

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0926

DISTRICT OFFICES:
14221 SW 120TH STREET, #115
MIAMI, FL 33186
(305) 222-0160

404 W PALM DRIVE
FLORIDA CITY, FLORIDA 33034
(305) 222-0160

1100 SIMONTON STREET, ROOM 1-213
KEY WEST, FL 33040
(305) 292-4485

April 29, 2022

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

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

Dear Chair Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

As you begin crafting the fiscal year 2023 bill, I respectfully request that you give consideration to the following funding priorities:

1. Provide a funding level of \$1,500,000 for the Connect to Protect – Assisting Property Owners to Convert from Septic Tank Systems to Sanitary Sewer community project funding request. The intended recipient is Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department located at 3071 SW 38th Ave. Miami, FL 33140. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because the funding would complement the public laterals being installed for properties with available and abutting sewer infrastructure. Providing financial assistance for the private side connections will allow complete connections to be realized more quickly, which remains the biggest barrier to private connections. Other benefits include protecting groundwater, which is the primary source of drinking water. Connecting properties vulnerable to rising groundwater reduces the risk of public health exposures from malfunctioning systems and reduces nutrient pollution protecting our ground and surface water resources including Biscayne Bay (Bay).
2. Provide a funding level of \$1,863,200 for the Card Sound Bridge Replacement Planning, Design & Engineering (PD&E) community project funding request. The intended recipient is Monroe County, FL located at 1100 Simonton Street Key West, FL 33040. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because they would assist in completing project development and environment (PD&E) to prepare for replacement of the Card Sound Bridge. The 53-year old bridge is a fracture critical, high level structure that spans the Intracoastal Waterway in north Key Largo, FL. It is located on Card Sound Road, which is one of two roadways that connect the Florida Keys to the mainland. The route is used by workers who commute to the Keys from the City of Homestead to work and it serves as an evacuation route for residents from the entire Keys in the event of a hurricane.

3. Provide a funding level of \$4,000,000 for the Economic Resilience Through Public Infrastructure: Big Pine Key Prison to Workforce Training Center community project funding request. The intended recipient is the College of the Florida Keys located at 5901 College Road, Key West, FL 33040. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because the 75,000 residents in Monroe County and the 5 million-plus annual Keys' visitors are dependent on the safe and successful movement of goods and services along US Highway 1. Community Partners who rely on CFK for employee training and would directly benefit from this project include The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, Keys Energy Services, Monroe County, City of Key West, Monroe County School District, and Waste Management. Additionally, the transformation of this property into a vibrant community workforce training facility will increase education, training, and ultimately employment opportunities for the 5,000 residents of Big Pine Key.
4. Provide a funding level of \$1,500,000 for the Heron Assisted Living Facility construction and capital improvements community project funding request. The intended recipient is the WestCare Florida, Inc. located at 1205 Fourth Street Key West, FL 33040. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because the Heron facility is the only assisted living facility with a limited mental health license in Monroe County. It enables its residents to maintain sobriety and manage their mental illness which greatly reduces the risk of recidivism in the criminal justice population. The Heron offers a more effective recovery environment than the typical alternatives of homelessness, correctional institutions and stable psychiatric hospitals. The impact of this community development project will be immediate as the waitlist for supported living is perpetual and having a safe and secure place to live is an essential component of rehabilitation and recovery. Expanding and enhancing housing at The Heron will change the future for the growing number of Florida Key residents struggling with mental health issues.
5. Provide a funding level of \$1,000,000 for the Downtown Revitalization and Resilient Electrical Infrastructure community project funding request. The intended recipient is the City of Homestead, Florida located at 675 N. Flagler Ave, Homestead, FL 33030. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because Homestead has experienced numerous direct hits by hurricanes over the past 50 years, with Hurricane Andrew being the most significant; it completely devastated the local economy for many years. Because of the impact of frequent severe weather events, lower income and commercial development has been difficult in this area due to unreliable aging overhead electricity sources. This area of Homestead is one of the oldest sections and the electric infrastructure is some of the oldest in the City, as well.
6. Provide a funding level of \$3,000,000 for the Agape Village Health Center community project funding request. The intended recipient is the Agape Network, Inc. located at 22790 SW 112 Avenue Miami, FL 33170. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because the development of the Agape Village Health Center will expand the vitally needed primary care and behavioral health services for the South Dade

geographical area. Located on a major artery with a bus stop on the property, the new Community Center will help to fill the gap for many area residents. The provision of mental health and substance abuse treatment is a priority concern for the State of Florida.

7. Provide a funding level of \$3,000,000 for the Card Sound Road Project Development Study funding request. The intended recipient is Miami Dade County Department of Transportation located at 111 NW 1 Street Steven P. Clark. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because Card Sound Road is currently one of the two connection links between Miami-Dade County and Key Largo (Florida Keys), the other connection being through US-1 / South Dixie Highway.

Card Sound Road is a vital lifeline to Monroe County's hurricane evacuation plans and the thousands of Miami-Dade County residents who earn their living while commuting south and north each day on the road. The corridor also serves an important role as the official alternate route for US-1. It is frequently utilized for traffic diversions due to accidents and/or any other circumstances that affect the traffic flow along US-1. Card Sound Road is approximately 16 miles long, with 11 miles being within Miami-Dade County and approximately 5 miles being within Monroe County.

Sincerely,



Carlos A. Gimenez
Member of Congress