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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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SENIOR MEMBER, HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

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March 24, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Simpson, and Ranking Member Pingree:

I write to respectfully request Community Project Funding in fiscal year 2024 for urgent, critical improvements and the expansion of the Borough of Lakehurst Water Treatment Plant in my congressional district in New Jersey (NJ-04) located at 23 Union Avenue, Lakehurst, New Jersey 08733. The expansion will help meet the water needs of Lakehurst but also those of regional residents previously serviced by wells now contaminated by Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS).

The much need expansion of the Lakehurst Water Treatment Plant will advance the health and safety of residents not just in the Borough of Lakehurst but those in neighboring municipalities. This proposed project has the widespread, strong support of local, county and state elected officials. It is also listed on the State's most recent Clean Water/Drinking Water SRF Intended Use Plan. The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300j-12.

The current wastewater facility is an aging water treatment plant which provides potable water and fire protection to the entire Lakehurst community. The plant was completed in 1966 and last upgraded over 20 years ago. The plant currently treats 300 gallons per minute, but the Borough's plan warrants expanded capacity to 600 gallons per minute. They note that water

treatment is needed to remove contaminants—iron and manganese—from the raw water of two wells.

Adding to the urgency for the expansion and upgrade of the Lakehurst facility is the mandate for neighboring Manchester Township to provide water in place of private wells contaminated by Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS). There are hundreds of single-family homes impacted by the PFOS as well as nursing home facility with 165 units accommodating elderly residents. More than 65 percent of the entire population who are seniors citizens with a very high concentration of 100% disabled veterans.

An upgraded Lakehurst water treatment facility is the best means for Manchester to meet the Safe Water Drinking Act standards for safe and clean drinking water for its community. As proposed, the project will include upgrading the existing facility to modern standards utilizing best practices, as well as replace the water main connecting the Lakehurst Treatment plant to the Manchester Township interconnection.

The plan also includes the completion of all piping and water system appurtenances associated with the interconnect vaults. In addition to bringing the existing plant into compliance with pending regulations, this infrastructure upgrade will improve the water system resiliency and cybersecurity, and it will enhance the health and safety of residents and businesses of neighboring municipalities. This is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds due to the fact it will expand drinking water treatment for water containing contaminants and delivery capacity to communities effected by PFOS groundwater contamination.

From an economic standpoint, the increased water capacity will allow for future construction of large apartment complexes and single-family homes, and it will also enable the construction of commercial infrastructure such as warehouses and office buildings which are currently limited by the emergency water pressure requirements needed to run the fire suppression systems.

The sponsor for this project is the Borough of Lakehurst, New Jersey and the cost is \$5,326,000.00. The Borough will meet the 20% cost share. Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of my request for assistance for the Lakehurst Water Treatment Plant Expansion and safe water implementation plan.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project. I appreciate the Committee's due consideration of the proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Smith", is written over the printed name.

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress