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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

May 10, 2024

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

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing
and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Sunken Garden Springs Historic Rehabilitation and Environmental Restoration Project in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive funding for this project is the City of Austin, located at 301 West Second Street, Second Floor, Austin, TX 78701.

This funding would be used for the following:

1. To establish a stable spring-fed stream channel that significantly reduces erosion risk for the spring, the pedestrian bridge, and park facilities (trails, parking, and historic structures).
2. Enhance and expand the federal endangered salamander habitat as required by the 2013 Habitat Conservation Plan specified in the City's permit to operate Barton Springs Pool.
3. Preserve the adjacent historic structures and increase public interaction with them through interpretive signs and viewpoints.

This project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it will benefit the park's more than 1.3 million annual visitors, including residents of Austin and elsewhere, as well as the federally endangered Barton Springs and Austin Blind Salamanders. Sunken Garden Springs is located within the Zilker Park National Register Historic District. The proposed improvements allow the City to preserve this historic site as outlined in the adopted 2008 Barton Springs Master Plan. This project is consistent with the primary objective of the EDI community development program and meets a compelling local need consistent with the statutory purposes.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by 42 U.S.C. 5305(a)(2).

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

Sincerely,

Lloyd Doggett