



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2023

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for Lee County Health Department Building and EMS Bay in Fiscal Year 2024. The entity to receive funding for this project is Lee County, Iowa, located at 933 Avenue H Fort Madison, Iowa. 52627

The funding would be used to build a new Lee County Health Department/EMS bay. The Lee County Health Department has not had an independent base of operations for more than three decades. The staff has operated out of leased facilities since that time and are currently operating out of the John Bennett Center in the old Iowa State Penitentiary. The facilities are part of the shuttered DOC operations and investment in maintenance at the facility is minimal. The new facility will be a 14,000 square foot wood frame construction with two EMS Ambulance bays located on about eight acres of property that was donated to the county.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because the Lee County Health Department and Lee County EMS Ambulance operations are critical services to the taxpayers of Lee County. The LCHD is essential to residents, especially low- to moderate-income residents for valuable health care services from vaccinations to dental interventions, early childhood intervention, all the way to advanced hospice care. LCHD staff regularly works under other grant funding streams to continue to provide recognized quality health care to not only the people of Lee County, but services to surrounding counties as well.

With the current struggles facing the county financially in the wake of the closure of Keokuk Blessing Hospital, and the substantial drain created in staffing that part of the county and community, these requested funds would be a much-needed shot in the arm that would help keep the county budget out of a crisis scenario. With the transports now required out of the Keokuk area for 911 transports, the county had to add nine additional EMS staff and reallocate rigs and equipment. The current EMS ambulance facility in Keokuk is also substantially in disrepair. Property has been secured to rebuild that facility to allow for better efficiency of staff and to improve morale and hiring capability in that area. To those ends, the county has added close to \$1 million in unforeseen expenses to the EMS budget and that will create an unanticipated draw down of general fund balance. That could in all likelihood pull other funds that were allocated to the LCHD project.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 7 U.S. Code section 1926(a).

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mariannette Miller-Meeks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a stylized 'J' for the first name.

Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress