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The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4611

March 31, 2023

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE:
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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND GLOBAL
COUNTERTERRORISM
ASIA, THE PACIFIC,
CENTRAL ASIA, AND NONPROLIFERATION

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting funding for "Enhancing Emergency Communications Resiliency and Effectiveness Through AI" in fiscal year 2024. The entity to receive funding for this project is George Mason University located at 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA, 22030. The funding would be used for the project below.

Project: Enhancing Emergency Communications Resiliency and Effectiveness Through AI

Recipient: George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA, 22030

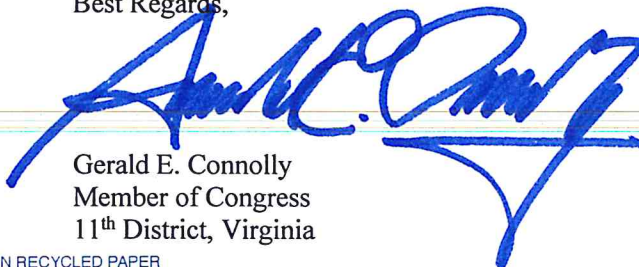
Amount: \$961,000

Justification: This project will enable George Mason University to work with local first responders to improve emergency communications using artificial intelligence (AI). The potential benefits of this work will include: 1) 9-1-1 calls can be directed more effectively using AI-enabled apps, which should both reduce response times and lighten the workload on 9-1-1 call centers in ways that can scale and be available 24/7. Moreover, these approaches can be used to consolidate the information and categorize it to improve decision support for public safety officials and first responders. The calls can be tailored to the 11th District's major languages and anonymized as needed. 2) Public feedback can be gathered in near-real time by using these same approaches. This could help first responders see what's happening sooner (Like flagging multiple co-located reports of "My street is flooding!") and understand public sentiment while the disruption is occurring, rather than waiting for post-event surveys. 3) The project will work with local IT personnel and emergency managers to use AI to help them implement comprehensive guidance on cyber resiliency like that issued by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) and adapt the guidance to their circumstances. This could reduce the likelihood of IT disruptions in emergencies. The project will reduce response times in emergencies by enhancing situational awareness for public safety officials, lightening the load on 9-1-1 call center operators, improving stakeholder engagement, and reducing the likelihood of IT disruptions during emergencies. The project includes three parts: (1) coordinating available data to support decisions better during emergencies and disasters, (2) integrating public feedback in near-real-time, and (3) improving cyber resiliency. The project will result in significantly more effective emergency management and public safety functions, as well as the increased resiliency of the underlying IT infrastructure.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Title VI of the 272 of title 15, United States Code.

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

Best Regards,



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress
11th District, Virginia