

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

May 3, 2024

The Honorable Mark Amodei
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Homeland
Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Cuellar
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Homeland
Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Amodei and Ranking Member Cuellar:

As you craft the fiscal year 2025 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that you include \$1,620,000 in community project funding for the installation of an emergency backup generator for flood mitigation efforts in Downtown Cedar Rapids, Iowa, located at the 3rd Avenue SE Downtown Pump Station at 201 1st Street SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401. The entity to receive the funding for this project is the City of Cedar Rapids, located at 101 1st Street SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401.

This project will support the critical flood mitigation work of the City of Cedar Rapids and meet the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirement of a redundant supply of electricity to certify the flood control system and pump station. This investment will prevent electrical failures of the pump station during severe flooding, bringing it into FEMA compliance and protecting livelihoods and businesses.

Cedar Rapids is a thriving metropolitan city that is impacted frequently by severe flooding due to the Cedar River, which runs through the middle of the city. In 2008, Cedar Rapids experienced a devastating flood event that affected thousands of families and small businesses and caused extensive damage to infrastructure and public facilities throughout the city. The Cedar River crested to its highest level of 31.12 feet, with flood water penetrating 10 square miles. Over 18,000 Iowans were displaced, and 310 City facilities were damaged, hindering essential services. The current flood mitigation system is designed with several pump stations to prevent interior flooding by pumping rainwater over the flood wall and into the river. During the 2008 Flood, electricity failed, causing pump stations at the Cedar River to not operate fully.

As dangerous weather events become more frequent, it is critical to ensure resiliency and redundancy. This project will establish the needed power connection between the A Avenue Pump Station and the CRST building, allowing the pump station to fully operate on backup power, providing safety for the city and its residents during flood events and heavy rains.

Installing the backup generator falls within the FEMA Community Disaster Resilience Zone in Cedar Rapids, one of only two in the State of Iowa. The inclusion of the emergency backup generator is required by FEMA to certify the flood protection system and remove areas in the Community Disaster Resilience Zone from the flood plain. The project would consist of the installation of a 450-kW natural gas generator and the duct bank required to power the 3rd Avenue SE Downtown Pump Station.

In addition to the disaster mitigation and resiliency potential of this project, the certainty provided by increased flood protection and reduced risk will bolster opportunities for economic development in Cedar Rapids. Flood protection and disaster resilience is imperative for the City and this project will save lives, small businesses, and property.

Additionally, the project has robust support from the City of Cedar Rapids and the greater community, for which residents and businesses reflect the immediate need for flood protection. I strongly urge the Committee to include this community project funding request in the FY25 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Ashley Hinson
Member of Congress
Committee on Appropriations