these projects through the community project funding process. So thank you. Thank you for your advocacy and participating in this effort. It really is—it means a lot. So thank you very, very much. Take care.

Mrs. RODGERS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR. I appreciate it, as I know the ranking member does as well. And, again, I see Congressman Cole there, who is my partner on Labor-H, so thank you very, very much.

And, with that, let me call to testimony Congresswoman Claudia Tenney from New York.

You are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. CLAUDIA TENNEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**

Ms. TENNEY. Well, thank you, Chairman DeLauro and obviously, Ranking Member Granger, and all the distinguished members of the House Appropriations Committee for giving Members an opportunity to show their priorities today. It is really important. I am honored to represent New York's 22nd Congressional District, which stretches from the shores of Lake Ontario in the north down to the Pennsylvania border in the south, so we have all of central New York and the center of the State.

This region has a strong history of innovation as the birthplace of IBM, many don't know that, and the current location of the Air Force Research Labs Information Directorate, one of our Nation's premier centers of scientific research and development. This is what I would like to first discuss.

Number one, the Air Force Research Laboratory, known in my community as Rome Lab, is truly world class. It conducts cutting-edge research into emerging technologies and the high-tech digital battle space, which is exactly where we are increasingly confronting our adversaries.

The game-changing technologies that Rome Lab is exploring will enable our warfighters to counter countries like China and Russia that are investing heavily in 21st century tools to target our critical infrastructure and degrade our capabilities.

My request today for Rome Lab includes funding for three vitally important lines of effort. The first is support for a quantum network computing testbed. It is a national security imperative that we lead in the development of quantum computing technologies, especially given the advances that continue to be made by many adversaries like China.

The second is to support the first and only government-owned UAS traffic management system. This investment would be a revolutionary tool to counter our adversaries' use of low-cost drones to target American lives, exploit our air space, and commit acts that disrupt our economy and homeland security.

And, finally, the third is for an artificial intelligence and machine learning experimentation and transition test bed. This investment will provide the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies with an operationally relevant environment for warfighters to use and assess the new AI tools, AI agents, and human machine teaming techniques.

These three investments are relatively small compared to the size of the total defense budget, but their impact will be tremendous. They will deepen the military's expertise in the fields that

matter most in shaping the battle space of the future, such as quantum computing and artificial intelligence. The fact is, in our increasingly digital world, greater investments in these priorities are not only needed and timely, they are absolutely essential. The men and women Air Force Research Lab Information Directorate are unsung heroes, and I hope they can count on your support. I urge this committee to fully support these requests.

The second that I have, I would like to highlight today is for increased funding in the amount of \$4.3 million for the Civil Air Patrol. I led a bipartisan effort this year with my colleague, Mike Thompson, to support this request. We now have more than 80 Members of Congress joining us, and this is more than ever before in the previous year. Many people do not know that the Civil Air Patrol plays an integral role in supporting critical defense training and homeland security operations across the country. It is both an Air Force auxiliary and a nonprofit that serves thousands of communities in every one of our States. They were particularly important during the pandemic. It also maintains a youth cadet program focused on cultivating the next generation of leaders. This weekend, I had the honor of participating in the Civil Air Patrol training session with young cadets and auxiliary members. I can personally attest to the Civil Air Patrol's professionalism, world class training, and commitment to serving our communities. Increased funding for the organizations will allow the program to further expand its role as the auxiliary and total force partner of the Air Force. It also will allow it to increase its support for States and communities. This is an example of all kind of smart, prudent Federal spending that benefits all of us.

Finally, just one more time, I would like to reiterate my support for each of the community funding projects I supported this cycle. While I have had an opportunity to testify before several of the subcommittees in support of these projects, I wanted to specifically focus on the water infrastructure projects I submitted. This includes submissions for the Village of Marathon River Crossing, Eastern Mohawk Valley Regional Transmission Main, Vernon Water Center District, and the Village of Frankfort Water System. Some of these areas in my community are suffering from contamination of their water sources while others have just such old infrastructure that the lifecycle is at a critical risk of failure. Without important Federal investments, these communities risk eventually losing access to a dependable supply of clean drinking water.

