April 29, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for The Excel Center Rockford in fiscal year 2023.

The entity to receive funding for this project is Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois and Wisconsin Stateline Area, Inc., located at 850 N. Church Street, Rockford, IL 61103.

The funding would be used to open The Excel Center, an innovative school model that provides adults with a rigorous high school experience, the opportunity to access postsecondary credentials and skill-building experiences, and wraparound support services. In the Rockford region, approximately 32,000 adults do not have a high school diploma or GED and this school will be the first of its kind in Illinois.

Individuals who drop out of high school face several challenges that affect their current well-being and future success including worse health, lower incomes, and fewer job opportunities than the general population. In addition, those who dropped out are more likely to be recipients of government welfare and are eight times more likely to be incarcerated than high school graduates. The Excel Center is an evidence-based solution for supporting all individuals, including those in under-resourced communities in achieving their academic and career goals.

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

Sincerely,

Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress