

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

April 26, 2022

The Honorable David Price  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Housing and Urban Development, &  
Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Housing and Urban Development, &  
Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

As you begin crafting the fiscal year 2023 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, & Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that you include \$1,104,938 in community project funding for the Hawkeye Community College Smart Automation Certification Alliance Center, located at 1501 East Orange Road, Waterloo, IA 50701.

Funding the Hawkeye Community College Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) Center will increase access to educational opportunity for Iowans, strengthen the local workforce, and contribute to the economic development of Waterloo, Iowa. This project would create an apprenticeship hub that will focus on short-term, competency-based, stackable credentials crucial to the manufacturing industry. Businesses throughout the state, specifically defense manufacturers, are constantly adapting innovative practices like Industry 4.0, which uses robotics and automation, and requires skilled workers.

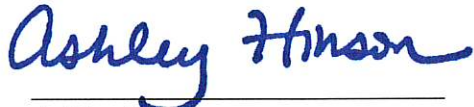
The launch of this center is a direct response to community need; it was originally conceptualized by five local manufacturers to address workforce shortages in a community with high unemployment and a wide skills gap. Manufacturing is a critical industry in Black Hawk County, making up nearly 17 percent of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area's total employment and supporting thousands of local jobs. Automation is a key aspect not only of Black Hawk County's economy, but of the entire state, with more than 4,100 Iowa manufacturers accounting for nearly 18 percent of the state's gross domestic product.

The SACA Center will allow students and current workers alike to earn credentials that will prepare them for Industry 4.0 manufacturing jobs. These stackable credentials will allow learners the flexibility to choose their own path, whether through an apprenticeship, finishing an associate's degree, pursuing a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution, or entering the workforce directly. The country is facing record workforce shortages that are disrupting

commercial supply chains worldwide, and this program will address Iowa's skilled-worker shortage while simultaneously bolstering our defense manufacturing workforce.

I appreciate your consideration of this request, as I strongly believe that providing these funds to help support the development of Hawkeye Community College's SACA Center will provide opportunities for Iowans to thrive in fulfilling careers, support workforce development in the region, and help address continuing supply chain issues.

Sincerely,



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Ashley Hinson  
Member of Congress  
Committee on Appropriations