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

Committee on House Administration
Ranking Member

Committee on Appropriations
Vice Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee on Defense

March 17, 2026

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Drone as First Responder Project in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, located at 130 South Plymouth Ave, Rochester, NY, 14614.

The funding would be used to expand the integrated Drones as First Responder (DFR) program. The semi-autonomous drones, remotely piloted from the Regional Investigative Operations Center (RIOC) command floor, launch within minutes of any alert, delivering live high-definition video, thermal imaging, and precise mapping data directly to decision-makers. This enables dispatchers and field commanders to deploy personnel and equipment accurately and safely; locate missing people, suspects, or victims faster; assess dangerous conditions—flooding, fires, downed lines, or active threats—without exposing officers or civilians to unnecessary risk. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because the RIOC actively provides real-time capabilities to track and mitigate threats while providing emergency responders with enhanced situational awareness. This targeted expansion will dramatically elevate the RIOC's mission effectiveness and transform how they protect our communities.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 1701(b)(9) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. § 10381(b)(9)).

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 "Joseph D. Morelle".

Joseph Morelle
Member of Congress