

April 28, 2021

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am writing this letter to express my support and formal request for funding for the following projects under the Community Project Funding (CPF) criteria. The below organizations have provided extraordinary proposals ranging from educational initiatives, mental health, and the protection of vital services for working-class families. I believe that bold visions for the future, especially those aimed to ensure lasting equity, are critical to meeting the CPF's mission and vision.

As you will see in reviewing these proposals, the projects below represent the spirit of ingenuity and community that is innate for New Yorkers. We take care of one another while also laying the groundwork for a better future. I therefore respectfully ask that you and your respective staff provide full and fair consideration of the below proposals, consistent with applicable rules, laws and regulations. The proposed projects include:

1. *Red Hook Community Youth Education Initiative*: Unique among the selected grantees, this grant would combine the efforts of several nonprofits under one umbrella to provide educational opportunities for youth across Southwest Brooklyn. The nonprofits serving working-class families would provide art education, sports, mentoring and college advance programs while allocating funds specifically for at-risk youth. With a \$1 million proposal, the Initiative would serve public housing residents and open educational pathways in areas that need them most.
2. *UPROSE/Sunset Park Regenerative Economies Industrial Ecosystem Development Initiative*: UPROSE is a longtime partner in the fight against climate change. Under the provided proposal, UPROSE would create a workforce development program for climate adaptation manufacturing. An investment of \$182,100 would allow our national economy to benefit from UPROSE's expertise while creating good, environmentally friendly jobs.
3. *Southside United HDFC*: Safe, clean and affordable housing is critical to socioeconomic security and development. A family's income should not serve as a barrier to obtain a safe place. Southside provides section 202 housing for families that would otherwise have limited options. New York City's housing vacancy rate averages about 3 percent a year. Southside's application for \$750,000 to meet capital needs, including facility upgrades and addressing pipe leaks, would help secure affordable housing for years to come.
4. *Chinese American Planning Council*: Our country continues to grapple with the adverse consequences of hate crimes due to the coronavirus pandemic. Anti-Asian hate crimes increased by nearly 150 percent in 2020, with cities like New York and Los Angeles among the most impacted. Mental health and outreach during the pandemic are critically important. There should be culturally appropriate services for areas that have experienced the brunt of the pandemic's hold or subject to senseless violence as a result. The grant here would provide \$500,000 to help strengthen mental health services in the Lower East Side/Chinatown and Sunset Park.
5. *Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation*: This organization has advanced many critical needs in the neighborhood that shares its name. This organization has provided social services for residents who have needed help applying for social services. A \$300,000 grant would allow the

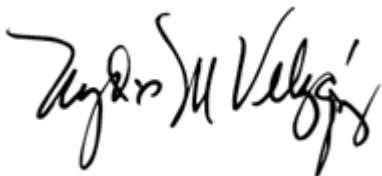
organization to continue serving the area's residents while supporting families as the nation continues its economic recovery from COVID-19.

6. *New York Sun Works*: Known for its activities encouraging environmental awareness for children, New York Sun Works has made a positive impact in my district by providing students with environmental education. Of particular interest is its history of STEM education with hydroponic farming in the classroom. Additionally, students learn about local food production, healthy eating, and sustainability. Under their \$800,000 proposal, a year-round farming program would be available 20 schools to teach students healthy eating habits and practical farming skills for urban agriculture.
7. *Friends of Marcy Houses*: Providing opportunities for our youth is critical in encouraging their development and growth. Friends of Marcy Houses has proposed, under a \$150,000 grant, to provide educational opportunities, mentorship and music education for NYCHA youth.
8. *El Puente*: A longtime organization providing environmental education for children. The organization seeks to expand its current initiatives by providing classroom engagement on air and pollution issues under its proposed \$500,000 grant. A 2008 Centers for Disease Control (CDC) noted that New York State's children are, based on a 2008 CDC report, more likely to have or develop asthma than children in 38 other states. The grant would allow El Puente to leverage its existing relationships with Elementary, Middle and Secondary schools across Bushwick and Williamsburg.
9. *Vision Urbana*: America's unique entrepreneurial spirit runs deep in New York. Vision Urbana's \$300,000 proposal would increase the nonprofit's capacity to provide entrepreneurial training to young adult residents living in NYCHA developments at the Baruch, Gompers, Lillian Wald, and Jacob Riis houses, along with Grand Street Guild. The grant will allow for a year-long business-based training and technical assistance program to low-income future entrepreneurs most impacted due to COVID-19 in the Lower East Side.
10. *Communities Resist*: Tenant advocacy is critical for all residents, but more so for those who cannot secure legal assistance. Under the proposed \$750,000 grant, Communities Resist would direct vital legal services and tenant education efforts to underserved families in North Brooklyn. The organization would empower and educate tenants on their rights, consistent with applicable local, state and federal laws.

As I stated previously, these projects represent some of the best talent and passion for community service in my district. I look forward to potentially discussing these projects with you and your staff and am thankful for the opportunity to provide these organizations my support and recommendation for funding under the CPF.

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Sincerely,



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress