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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

DEMOCRATIC POLICY AND
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
CO-CHAIR

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RANKING MEMBER OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND CENTRAL ASIA

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS
VICE RANKING MEMBER

PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS

March 31, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for Hennepin County Sheriff – Forensic Science Lab Technology Improvements to Combat Gun Violence in fiscal year 2024.

The entity to receive funding for this project is Hennepin County, located at 300 South 6th Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55487.

The funding would be used Hennepin County Sheriff Office – Forensic Science Laboratory to purchase two light comparison microscopes (LCM) and one 3D virtual comparison microscope (VCM) for the laboratory's Firearm Section. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it would alleviate the instrument/technology constraints at the lab and allow the HCSO-FSL to better support the ATF in their mission for rapid entry of firearms related evidence into the NIBIN database. This is particularly important because, over the past three years, gun-related crimes have risen dramatically in Hennepin County. The HCSO - FSL has seen firearm related case requests jump by 148% along with the individual number of firearm evidence items increasing by 204%. This has produced an increase in the number of backlogged cases by 872%.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 501 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. § 10152).

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Phillips', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dean Phillips
Member of Congress