Transparency and accountability were two critical factors that drove my support of these water projects. I am committed to ensuring any Federal funding brought back to our community is spent responsibly. As with any Federal program, community projects funds must adhere to the highest standards, and I will hold our community beneficiaries accountable. And I thank the chair, the chairwoman, and also our ranker for allowing these community projects, and I reiterate the great comments of my colleagues, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, on bringing Article I powers back to the House and our power of the purse. So I really greatly appreciate your consideration of all of these requests, and thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I really am grateful. Thanks so much.



[The information follows:]

***The Honorable Claudia Tenney (NY-22)***  
**Member Testimony before the House Appropriations Committee**

I would like to thank Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and the distinguished members of the House Appropriations Committee for giving Members the opportunity to share their priorities with you today.

I am honored to represent New York's 22<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District which stretches from the shores of Lake Ontario in the north to the Pennsylvania border in the south including a diverse collection of cities, towns, farms, suburbs, and rural communities. The region has a strong innovation heritage as the birthplace of IBM and headquarters for Rome Laboratory which houses the Air Force Research Lab Information Directorate. However, as one of the first regions in the country to industrialize the infrastructure of Upstate New York is growing increasingly old, worn and in need of investment.

One of my top priorities is the Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate's (AFRL/RI) Fiscal Year 2022 funding request. This includes \$10 million for a quantum network computing testbed, \$10 million for the first and only government owned UAS traffic management system, and \$10 million for an artificial intelligence and machine learning Experimentation and Transition Testbed. These investments will deepen the military's expertise in cutting-edge fields such as quantum computing and artificial intelligence, greatly strengthening our defense capabilities.

My congressional district is home to 96 percent of AFRL/RI's workforce. The lab employs 830 military and civilian personnel and is responsible for 1,415 indirect jobs, creating a local economic impact of more than \$500 million. This is a testament to the vitally important role the lab plays in driving economic growth and high-tech innovation in our community. The programs would greatly expand the military's capabilities and enable the United States to compete globally with our adversaries, dominate the virtual battlespace, and counter emerging threats to our country.

Secondly, I ask the support of the Committee for the Civil Air Patrol's Fiscal Year 2022 defense appropriations funding request and ask for \$47.3 million for operations and maintenance, \$11.4 million for aircraft procurement, and \$1.8 million for vehicle procurement. This is only \$4.3 million more than appropriated last year.

CAP plays an increasingly integral role in supporting critical defense training and homeland security as both the Air Force Auxiliary and a public service non-profit supporting every state and thousands of communities. CAP's small, cost-effective budget request deserves full consideration by Congress due to its expanding role as the Auxiliary and Total Force partner of the Air Force, and its increasing support to states and communities. Every day it is doing more and more for the nation and its citizens.

Finally, I would like to express support for clean water projects throughout my district. This includes my community funding projects submissions requesting \$600,000 for the Village of Marathon River Crossing, \$500,000 for the Eastern Mohawk Valley Regional Transmission Main, \$3 million for the Vernon Center Water District, and the \$3 million for Village of

Frankford Water System. Many of these areas are suffering from contamination of their water sources while others have old infrastructure well past its useful life and at a high risk of failure. Without these important projects these communities risk losing their access to dependable clean water.

Transparency and accountability were two critical factors that drove my support of these water projects. I am committed to ensuring any federal funding brought back to our region is spent transparently and responsibly. As with any federal program, Community Project Funds must adhere to the highest standards and I will hold community beneficiaries accountable. This project I am supporting today was rigorously reviewed, including extensive consultations with a variety of stakeholders. It has strong buy-in from the community as well as a clearly demonstrated benefit to my district.

As many of you likely know, New York State taxpayers pay more to the federal government than they get back in return. I will always advocate on behalf of my community and fight to return tax dollars to New York. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today.

The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much, and thanks for taking a lead on defense issues and natural security as it relates to technology and the research laboratory. They certainly distinguish themselves all of the time in the cutting-edge research that they do do, and I think critically now with regard to your word, our adversaries in this area.

And, again, I think overall, just listening to folks this morning is the whole issue of the water quality, water projects, et cetera, and what a national imperative that is. So I thank you very, very much for your testimony today.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you.

The CHAIR. Thank you. Thank you.

And, with that, let me recognize Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon from Pennsylvania.

You are recognized for 5 minutes. Thank you.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. MARY GAY SCANLON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Chair, thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am going to follow our colleague from Hawaii's example. I guess I should start by saying "yo" from Philadelphia.

I do want to briefly discuss some of the ways we hope the appropriations bills can help the people I am proud to represent in Pennsylvania's Fifth District, which includes Delaware County and important parts of Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties and how those things can also help all of our constituents. As someone who has worked with legal services and high quality pro bono programs for decades, I have seen firsthand the impact that access to legal assistance can have for our most vulnerable constituents and neighbors, but we don't have to rely upon my anecdotal evidence. In recent years, we have seen a growing number of studies demonstrating that investment in legal services provides a robust return on investment. For example, when we fund lawyers to defend tenants in eviction matters, which are often wrongful, the return is 11 to 1. So as co-chair of the House Access to Legal Aid Caucus, I am proud to work with leaders like Congressmen Cohen and Fitzpatrick to advocate for robust funding of legal services appropriations and other legal services efforts.

The reality is that many of our most ambitious government programs are inaccessible to everyday Americans without the assistance of legal professionals to provide support. While our legal and benefit systems have grown increasingly complex, we continue to fund or, rather, underfund legal services at 1970s levels. The programs funded by the Appropriations Committee are more effective and efficient when they include legal aid as a key component to assist vulnerable individuals in accessing resources. Initiatives aimed at increasing opportunities for education, employment, healthcare, public service, public safety, and veterans services, preventing homelessness, and protecting civil rights are critical, but they can have complicated administrative hurdles, so legal aid professionals can help people navigate the complex applications, appeal decisions, and ensure that individuals receive the maximum benefits to which they are entitled under our laws.

Providing representation also makes our courts more efficient as it streamlines and focuses the issues brought to court. Accordingly, I respectfully urge this committee to ensure robust funding for the Legal Services Corporation and other legal aid programs that protect our most vulnerable constituents.

I also urge the committee to provide funding for programs that are both critical to our Nation's infrastructure and create good-pay-

ing union jobs. In my district, we have a manufacturing center with highly skilled employees who work on the vital CH-47F Block II program which will provide critical upgrades to the Army's fleet of Chinook helicopters. These are the Army's primary heavy-lift helicopters, and the Block II upgrades will deliver advanced heavy-lift capabilities now and for decades to come. I hope the defense appropriations bill will reflect how critical this program is to our national security.

We have also been proud to revitalize the historic Philadelphia Shipyard with a billion dollar investment from the U.S. Maritime Administration, which contracted with the Philadelphia Shipyard to build new training vessels as part of the national security multi-mission vessel program. This important program helps to sustain world-class U.S. maritime training operations at the State maritime academies by equipping young American mariners with the most modern and adaptable training platforms. It will also support almost 2,000 good-paying jobs for the Philadelphia region.

We also urge you to increase funding for SNAP, WIC, and summer child feeding programs, especially those programs directed at the highest need areas. In Philadelphia, the poorest large city in the country, we have an epidemic of hunger, particularly for children. It is estimated at least 21 percent of Philadelphia residents do not have enough food to lead a healthy life. It is a national crisis, but it is a preventable one. SNAP and WIC have shown that when fully funded, they can dramatically reduce hunger in America. The pandemic has exposed gaps in those programs. Expanding them will allow my constituents and all of our constituents, indeed, to access food and have the ability to grow.

And, finally, we thank you for consideration of the community project funding requests. Simply the process of selecting them was very helpful to my office. The projects—we had over 60 projects apply. They were all excellent, strongly vetted, great community support. They addressed a range of social, equity, and economic issues, and we are really excited to continue working with the government and nonprofit agencies that submitted those projects, whether they are funded through the appropriations process or not. I am not going to rehash them all, but we are very, very excited for this opportunity and very excited about all the recommendations that we submitted.

So thank you for the chance to be here today and talk with you about my region's priorities. And, as always, my staff and I are available for followup questions.

[The information follows:]

Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (PA-05)  
Appropriations Committee Members Day Testimony

M\_\_ Chair\_\_\_\_, thank you for allowing me to testify today.

I want to briefly discuss some of the ways the appropriations bills can help the people I am proud to represent in the Fifth District of Pennsylvania, which includes Delaware County, South and Southwest Philadelphia, and part of Montgomery County.

Federal investments play a critical role in ensuring the success of juvenile justice programs. Efforts to protect youth, prevent delinquency and create opportunities in our most underserved communities require robust investments. My district has recently seen the closing of two juvenile detention centers— both the Glen Mills school and the Lima Juvenile Facility. Though the details of each case are unique, both facilities faced credible allegations of misconduct that highlight just how vulnerable young people are in these systems. These stories exemplify why Congress should do everything in its power to prevent young people from entering the justice system, protect them once they are there, and ensure that robust re-entry programs exist upon their release. I urge the committee to support fully funding and implementing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, the Incentive Youth Promise Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs Act of 2018, and allocating robust funding for additional juvenile justice programs that would protect vulnerable young people. I hope this committee will consider increasing funding for juvenile justice programs to give juvenile offenders a real second chance at a good life.

Second, I hope this committee will also ensure the continuation of the vital CH-47F Block II program, which will provide critical upgrades to the Army's fleet of Chinook helicopters. The Chinook is the Army's primary heavy-lift helicopter, and the Block II upgrades will deliver advanced heavy-lift capabilities now and for decades to come. I am confident that continued investment in the CH-47F Block II program will benefit the men and women who are vital to the defense industrial base that is so critical to our nation. I hope the Defense Appropriations bill will reflect how critical this program is to our national security.

I hope you will also increase funding for SNAP and WIC programs, especially those programs directed at the highest need areas. In Philadelphia, we have an epidemic of hunger, particularly in our children. It is estimated at least 21% of people in Philadelphia do not have enough food to lead a healthy life. This is a national crisis and a preventable one. SNAP and WIC have shown that, when fully funded, they can dramatically reduce hunger in America. Expanding these programs will allow my constituents in need to access food and the ability to grow, learn, and work.

Finally, I am grateful for the opportunity to recommend ten exciting projects for Community Project Funding. Allowing members to recommend targeted, well-vetted project funding for governments and nonprofits in our district will ensure federal budget priorities meet the real needs of the American people.

Even just the process of selecting ten CPF requests was helpful to my entire office and me. We had almost sixty applications submitted, all of which were excellent and would have been strong candidates for funding. We were able to learn about incredible work happening by service providers all over southeast Pennsylvania.

The ten we submitted represent a diverse set of goals and communities to be served. From a mussel hatchery to clean the Schuylkill River to a new playground for a school in an area of dense economic challenges. From expanding an opioid treatment center and rebuilding the oldest continually operating library in the country, to a county-administered micro-grant program. I've recommended two workforce training programs serving communities in need, a green roof for a community center and the restoration of a historic performing arts space.

And finally, an exciting new program that would fund the hiring of mental health professionals who can be dispatched with law enforcement to help de-escalate contentious disputes and get those in crisis the help they need.

I am grateful for the opportunity to talk with the committee about these exciting projects and hope you will consider funding these requests. Each one would change my constituents' lives for the better.

Thank you for the chance to be here today and talk with you about my region's priorities. As always, my staff and I are available for any follow-up questions.



The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much, and I just wanted to make a comment. First of all, thank you for your comments on the community projects funding process, which, as I heard from both sides of the aisle, that the engagement of Members and their communities and, you know, the support from communities has really been really very, very gratifying.

Your emphasis on legal services. I want to just make a quick comment that helping people to navigate the system, protecting the most vulnerable people, the most vulnerable is really, really laudable. And, finally, the United States—I said this earlier to Jim McGovern. This is a Nation of great abundance in terms of food, and no one, no one in this country, should go to bed hungry at night. So thank you very, very much for your testimony. I appreciate it very much. Thank you.

And, with that, I am going to give Dr. Ruiz really, if you will, the final words. Dr. Ruiz, Congressman Ruiz from California, is the last Member. We have had 35 Members testify today. And I believe everyone has shown up, so I really feel very gratified in terms of this Member Day.

So, Dr. Ruiz, the floor is yours. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021.

WITNESS

**HON. RAUL RUIZ, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Mr. RUIZ. Thank you, Chair DeLauro. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the House Appropriations Committee on Members Day. I am here as the chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to discuss critical matters of importance to the Hispanic communities, such as reducing health disparities, supporting families and children, protecting the health, safety, and welfare of workers, and improving our immigration system.

We are working closely with our CHC appropriators, Representatives Lucille Roybal-Allard, Henry Cuellar, Pete Aguilar, Norma Torres, and Adriano Espaillat to advance our caucus' priorities. We follow a strong methodology in collaboration with CHC members, Appropriations Subcommittee staff, and many stakeholders, such as UnidosUS, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, and the National Immigration Law Center, amongst others.

While we compiled several priorities under each subcommittee, many of which have a CHC member sponsor, today I am here to address specific priorities that the CHC supports as a collective. To the Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, the caucus asks for the Department of Labor's Wage and Hours Divisions to be funded at \$298 million to help safeguard the health and welfare of workers, including migrant and seasonal agricultural workers. The Advisory Committee on Minority Health account to include report language addressing the physician shortage crisis, which is especially pronounced in underserved communities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention account to include report language to conduct vaccine outreach with community health workers, like Norma Torres, and have coronavirus vaccines available in immigrant detention facilities across the Nation. And, lastly, the Office of Refugee Resettlement account to include report language to create a humanitarian civilian response team of medical providers and childcare professionals that can be deployed to help with high surges of unaccompanied children.

To the Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, the caucus asks for the House of Representatives Office of Diversity and Inclusion to be funded at \$3 million and include report language to allow DACA holders to receive payment for work in Congress.

To the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies, the caucus asks for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to be funded at \$6.6 billion.

To the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, the caucus asks for the Emergency Benefit Broadband Program to be funded at \$24 billion, the pro bono legal representation during removal proceeding program to be funded at \$200 million, the Office of Legal Access programs under the Office of Policy to be funded at \$50 million, and the Hispanic Serving Institutions Undergraduate Program under the National Science Foundation to be funded at \$55 million.

For the Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development and related agencies, the caucus asks for the Public and Indian Housing account to include report language to encourage the Department of Housing and Urban Development to improve the administration of aid for natural disaster relief efforts in Puerto Rico.

To the Subcommittee on Homeland Security, the caucus asks for the U.S. Immigration Custom Enforcement account to include report language to authorize a spectrum of alternatives to detention. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection account to include report language to establish standards of health, nutrition, shelter, water, and hygiene for immigrants detained in CBP custody and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services account to include report language to restrict funds that may be used to administer an immigration and naturalization benefits program that eliminates any category of eligibility for fee waivers.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration to these important caucus priorities. While we submitted more requests, we will include them in the statement for the record, given the time constraints.

I appreciate you, and I thank you for this consideration.  
[The information follows:]

**Testimony of Raul Ruiz, M.D., M.P.P., M.P.H. (CA-36)**

**Chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus**

**FY 22 Member Day Hearing**

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Committee on Appropriations**

**June 07, 2021**

Good morning Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Appropriations Committee on Member Day. I am here as Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to discuss critical matters of importance to the Hispanic community.

Our Caucus has several members in the Appropriations committee, including Congressmen Pete Aguilar, Adriano Espaillat, and Henry Cuellar and Congresswomen Lucille Roybal-Allard and Norma Torres. Following a strong methodology, we have worked to compile a list of appropriations needs. This effort is the result of the collaborative work among CHC Members and staff, Appropriations Subcommittee staff, and stakeholders such as UnidosUS, NALEO, National Immigration Law Center, American Immigration Lawyers Associations, and United We Dream. We have identified top 3 appropriations priorities in each subcommittee—many of which have a CHC member as a sponsor. Today, I am here to address the priorities that the CHC supports collaboratively.

**Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies**

**Program:** DOL Wage and House Division, **Amount:** \$298,000,000

**Program:** Advisory Committee on Minority Health (ACMH), **Report Language** addressing physician shortage in underserved communities.

**Program:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **Report language** on vaccine outreach with community health workers.

**Program:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **Report Language** on coronavirus vaccine availability in immigrant detention facilities across the nation.

**Program:** Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), **Report Language** on humanitarian response teams.

**Subcommittee on Legislative Branch**

**Program:** House of Representatives Office of Diversity and Inclusion, **Amount:** Total funding of \$3,000,000, **Report Language** on allowing DACA holders to receive payment for work in Congress.

**Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, Related Agencies**

**Program:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, **Amount:** \$6,600,000,000

**Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

**Program:** Lifeline Program, **Amount:** Highest possible funding

**Program:** Emergency Benefit Broadband Program, **Amount:** Total funding of \$24,000,000,000

**Program:** Pro-Bono Legal Representation during Removal Proceedings, **Amount:** \$200,000,000

**Program:** Office of Policy, Office of Legal Access Programs, **Amount:** Total funding of \$50,000,000

**Program:** National Science Foundation, Hispanic Serving Institutions Undergraduate Program,

**Amount:** Total funding of \$55,000,000

**Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies**

**Program:** Public and Indian Housing, **Report Language** in support of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development improving natural disaster relief for Puerto Rico.

**Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies**

**Program:** National Endowment of the Arts, **Report Language** on reporting requirements on diversity of agency's decision-makers and the programing hat receives funding.

**Program:** National Endowment of the Humanities, **Report Language:** reporting requirements on diversity of agency's decision-makers and the programing hat receives funding.

**Subcommittee on Homeland Security**

**Program:** U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, **Report Language** on authorizing a spectrum of alternatives to detention, including release on parole or recognizance.

**Program:** Office of the Inspector General, **Amount:** Total funding of \$250,000,000

**Program:** U.S. Customs and Border Protection, **Report Language** on standards of health, nutrition, shelter, water, and hygiene for immigrants detained in CBP custody.

**Program:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, **Report Language** on restricting funds in this bill to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to be used to administer an immigration and

naturalization benefits program that eliminates any category of eligibility for fee waivers set forth in 8 CFR § 103.7(c)(3-5) as it existed on January 1, 2020.

**Program:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Naturalization Through Military Service, Citizenship for Military Family Members, **Report Language on** directing U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to process military naturalization applications within six months, as previously required by the Military Personnel Citizenship Process Act, and to establish a military naturalization promotion program, in conjunction with the Department of Defense, to ensure all military service members and their families learn about and consider their eligibility to apply for naturalization before the military service member's separation from the military.

We appreciate the consideration to these important Caucus priorities. While we have submitted more requests, we will include them in the statement for the record given the time constraints on the Member testimony.



The CHAIR. Thank you very, very much for your testimony. And I know that it is from the Hispanic Caucus, but also your own personal values and views on these issues and the emphasis that you place on what is happening with the vaccines and the outreach there and what is happening at the border and also looking at where we go with the Department of Labor. So I thank you very, very much for all of these areas, and I know we will take a look at—and so many of these are part of the overall appropriations process as well. So thank you very, very much for your leadership and the values that that leadership represents. So thank you very, very much.

Mr. RUIZ. Thank you.

The CHAIR. And I will just say, you are a trooper. You are the last Member on the list for testimony, but you know, it was wonderful to hear from you, so many, many, many thanks.

I will take this opportunity to say thank you to all of my colleagues today who have participated, and I want to ask if Congressman Cole has any comments that he wants to make. It has been very, very informative to hear all of the interest. And what is quite extraordinary is, if anybody has had the opportunity to listen, as we have today, is that there are so many of the same issues on both sides of the aisle and that we share in trying to move forward.

So I want to just say thank you again to all of my colleagues and ask Congressman Cole if he would like to say a few words in closing.

Mr. COLE. Just very quickly, Madam Chair. First of all, you are the trooper. Thank you for putting this on and being with us for so much of the hearing. And I really want to thank all the Members that showed up on both sides of the aisle. I thought we had an extraordinary range of impressive requests, both programmatic and individual and specific, you know, some of them district-oriented. But I hope the people that are critical of community investments listened and really saw the merit of the various proposals that were put in front of us. We know we can't fund every worthy idea that we see, but these are worthy ideas.

I mean, I listened for quite some time. I missed the initial part of the meeting, but I certainly didn't hear anything that I would be embarrassed to have my name associated with. And I think the Members that brought these requests, they do so at some risk because people are critical of the process. But I think it is a reminder of how important this process is. We are all sent here to advocate for our constituents. We are all sent here to advocate for things that we think are appropriate Federal expenditures. And I think seeing the range of them instead of hearing, you know, cheap shots and terms, just to listen to project after project after project and the obvious intensity of the advocates and their knowledge. I mean, who is really against spending more money on our maritime academy, you know? Who is really against trying to make sure that we have adequate food protection and things of that nature for all of our citizens?

So, again, I just thought the range of programs were impressive. I thank you for doing this, and I thank you for undertaking the leadership of moving us back toward this. Where I think we did

surrender power that appropriately belongs with Congress, I am proud to see Congress reclaiming it, and I am proud that our colleagues are presenting us the kind of proposals with the thoughtfulness that will command the respect of people that were worried about the process.

As you and I know, we are not spending more money here. We are going to live within whatever our top lines are. What we are doing is trying to allow Members, who know something on ground about the needs of their constituents and constituencies, to have an opportunity to bring that in front of our committee and get the appropriate consideration. That is what they are elected to do. That is what we are elected to do and appointed to do on this committee.

So I commend you for your effort to bring us back and, frankly, for putting on display for anybody who is critical of this process to see how it really works. Members come, make an advocate, submit appropriate documents. Our staffs go through and work those. Our members deliberate over them. They are agonizing. Not every project will be funded, and, frankly, not every worthy project will be funded. But it is a pretty impressive display of how worthy these projects are, how much thought has gone into them, and how serious our committee is about discharging this very important function in an appropriate way under your leadership.

So thank you very much, and I look forward to working with you as we continue down the road and look at all of these projects and try to do the best we can for the American people.

With that, Madam Chair, I yield back.

The CHAIR. Well, thank you very, very much. And, please, a good recovery here, so just—you know, in Italian, we have the expression “piano piano,” so slowly, slowly here.

And I also want to take a moment to say another thank you to Congressman Pete Aguilar for filling in for a good portion of this as well.

And, once again, I thank everyone for participating, and with that, this hearing is adjourned. Thank you.