



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 SunLine Transit Agency Battery Capacity for Solar Microgrid Project in Fiscal Year 2024.

The entity to receive funding for this project is the SunLine Transit Agency at 32505 Harry Oliver Trail, Thousand Palms, CA 92276.

The funding would be used for a battery storage package that will enable the Agency to more efficiently produce hydrogen with its on-site hydrogen electrolyzer to fuel its hydrogen fuel cell electric bus fleet.

The project will require design and construction of approximately 31,600 feet of new 10-inch PVC sewer pipeline along with approximately 41,000 feet of sewer laterals within the reservation including Soboba Road, Poppet Flats Road, Castile Canyon Road, Silvas Flat Road, Noli Road, and other local roads. The sewer laterals will be designed and constructed to collect wastewater flows from the existing septic inlet systems within the reservation. Currently, there are 256 residential properties with sewer septic systems and 97 planned residential properties in need of future sewer connection. The Tribe also directed its consultant engineer to extend the proposed sewer line to collect wastewater flows from the future Olive Ranch/Ciernia development site along Soboba Road. A new lift station will be designed to collect and deliver flows to a manhole along Soboba Road near the Olive Ranch/Ciernia development site via a 6-inch forcemain. A 15-inch gravity sewer pipeline will collect and convey the wastewater flows from the forcemain along with the flows from the future Olive Ranch/Ciernia development to a connection point to the existing 15-inch sewer pipeline within an EMWD easement.

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The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because this proposal aims to facilitate Sunline's energy independence, increase the renewable content and at the same time reduce the cost of energy used for Sunline's operations. A battery storage package is proposed as a stand-alone solution, to be plugged to its existing substation in order to store energy coming from the existing infrastructure (grid, solar or other). Once installed, SunLine can benefit in the following ways:

- Storing energy coming from the utility at the times when cost is lower or has a higher renewable content, as per Sunline's interests, to be used at night or when prices from the utility are higher.
- Storing energy from the existing renewable sources that at a given moment could face curtailment or lower price.
- Storing energy coming from future energy producing sources like additional solar, wind, etc. that will be connected to the existing infrastructure (substation, switchgear, etc) or to new infrastructure that could be built.

The proposed solution includes the following components: 1.4MWh Battery system; Power converters; Warranty for batteries (Zero Degradation in 20 years); Related construction materials; Design and engineering; Interconnection requirements; Permitting and other similar needs.

This proposal complements other grant funding opportunities for which SunLine has applied. Taken together, SunLine intends to construct a solar microgrid and battery facility that will enable it to produce 100% renewable green hydrogen to fuel its fleet of clean buses and provide excess hydrogen for other hydrogen-powered fleets in the region. The Coachella Valley is severely impacted by emissions; this project enables SunLine to do its part to reduce emissions and improve health outcomes for all residents.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by chapter 53 of title 49 of the United States Code.

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

Sincerely,


Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress