

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1806

May 10, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Resilience Artificial Intelligence Innovation Program in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive funding for this project is The Water Institute of the Gulf (TWIG), located at 1110 River Road S., Suite 200, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. The funding would be used for the Resilience Center to provide technical assistance to local governments and non-profits operating in coastal areas. These efforts will primarily support resiliency planning for coastal management to create an artificial intelligence tool that would produce the most effective and cost-efficient management solutions.

The project appropriately uses taxpayer funds because it will support national and state-level coastal conservation efforts. Louisiana's unique geography puts the state at an elevated risk for severe storm events during Atlantic hurricane season and pluvial flooding from the Mississippi River basin. By supporting TWIG's efforts to create a lasting artificial intelligence tool to support long-term resilience strategies, taxpayers will see a significant and exponential return on their investments. According to the National Institute of Building Sciences, natural hazard mitigation, like proper floodplain management, saves up to \$13 for every \$1 invested.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized in the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §1451 et seq.). Section 310 of the Act (16 U.S.C. §1456c) authorizes the Secretary to enter into arrangements with qualified persons for "the coordination of technical assistance, studies, and research activities" to support the development and implementation of State coastal management objectives. This project fits within these directives because it will provide technical assistance to local governments and non-profits. In turn, these communities will be able to implement resilience projects that support the State's coastal management objectives.

Additionally, unlike other sections of the statute, Section 310 of CZMA carries no cost share requirement. However, I am assured that if the Committee disagrees with the project being authorized through this specific section of CZMA, the Water Institute of the Gulf is prepared to provide an

appropriate amount of non-federal matching funds. Should you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Garret Graves", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Garret Graves
Member of Congress