

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

May 2, 2025

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 craft the fiscal year 2026 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, & Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that you include \$1,000,000 in community project funding for the Grinnell Regional Medical Center Labor and Delivery Unit Expansion. The entity to receive the funding for this project is the Grinnell Regional Medical Center, located at 210 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

This project will support UnityPoint Health, Grinnell Regional Medical Center's (GRMC) labor and delivery unit, in expanding their delivery capacity by up to 100 births annually. Currently, GRMC has the capacity to accommodate up to 250 births annually, and they are unable to meet the rising demand for local obstetrics services in the rural six-county region the hospital serves. GRMC's six-county service area contains four counties that do not have a labor and delivery unit, leaving a significant gap in access to labor and delivery services for women. Without continued access to local high-quality labor and delivery services, these rural families are likely to face significant barriers to accessing obstetrical care, and risk negative outcomes for mother and baby. Investing in this renovation is essential to ensuring the long-term health and prosperity of these rural communities.

The current labor and delivery unit was constructed in 1970 with only minor cosmetic updates in 2000. The realities of aging hospital equipment and infrastructure require GRMC to spend much of its capital to perform basic infrastructure repairs and replace vital equipment, instead of increasing capacity and improving quality of care for mothers and babies. Enhancing hospital-based labor and delivery infrastructure also supports the hiring and retention of OB/GYNs and maternal health specialists.

This project will enable GRMC to better handle acute and unexpected medical needs of obstetrics patients, increase safety and efficiency of patient care, and allow for increased

economic opportunity and development in the region. For the community, this project will enable timely access to prenatal, routine, and emergency services, facilitate the efficient use of regional rural resources, and prevent avoidable travel by patients seeking care. The anticipated economic and community development impact of this project is significant, sustaining high-quality, local jobs and encouraging young families to live in the region.

I strongly urge the Committee to include this community project funding request in the FY26 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, & Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ashley Hinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Ashley" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and the last name "Hinson" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ashley Hinson
Member of Congress
Committee on Appropriations