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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND COMMERCE
Subcommittee on Health
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

DOCTORS CAUCUS
Vice-Chairman

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3813

April 27, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you proceed with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Appropriations process, I respectfully request that you give consideration to the following funding priorities within the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies legislation.

1. Provide a funding level of **$100,000** for the Recovery to Work Program Expansion as a community project funding request. The intended recipient is the UPMC Western Behavioral Health at Twin Lakes, located at 224 Twin Lakes Road Somerset, PA 15501. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because as it will allow the expansion of the Recovery to Work Program within Somerset and into Cambria Counties. Recovery to Work is a 12 week program offered by UPMC Western Behavioral Health at Twin Lakes Center (WBH at Twin Lakes) in collaboration with the Somerset Chamber of Commerce and CareerLink that helps individuals with at least 6 months in recovery prepare for gainful employment. With this additional funding, the program will continue and expand by offering more classes throughout the year. In the past, the program ran on an as needed basis. With this expansion, WBH at Twin Lakes will offer four classes per year. In addition, they will expand services into Cambria County offering four classes throughout the year there as well. Recovery to Work initiates employment opportunities for clients in early recovery which helps prevent relapse. At a time when so many are struggling with addiction especially in response to social isolation during the COVID-19 Pandemic, this funding will help a vulnerable population get back on their feet.

2. Provide a funding level of **$125,000** for the SimMan Patient Simulator acquisition as a community project funding request. The intended recipient is Excela Health located at 532 West Pittsburgh Street, Greensburg PA 15601. The project would be a valuable use of taxpayer funds because this would provide the Excela Health School of Anesthesia with a needed asset to conduct training courses. The Excela Health School of Anesthesia provides anesthesia education and training for approximately 90 student registered nurse anesthetists each year. The program culminates with the awarding of a Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice degree. Each of these graduates are veteran intensive care nurses who are seeking to advance their skills and training. They are a vital cog in the continuum of

are seeking to advance their skills and training. They are a vital cog in the continuum of care provided within the operating room. The use of simulation in this educational process is an essential component in assuring students receive the most comprehensive and realistic experience possible. As a reflection of the ever-evolving advances in medicine, the acuity of the surgical patient, as well as the level of technique and technology necessary to safely usher them through a procedure, has grown exponentially. It is in this context that acquisition of a new SimMan patient simulator is a good use of this funding.

3. Provide a funding level of **$995,000** for the Juniata College One Health Initiative. The sponsor for this project is Juniata College located at 1700 Moore Street, Huntingdon, PA, 16652. The project is a valuable use of taxpayer dollars and will improve public health and education by integrating community engagement, computational sciences (e.g. data science, bioinformatics), biotechnology research discoveries, ecology, environmental science, and epidemiology to address challenges and research gaps associated with tick-borne diseases (TBD). Funding designated for this project will be used to survey and research ticks and tickborne pathogens, as well as developing community-engaged prevention, symptoms, and treatment options to the public and clinicians. Tick-Borne Diseases like Lyme disease impact millions of people in the United States and globally each year, and in Pennsylvania has the highest number of reported cases annually. Spikes in tick populations are increasing chances of contracting vector-borne pathogens with year around residents and summer travelers enjoying the ecotourism of this community. COVID-19 has exacerbated this problem further with more people seeking outdoor activities thereby increasing exposure to tick-transmitted diseases. This project will help protect both residents and visitors of Huntingdon by investing more resources in better understanding the latest distributions of ticks.

Thank you for your full consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

John Joyce, M.D.

Member of Congress