

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

CONSTITUENT SERVICE CENTERS:

MONMOUTH
112 Village Center Drive
Freehold, NJ 07728-2510
(732) 780-3035

MERCER
4573 South Broad Street
Hamilton, NJ 08620-2215
(609) 585-7878

OCEAN
405 Route 539
Plumsted, NJ 08514-2303
(609) 585-7878
By Appointment



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 28, 2021

CO-CHAIRMAN, TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

SENIOR MEMBER, FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

RANKING MEMBER, AFRICA, GLOBAL
HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE SUBCOMMITTEE

RANKING MEMBER, CONGRESSIONAL-
EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

www.chrissmith.house.gov

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, I write today to respectfully request Community Project Funding for the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey's (VNACJ) Freehold Family Health Center. The Center will use the federal support to accommodate their burgeoning health clinic and add full dental services for an underserved low-income population. Additionally, on designated days, the dental service will be offered exclusively to autistic and other intellectual/developmentally disabled children thereby providing a supportive environment for children with special needs and their family caregivers.

Working in a unique collaboration with CentraState Medical Center and the Rutgers Family Medicine Residency Program, the VNACJ Freehold Family Health Center offers medical services to the community and provides clinical training for resident physicians. The program also cultivates a workforce development pipeline designed to serve the healthcare needs of an underserved low-income population in Freehold and the surrounding area.

In 2020, the Freehold Family Health Center provided comprehensive primary care through 16,710 patient visits. Many of those served were young children who may otherwise obtain no health care at all. It is important to note, that the clinic also attends to a diverse population with an uninsured rate of nearly 20.5%.

With the support of a Community Project approved by Congressional appropriators in the amount of \$700,000 for fiscal year 2022, VNACJ would be able to reconfigure their health center to include a complete dental suite with five dental units, as well as an X-ray machine, sanitation station, and a lab room to complete all dentistry work on-site.

Data shows that dental care is often neglected among underserved populations even though annual dental visits have proven helpful for early detection of oral and throat cancers. Additionally, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry states that tooth decay is

the most common childhood disease, even though it's completely preventable. By expanding access to dental services for this vulnerable population, this Community Project stands to improve health outcomes in the greater Freehold community.

Equally important, VNACJ plans to partner with local Autism awareness groups to begin Saturday dental hours with a focus on those with Autism and other intellectual/developmental disabilities who require competent care from compassionate and patient health professionals in a dedicated setting.

This investment is a valuable use of taxpayer funding because it will help provide essential preventative health care, especially dental services, to those most in need in Freehold Borough and the surrounding Monmouth County area. As such, the project is widely supported by the Monmouth County Board of Commissioners, the Mayor of Freehold Borough, and local State Senators.

Thank you in advance for your full and fair consideration of my request for Community Project Funding for Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey's Freehold Family Health Center. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with me or my staff should you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress