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Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for Rehabilitation of the Rockville Public Library in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Town of Vernon, located at 14 Park Place, Vernon CT 06066. The census-designated area of Rockville is a community within the Town of Vernon. The location of the project is at 52 Union Street, Vernon CT 06066.

The funding would be used for rehabilitation of the stairs of the Rockville Library. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because Rockville is a state-designated Environmental Justice (EJ) community that is already burdened by adverse health impacts, high poverty levels, and low environmental quality. Therefore, it is a disadvantaged community. Rockville is a small, low-income community with 7,660 residents that are disproportionately affected by additional environmental burdens. With this grant, the Town will acquire the necessary funds to rehabilitate and construct the monumental granite stairs and wing walls on the south side of the library. The scope of work and funds required to appropriately rehabilitate and restore the library monumental granite stairs to satisfactory standards are outside the Town's financial ability without state and federal assistance.

The community cannot draw from another resource given its financial struggles. The rehabilitation of this structure will benefit not only the residents of Vernon but also the library's visitors from throughout the region. The rehabilitated stairs will make the library safer by reopening the south entrance and providing a safe egress through the front door. The front stairs of the library serve as the main access point for pedestrians using the sidewalks, as well as those who arrive via public transportation from a nearby bus stop. However, the stairs are currently not in use, which creates a barrier for these users. Over the years, the stairs, landing pad, and patio have deteriorated due to breakage, decay, decomposition, and shifting. In 2009, some temporary repairs were made to reattach the handrails, fill gaps, and reset bricks. Unfortunately, these measures did not address the underlying problem, and the stairs are still in a state of disrepair.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by the funding provided is for purposes authorized by 42 U.S. Code § 5305 (a)(4), 42 U.S. Code § 5305 (a)(5) and 42 U.S. Code § 5305 (a)(2).

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

Sincerely,

JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress