



April 23, 2021

The Honorable Chris Smith
Washington, DC Office
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Honorable Congressman,

This is a request for \$400,000 in Community Project Funding from the House Appropriations Committee, Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Health Facilities Construction to assist us in the expansion of our mental health center.

As you know, Lakewood Community Services Corp., a 501 ©3 organization, is at the frontlines servicing the mental and behavioral health needs of the greater Lakewood community. In 2020, LCSC provided 25,397 units of service (including telehealth) to 1,609 unique patients, 86% of whom were Medicaid insured or uninsured.

This area was a sustained Covid-19 hotspot, leading to a tremendous spike in the need for mental health services. During the pandemic, about 4 in 10 adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, up from one in ten adults who reported these symptoms from January to June 2019(KFF). Children, in particular, have been impacted by the social isolation, and are displaying gaps in their social emotional development. Stress, anxiety, depression and other impacts of COVID-19 are soaring in this hard-hit community, and existing resources cannot meet the need. A spate of recent attacks targeting Orthodox Jews in our service area has contributed to an increase in Orthodox seeking trauma treatment at LCSC. Due to the high fertility rate, there is a need for perinatal behavioral health expansion. In addition, the high poverty rate (with 53% of Lakewood residents are below 200% of poverty, much higher than the statewide average of 21.2% and the national average of 28.9%) and the huge population growth (54% population growth in the 2010 census) the need for services has dramatically increased. In fact, Lakewood is designated by the US government as a Medically Underserved Area (MUA).


Expanding the capacity of LCSC to provide outpatient mental health services is an excellent use of taxpayer dollars, as these services have demonstrated a tremendous cost savings on the system. NIH researchers have found that outpatient treatment reduces expensive interventions and treatments, including inpatient admissions, days in hospital, and emergency room visits. By treating mental health issues before they spiral out of control, individuals gain the skills and tools they need to be functioning and safe members of society, reducing unemployment and reliance on public assistance.

LCSC has participated in site visits/reviews by numerous stakeholders, including DMAHS, DCF, the US Department of Education (DOE), and has received stellar audits.

To address the growing and unmet needs, we need to expand capacity by moving into a larger facility. We have already purchased land and developed architectural plans. LCSC has assembled a broad team of governmental and philanthropic partners, to support this project. All funding from the Community Project Funding will be utilized for construction of this 5,000+ square foot mental health facility which will have the capacity for an array of services including, individual and family psychotherapy, group sessions, DBT and other evidence based practice models. All funding received will be expended in fiscal year 2022.

Our complete address is listed below. Should you need any further information, please don't hesitate to reach out to Sarah Gelbwachs @SGelbwachs@thelcsc.org or 848.226.5396.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Moshe Z. Weisberg
President



Sarah Gelbwachs
Executive Director



NEW JERSEY SENATE

ROBERT W. SINGER
SENATOR, DISTRICT 30
DEPUTY MINORITY LEADER
SenSinger@njleg.org

COMMITTEES
SENIOR REPUBLICAN MEMBER
HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES
& SENIOR CITIZENS
MEMBER, TRANSPORTATION
LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT

PARTS OF MONMOUTH-OCEAN COUNTIES
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Dear Honorable Congressman,

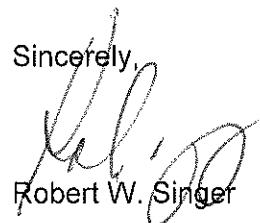
I'm writing this letter to support the request from Lakewood Community Services Corp. (LCSC) for \$400,000 in Community Project Funding from the House Appropriations Committee, to assist them in the expansion of their mental health center.

LCSC is at the frontlines of servicing the mental and behavioral health needs of the greater Lakewood community. I have been personally involved with LCSC since its founding over 20 years ago, and can attest to the high quality, efficiency and integrity of the mental health services they provide. Based on my first-hand experience as a Legislator and Committeeman on State, County and municipal levels, I unequivocally recommend LCSC for priority funding to enable the expansion of critically needed mental health services in Lakewood.

Lakewood is by at the largest and most vulnerable community with its high concentration of Orthodox Jewish, minority and senior residents. LCSC has provided outstanding outreach to all three of these communities with bicultural and bilingual services and dedicated outreach coordinators. It is essential that LCSC expand their capacity in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis so that their services can continue to be offered safely and efficiently.

I am certain that you share my belief that this application should be prioritized for submission. I am available to speak to you, should you need any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Singer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Robert W. Singer
Senator, District 30
RWS/mp

COUNTY OF OCEAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08754-2191



Joseph H. Vicari
Commissioner

(732) 929-2002
Fax (732) 505-1918

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Washington, DC Office
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Smith:

I am writing this letter to support the request from Lakewood Community Services Corp. (LCSC) for \$400,000 in Community Project Funding from the House Appropriations Committee, to assist them in the expansion of their mental health center.

I have a long-standing relationship with the LCSC and with Rabbi Weisberg its President, in particular, and have observed firsthand the wonderful work they do for Ocean County seniors, especially with meals-on-wheels and mental health services for this fragile community. As a Commissioner, I am liaison to the county's Office of Senior Services and their partner agencies. LCSC has an impeccable reputation for integrity and quality of services attested to by the many audits and inspections the county has done over the years. Particularly during the COVID-19 crisis, the LCSC has been a leader in aggressively partnering with the county to ensure that services to vulnerable populations continue uninterrupted during this challenging period. The Ocean County Board of Commissioners recognizes the explosion of mental health needs due to COVID-19 and it is critical for LCSC to be able to expand their facilities to be able to service our vulnerable constituents.

I respectfully request that you prioritize this application for submission. I am available to speak to you, should you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Joseph H. Vicari
Commissioner



Township of Lakewood

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
231 THIRD STREET
LAKEWOOD, NEW JERSEY 08701
732-364-2500



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I'm writing this letter to support the request from Lakewood Community Services Corp. (LCSC) for \$400,000 in Community Project Funding from the House Appropriations Committee, Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Health Facilities Construction to assist them in the expansion of their mental health center.

LCSC is at the frontlines of servicing the mental and behavioral health needs of the greater Lakewood community. For over 15 years, LCSC has been a key partner in servicing our community. LCSC has worked in close partnership with Lakewood Township to provide an array of services and all projects have been implemented professionally and successfully.

LCSC has provided outstanding leadership and dedication in meeting the critical mental health needs of our community. LCSC has been the go-to agency to provide services to vulnerable children, family and seniors in crisis during the pandemic. Despite shutdowns and restrictions, LCSC therapists went out of their way to ensure the Lakewood's most vulnerable populations, including seniors and children, received counseling, psychiatric and needed support services. Given the new realities, it is essential that LCSC expand and modernize its facility to ensure adequate capacity and safety protocols.

Congressman Smith – Being that Lakewood is the largest Township in your district, I am confident that you will prioritize this application for submission, thereby ensuring that the mental health needs of your constituents are met. Please make this a priority among your many worthy funding requirements.

Should you need any further information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Raymond G. Coles, Mayor

