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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting funding for the Rehabilitation of the Meridian Road Bridge project in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is the County of Winnebago, located at 404 Elm St, Rockford, IL 61101. The funding would be used to replace the existing deck, girders, and bearings on a deteriorating bridge.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because the Meridian Road Bridge over the Pecatonica River, constructed in 1973, has a sufficiency rating of 38.5 under the National Bridge Inspection Standards and a 2023 IDOT-approved condition report rating the deck in poor condition and the superstructure in serious condition. Full-depth deck deterioration has resulted in hazardous holes in the driving surface, requiring the installation of temporary steel plates to maintain safe passage. The bridge carries approximately 1,700 vehicles per day on a major collector route serving rural communities, agricultural operations, and emergency services in northern Winnebago County, and continued deterioration risks lane reductions or closure that would significantly disrupt regional traffic, agricultural transport, and emergency response times.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by 23 USC 133 (Surface Transportation Block Grant Program).

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 that reads "Darin LaHood".

Darin LaHood
Member of Congress

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