



RAUL RUIZ, M.D.
Member of Congress
36th District of California

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3605

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March 31, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians Project Dillon Road Improvement Project in Fiscal Year 2024.

The entity to receive funding for this project is the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians at 46200 Harrison Place Coachella, CA 92236

The funding would be used for Dillon Road Improvement Project, which connects Tribal Reservation Lands of the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians and the City of Coachella, CA. The project proposes to reconstruct the existing road (Demo), grading, laying concrete and asphalt, striping, and installing a traffic control system. The project will benefit visitors of Tribal Reservation lands, as well as the adjacent community in Coachella, CA. In addition, the proposed project will install pedestrian-friendly facilities that will improve the safety of cyclists and pedestrians and will attract alternate modes of transportation, contributing to improved air quality on Tribal Reservation Lands.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because Investing federal funding to improving the condition of Tribal roads will further the federal Indian trust responsibility to “protect Tribal treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources,” as found in *Seminole Nation v. United States*, 1942. The Tribe does not receive sufficient Tribal Transportation Funds to address all of the needs for improvements to Tribal roads on its reservation lands. In funding this proposed project with U.S. federal dollars, the Tribe will have the ability to continue to protect and maintain its Tribal lands in accordance with the federal Indian trust responsibility. Per the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Native Americans and Alaskan Natives are ranked low in terms of health, education and employment.

The proposed project will promote economic development for the Tribe as it continues to expand its enterprises and continue its contributions to the local economy. The Tribe’s southern reservation is adjacent to the cities of Indio, CA and Coachella, CA which are also designated as Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities. The jobs created by the Tribe benefit these communities and contribute to their financial standard of living. In addition, the Tribe hosts community events that engage the local community in recreational and



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social activities on its southern reservation lands. The proposed project will provide benefits beyond the immediate project area and will improve safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, partnership and collaboration, and innovation on Tribal lands.

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

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,


Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress