

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1501

May 3, 2024

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, &
Food & Drug Administration
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, &
Food & Drug Administration
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Harris and Ranking Member Bishop:

As you begin crafting the fiscal year 2025 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that you include \$4,000,000 in community project funding for the Belle Plaine Drinking Water Resiliency Project, located at 1207 8th Avenue, Belle Plaine, IA 52208.

These funds will support necessary upgrades to the City of Belle Plaine's drinking water infrastructure to provide clean, reliable, and abundant drinking water to the 2,300 residents of Belle Plaine, Iowa. The Belle Plaine community frequently faces water supply challenges due to drought, and the city recently implemented water restrictions to prevent a water shortage. While the water supply is carefully managed, several years of drought have depleted water reserves to dangerously low levels. Several years of water supply challenges have dropped the community's water table over 15 feet, leaving only 4 feet of water in the city's reserves.

With this funding, Belle Plaine residents will have a long-term solution to their ongoing water crisis. Due to the low amount of water available in the aquifer, Belle Plaine has been unable to flush water mains for over 3 years, leading to significant sediment and discoloration in drinking water and contributing to water quality concerns from the city's residents. This project will allow the city to improve water quality from its emergency well, construct additional wells to bolster the city's water supply, upgrade electrical systems to support drinking water infrastructure, and strengthen the city's water storage and distribution. These improvements will be critical to ensure the long-term resiliency of the water system that supports 1,300 residential households, 120 businesses, three schools, and two medical care facilities. This project has garnered significant support from the community and will facilitate further economic growth in the years to come.

I strongly urge the Committee to include this community project funding request in the FY25 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies Appropriations bill. I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ashley Hinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ashley Hinson
Member of Congress
Committee on Appropriations