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4TH DISTRICT, TENNESSEE

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Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for an expansion of a rural family clinic in Dayton, TN in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive funding for the project is CHI Memorial Health, located at 7693 Rhea County Hwy Ste. 3, Dayton, TN 37321. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because this area has been identified by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as a low-income Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary care, illustrating the need for further investment in care accessibility.

CHI Memorial's intention in pursuing this project is to allow residents easier access to care, closer to home. These considerations of accessibility are especially important when considering the demographics of Dayton and Rhea County. According to data from the 2020 Census, Dayton and Rhea County significantly exceed state and nationwide rates for individuals with disabilities under the age of 65 (16.2% for the city and 17% for the county) and poverty (20.6% for the city and 14.4% for the county).

At the same time, Dayton and Rhea County fall more than \$8,000 below state and nationwide averages for median household income and have far fewer individuals enrolled in health insurance. For residents of this area, accessing appropriate care all too often represents a commitment of scarce financial resources. In addition to the significant distances many patients travel to access primary care, CHI Memorial must currently refer those same individuals elsewhere if x-ray imaging or lab testing are required for their diagnosis or treatment. Considering the rural service area and the low-income population the Dayton clinic currently serves, the resulting inefficiencies of this process cost patients money, cause unnecessary delays, and result in worse health outcomes. The proposed expansion of clinical space at CHI Memorial's Dayton clinic will directly address these factors. In addition to generally expanding the accessibility of primary care in Rhea County and providing necessary space for specialty care physicians, new x-ray and testing equipment will reduce the need for patients to seek imaging services elsewhere. In the long run, these improvements will result in better patient experiences, enhanced efficiencies, and savings on healthcare spending in TN-04.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for the purposes authorized by in Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 7 U.S. Code section 1926(a).

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish at the end.

Scott DesJarlais