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Congress of the United States
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May 3, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I respectfully request funding for the Veterans Memorial Parkway Restoration and Improvement in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive this funding is the Stephen F. Austin State University, located at 1936 North Street, Nacogdoches, Texas 75961.

This \$3,123,000 request would fund construction of a facility and the procurement of lab equipment and simulators for the new Center for Wood Technology and Demonstration at Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA). Funding will be used to significantly rehabilitate and equip a former poultry processing plant into a functional research and training facility. This Center will prioritize training students at the trade school and undergraduate level in emerging bioenergy and wood product technology and emerging industries. This project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it will support the demand for a skilled workforce in the forest products industry and drive innovation in sustainable production and use of wood products and bioenergy. SFA is leading economic development strategy and has numerous regional partners working toward the transformation of the rural Deep East Texas region into an innovation hub for bioenergy generation and the manufacture of forest products and by-products.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by 42 U.S.C. 5305(a)(2), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress