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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4202

May 3, 2024

Chairman Tom Cole
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your work on the fiscal year 2025 appropriations legislation. I respectfully request funding for the following project in Tennessee's second congressional district:

Project Name: Spark Innovation Center

Entity: University of Tennessee

Address: 2641 Osprey Vista Way, Knoxville, TN 37996

Project Description: The University of Tennessee seeks funding for the Spark Innovation Center's renovation of a research facility for STEM-related business and entrepreneurial development in support of entrepreneurs from the University of Tennessee, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and throughout the state. The renovations will expand start-up STEM business access to wet lab facilities, office space and expert mentoring. The center contributes to economic growth in East Tennessee by connecting entrepreneurs with local partners, including the Oak Ridge National Lab, and by providing intensive programming to help build strong and investible companies. For the Appalachian region, an area with lower population density, limited economic opportunity and public health challenges, the Spark Innovation Center is attracting new, well-paying jobs.

Project Justification: STEM entrepreneurs have critical need for top quality lab facilities, office and meeting space. The Spark Innovation Center provides important programming to encourage and support the region's most promising companies. Over the past six years, the Center has worked with 31 startup companies which attracted \$150 million of external funding to the region and created 140 new jobs. However, without adequate lab facilities, it lacks the capacity to serve the numerous talented STEM startups seeking access to this important program.

Federal Nexus: 5305(a)(2) – the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or installation (including design features and improvements with respect to such construction, reconstruction, or installation that promote energy efficiency) of public works, facilities (except for buildings for the general conduct of government), and site or other improvements

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in the above project. Thank you again for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Tim Burchett,
Member of Congress

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