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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

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March 27, 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 David Joyce  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
2006 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Cuellar  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Joyce and Ranking Member Cuellar:

I write to request Community Project Funding in Fiscal Year 2024 to acquire updated, state-of-the-art computer, electronic and other equipment for the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office's Emergency Operation Center (EOC). This critical law enforcement and first responder unit is located at 2500 Kozloski Road, Freehold, New Jersey 07728.

The nearly \$1,655,000 sought represents an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it would enhance the lifesaving mission of the center which comprehensively evaluates and works to mitigate the damage of natural disasters, extreme weather, environmental emergencies, and pandemics like COVID-19, before, during and after each events. The enhancements will ensure that leaders from the local, state, and federal levels can make the most informed and timely decisions on how to deploy and manage resources amid such difficult circumstances. The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Section 614 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 5196(c)).

To its credit, Monmouth County—a substantial jurisdiction of approximately 645,354 people—has provided county-wide leadership for emergency response through the Emergency Operation Center. The up-to-date technology is needed to assure the best collection of actionable information and real-time coordination between key officials in multiple departments, agencies, organizations and different municipalities. Sheriff Shaun Golden states in his letter requesting assistance that the upgrades to more sophisticated equipment “will ensure the continuity of operations between the fifty-three municipalities within the County of Monmouth.”

It is also important to note that the State of New Jersey—specifically, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM)—concur that the upgrades are of critical importance, writing that the project will “ensure that the County is able to plan, coordinate and respond to large-scale emergencies and other disasters that threaten public safety or health.”

Additionally, much of Monmouth County is considered at-risk and environmentally sensitive for some of the very disasters this EOC upgrade would counteract. The county—which was devastated by Superstorm Sandy in 2012—contains fifty miles of shoreline, and many coastal areas lie in federally-designated flood zones. It was also one of the hardest and earliest hit jurisdictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, because of its close proximity to New York City—only thirty miles to the South—the county is at heightened risk for terrorist attacks. County personnel and residents are often called upon during major disasters, including 9/11—a day which still impacts the lives of many in the county. In fact, more residents of Middletown Township, Monmouth’s largest municipality, lost their lives than any other location besides the City of New York itself.

Among the upgrades needed at the EOC are the replacement of a failing video wall; radio communications system upgrades; the replacement of outdated desktop computers and monitors; the purchase of laptops to conduct field assessments; the purchase of tablets to allow for real time tracking and status of evacuations; seating upgrades to better suit 24/7 operations; and replacement of the EOC’s end of life phone systems.

There is no doubt that these funds will be wisely spent. The Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office regularly receives awards for the top-notch, cost-effective services provided to residents—the 911 center, for example, was recognized by the Federal Communications Commission for “overall excellence in serving the public.” Having visited the EOC myself, and participated in the government response to several emergencies, I can personally attest to the vital importance of this project to my constituents and residents of the county.

As you know, Emergency Operation Center grants are issued to states. Thus it is significant that OEM has strongly endorsed the proposal and committed to direct these funds to the Monmouth EOC.

Lastly, I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this important request. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Assistant, Christian Henniger, at 202-225-3765 or [Christian.Henniger@mail.house.gov](mailto:Christian.Henniger@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress