

**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 you include \$500,000 for the Iowa Advanced Drought Information System project as a community project funding request through the Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Operations account. The intended recipient is the University of Iowa, IIHR-Hydrosience & Engineering, located at 100 C. Maxwell Stanley Hydraulics Laboratory, Iowa City, Iowa 52242.

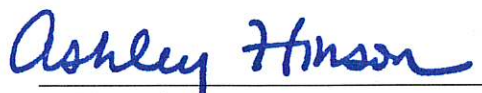
This project will address growing concerns surrounding drought conditions across Iowa. In 2023, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management led an effort to develop an Iowa Drought Plan to address challenges faced by the state's farmers and conservationists. The need for an Iowa Drought Information System was recognized by state officials and is included in the plan as a valuable resource to provide reliable, timely, and accurate drought information.

The Iowa Drought Information System will communicate comprehensive drought information that is readily accessible to assist crop and livestock producers with making on-farm management decisions and reduce damages caused by droughts. The publicly available drought information will provide critical data to help researchers, agencies, and the public monitor understand our natural environment. This project draws upon over 250 years of collective expertise in water resources harnessed from IIHR—Hydrosience and Engineering and its affiliated units, the Iowa Flood Center (IFC) and the Iowa Geological Survey, to build a robust and comprehensive Iowa Drought Information System (IDIS) for Iowans. This project has robust support from state and local officials, local farmers, and other leaders in Iowa agriculture.

Last year was Iowa's driest year on record, with 2.4 million Iowans impacted by drought and more than \$248 million allocated in crop insurance payments from drought. Enhancing the understanding of drought is critical for Iowa agriculture, water utilities, energy and industry sectors, public health, the environment, and all other water users. Improving the ability to accurately measure the onset and intensity of drought in agricultural areas will lead to improved resilience for food production systems and will support a higher quality of life for Iowans.

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 project.

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