April 27, 2022

The Honorable Chris Jacobs  
Member of Congress  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congressman Jacobs:

Pursuant to the House Appropriations Committee’s Community Project Funding process, the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, can affirm Orleans County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) project meets eligibility requirements under the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program and the project is able to be funded within the Fiscal Year 2023 Community Project Funding.

The project sponsor is responsible for demonstrating other non-federal matching requirements.

Sincerely,

Eric Abramson  
Director  
Grants Program Administration
April 7, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending – Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

Thank you for taking the time to consider my letter of support for a new Emergency Management facility in Orleans County.

As the President of The NYS Fire Coordinator’s Association, I represent members from nearly every county in New York State. Our mission is to provide a forum for members to share relevant fire service information and experiences, to advocate in the development and passage of fire and safety related legislation in state government, and to advance the personal and professional growth of its membership.

Vital to the work of any firefighting association in the State – professional or volunteer – is continual training. Currently, training happens when the weather allows. A new facility would offer ample classroom space for teaching hands on courses for firefighters year-round. In addition, trainings could be held for fire/EMS/law enforcement responding to Active Shooter incidents. All of these trainings are important to saving the lives of both civilian and emergency responders.

In addition to training, staff would also have facilities that include new bunk rooms, kitchen facilities, ADA compliant bathrooms and locker rooms and a lactation facility.

These upgrades are not just nice, they are necessary. In supporting our emergency teams in facilities and training we are ensuring that they can respond with their very best in any emergency in Orleans County. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Firematically yours,

William Streicher  
President
April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending – Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

I write to you today as the Chairman of the Finger Lakes Radio Consortium in support of an application by Orleans County for a new Emergency Management building.

Our consortium covers the counties of Allegany, Chemung, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates. Most of these are smaller counties in New York, Orleans being one of the smallest. Small counties often struggle to maintain emergency operations at full capacity due to cost and a smaller tax base. Federal funds are urgently needed to upgrade the current 1960’s facility where Orleans County Emergency Management is housed.

One of our concerns is the lack of a sufficient 911 Dispatch back up facility. Backup dispatch currently consists of only 2 stations, there isn’t spacing for the needed 4 stations and to still be able continue the other functions of the room where it is located. The current backup dispatch is not capable of the same operability as the primary dispatch, which could lead to loss of civilian or first responder life.

If emergencies were to occur across the consortium area we could not rely on the current configuration of Orleans County’s backup dispatch system to function as it should on behalf of the region.

I thank you for considering this application that would not only serve to strengthen the emergency management functions in Orleans County, but would ensure any regional coordination can operate at a fully functioning capacity – saving lives in an emergency.

Respectfully,

Stephen M. DeChick
FLRNYICC Chairman
April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending - Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

The Orleans County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) enthusiastically supports the construction of a new Emergency Management building in Orleans County.

As the President of Orleans County RACES, a volunteer organization of licensed radio amateurs that are certified by civil defense we are able to communicate on Amateur Radio frequencies during drills, exercises and emergencies. We are activated by local, county and state jurisdictions and are the only Amateur Radio operators authorized to transmit during declared emergencies when the President of the United States specifically invokes the War Powers Act.

Our operations are housed at the current facility that was a 1960’s era bomb shelter. We serve as a back up to Orleans County’s primary radio system/additional communication tool that can be used in the event of cell network disruption or primary radio system failure.

Our volunteers must navigate the stairs down to rooms that house operations and non-ADA compliant facilities including hallways and restrooms. The roof is leaking, and storage is contained in trailers off site in order to protect them from weather damage.

We thank you for considering this project in your allocated Congressionally Directed Spending. The safety of the citizens and of our volunteers could be ensured with your support and a new Emergency Management building in Orleans County.

Bruce P. Sidari
President OCARC
April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending – Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

Thank you for accepting this letter of support for the construction of a new facility to house the Orleans County Emergency Management Operations.

As the President of the Emergency Managers’ Association of Western New York, it is of vital importance to have an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that is fully equipped and ready to become operational quickly and easily. In the current state of affairs at the Orleans EMO building it would take time to get an EOC even partially operational and hope that nothing else would have to happen in that room during operations. All trainings and other operational meetings would have to be cancelled in order to utilize the EOC facility.

The region relies on the strength of each County and their operations centers to back each other up and work together in an emergency situation. At the present time, in this building, Orleans is not equipped to play a fully functioning role in those operations.

We ask for your assistance in ensuring that the entire Western New York region is fully equipped and prepared to handle emergency situations by supporting this application for a new Emergency Management Building in Orleans County. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Gregory Butcher
President
Emergency Managers’ Association of Western New York
April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending - Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

I write to you today to express why a new Emergency Management Operations Center is needed in Orleans County:

The current facility is a former bomb shelter built in the 1960's. It is neither ADA compliant nor wheelchair accessible. Space is strictly limited and concurrent operations and training are nearly impossible at the level required for emergency operations.

The Backup Dispatch consists of only two (2) stations, when four (4) stations are needed. The current Backup Dispatch cannot deliver the same capabilities as the primary Dispatch, which could lead to loss of civilian and or First Responder life.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) currently lacks the technology and space to support all fifteen (15) Emergency Support Functions. There is risk that in an event that would require EOC usage; we must utilize at minimum one (1) of the Backup Dispatch stations. This prevents the ability to have meetings without interfering with Dispatch, and disrupting coordination of activities as needed.

The County does not have any owned facilities that are capable of supporting pandemic operations, facilities had to be rented which disrupted operations at local fire facilities and the Cornell Cooperative Extension in order to conduct testing and offer vaccinations. We received no state support during the most recent Pandemic, until the Omicron variant, when the state opened a testing site within the county. A new facility could be used for testing, vaccines, PPE distribution, rabies clinics, etc. to support Public Health operations.
And finally, one (1) room currently is the training classroom, Backup Dispatch, Emergency Operations Center, and the meeting room. The training classroom is used by, Fire, EMS, Amateur Radio Club, as well as Law Enforcement. More room is needed in order to adequately train our staff and volunteers.

As you can see, we are severely limited in our ability to perform the full range of functions Emergency Management requires. We urgently ask for your support on this application to build a new facility in Orleans County to support every aspect of emergency operations for our residents.

Respectfully,

[Signature]
Christopher M. Bourke
Orleans County Sheriff
April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending - Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

I write to you today in support of a new Emergency Management building for Orleans County.

I am the President of The New York State Emergency Management Association, which is made up of a broad-range of both public and private sector emergency managers who are charged with mitigating, planning, responding and recovering from natural and man-made disasters.

It is vital in our work that the facilities for each County Emergency Management team are able to accommodate the needs of training, planning and executing in the case of an emergency.

The current Orleans County facility dates to the 1960’s. The roof is leaking, and the building is not large enough to accommodate both training and operations. 4 trailers are used to store items and moved around the County to various fire halls in order to keep them protected from the weather.

A new building would allow for training and operations as well as storage. It would also house the 911- Dispatch back up that is vital to maintaining full operations in case of an emergency. Staff support such as locker rooms, a bunk room, kitchen and restroom facilities and a lactation room are also included.

Ensuring that Orleans County’s Emergency Management team has the space and resources they need to be fully functional is vital to maintaining the health and safety of the citizens of Orleans County. I thank you for your consideration of this application.

Christopher Baker
President

NEW YORK STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
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April 4, 2022

Representative Christopher Jacobs
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending – Orleans County Emergency Management Building

Dear Representative Jacobs and Staff:

As the President of the Orleans County Fire Advisory Board, I write to you today asking for your support for a new Emergency Management building for Orleans County.

The Orleans County Fire Advisory Board is a statutory board made up of representatives of the fire service in Orleans County that makes recommendations to the Legislature on improving the training and response to fire related issues.

The current building where emergency management and operations is housed is woefully out of date. The space is small and cannot accommodate fully functioning operations such as the 911 Backup Dispatch or year-round trainings. There is not room for storage which is primarily housed off sight in trailers that we rotate in fire halls throughout the County to protect them from weather damage.

The required 6-month supply of PPE that Orleans County must maintain has taken up a large portion of that available storage space that isn’t climate controlled. This could ultimately cause the PPE to go bad before it reaches the end of its shelf life costing the county thousands of dollars.

New ADA compliant and wheelchair accessible accommodations are badly needed. Both larger classroom space and ADA compliance would allow Disaster Preparedness Courses to be offered to the community, resulting in a safer and more resilient community.

This is not just a matter of aesthetics or comfort, these trainings and operations are vital to the preparedness of the staff and the timely reaction to emergency situations. A new Emergency Management building will save lives in Orleans County and therefore I thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely

Jason Watts
Orleans County Fire Advisory Board President