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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 28, 2021

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www.chrissmith.house.gov

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

I am writing to request Community Project Funding for the establishment of a **Cybersecurity Education Center for Excellence (CECE)** at Brookdale Community College, located in my district.

As you may know, cybersecurity is a rapidly expanding field, and cybersecurity experts provide much-needed services to entities such as businesses, non-profits, and governmental organizations. According to one estimate, there are currently 13,273 job openings in this field throughout New Jersey, and the college's cybersecurity programs—which prepare students for these jobs—are experiencing higher enrollment. The establishment of this Center for Excellence would contribute to economic growth, as well as significantly expand career and technical education opportunities, both at Brookdale and throughout the State of New Jersey.

It is important to note that Brookdale college was recently designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education by National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security—one of only two community colleges in New Jersey to hold that distinction. Brookdale offers a degree in Network Information Technology AAS, in addition to certificate programs in Cybersecurity, Local Area Networks/Wide Area Networks, and Computer Repair, all of which are increasingly in demand among students and employers.

The CECE will allow the College to build on this success and develop new courses and training programs to supplement its programs. Particularly, it will allow the college to establish additional certificate programs in Cybersecurity Management and Cybersecurity Auditor. It will also increase the College's virtual lab environment from 32 concurrent users to 128 to provide much-needed hands-on training, as well as provide additional classroom space, allowing more students to be trained using state-of-the-art technology, in an environment updated and equipped to prepare students for immediate employment.

The total amount of Community Project Funding I am requesting for this project is \$439,456, to be drawn from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education and spent in fiscal year 2022. Of these funds, \$132,000 would be used to hire a CECE Director, \$52,000 for a Net Lab Administrator, \$79,960 for virtual lab licenses, \$100,496 for virtual lab hardware and Cisco connectivity, and \$75,000 for furniture, equipment, and technology for classrooms and community spaces. It is also important to note that the remaining costs of this \$2,827,512 project will be paid through the College's budget and grants from the State of New Jersey.

This project is widely supported within the local community. New Jersey State Senator Samuel Thompson, New Jersey State Senator Robert Singer, New Jersey State Senator Vin Gopal, New Jersey State Assemblywoman Serena DiMaso, New Jersey State Assemblyman Gerard Scharfenberger, Monmouth County Commissioner Director Thomas Arnone, and Brookdale's Trustees have all sent me letters of support, which you will find attached to this application.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staffer, Christian Henniger, at 202-225-3765 or Christian.Henniger@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress