

The Honorable Claudia Tenney (NY-22)

**Member Testimony before the House Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee**

I would like to thank Chairman Price, Ranking Member Diaz-Balart, and distinguished members of the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee for holding today's hearing. I am grateful for this important opportunity to advocate for funding priorities that matter to my constituents and community.

New York's 22nd Congressional District stretches from the shores of Lake Ontario in the north to the Pennsylvania border in the south. It includes cities like Utica and Binghamton, as well as so many historic villages and towns. Many of the communities I represent are rural and suffer from a lack of resources.

While states across the country face aging infrastructure, in New York our challenges are especially dire. Upstate New York, once a manufacturing hub along the famed Erie Canal, is in desperate need of greater revitalization and investment. That's why today, I'm honored to highlight four projects that would greatly benefit my community and bring hard-earned taxpayer dollars back to New York State.

The first project is a pedestrian bridge located at Utica Harbor in the City of Utica. In the early 1800s, construction of the Erie Canal kicked off the beginning of the industrial revolution in the Mohawk Valley. For decades it was an important route for barge traffic, carrying crops and

goods between the Great Lakes and the rest of the world. Utica Harbor was an important stop along this route. But that was then.

Today, this route has dried up and the harbor has been cut off from the City of Utica. I am advocating for a pedestrian bridge to once again link downtown Utica to the harbor, which would open up this area to greater economic growth and allow more people to easily access this community resource and historical landmark.

The second project I want to highlight is the Griffiss-Woodhaven Revitalization project in the City of Rome. This initiative has strong community support and aims to revitalize more than 100 acres of former military housing near what was once the Griffiss Air Force Base into a new vibrant mixed-use community.

As you may know, the Griffiss Air Force Base was shuttered in 1995 following the Base Realignment and Closure process. The loss of this base devastated my community, making the need for greater federal investment critical today.

The refurbished housing stock will boost the growing job market within the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, which today is anchored by the Air Force Research Laboratory's Information Directorate as well as the Defense Finance and Accounting Agency. For these institutions to stay competitive and achieve their important missions, we must continue to invest in this area's development.

The third project I want to highlight is located in the City of Binghamton, New York. After decades of use, the city's current fire headquarters located within Binghamton City Hall has been deemed structurally unsound. This has put a huge strain on the city's ability to respond reliably to local emergencies.

The City has proposed building a new, state of the art facility that will greatly benefit the community. The new facility will include more space to house equipment and will also provide additional protections to the brave first responders I represent, including housing a new decontamination room to prevent hazardous toxins from spreading throughout the facility.

Finally, we must not forget the importance of investing in local services and community spaces, which is why I support a request for funding to renovate the H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse in the Village of Pulaski. This courthouse is the oldest building in Oswego County still used for its initial purpose. In addition to serving as a courthouse, the local landmark also houses the Town of Richland offices, a satellite office for the Department of Motor Vehicles, the County Health Department, and other services and resources for the community.

However, after years of withstanding harsh New York winters, including average annual snowfalls of 12-feet, the building is in desperate need of critical and costly maintenance. Without these repairs, the building risks closing altogether, which would prevent those in my community from accessing vital services.

Transparency and accountability were two critical factors that drove my support of these projects. I am committed to ensuring any federal funding brought back to our region is spent transparently and responsibly. As with any federal program, Community Project Funds must adhere to the highest standards and I will hold community beneficiaries accountable. The projects I am supporting today were rigorously reviewed, including extensive consultations with a variety of stakeholders. They have strong buy-in from the community as well as a clearly demonstrated benefit to my district.

As many of you likely know, New York State taxpayers pay more to the federal government than they get back in return. I will always advocate on behalf of my community and fight to return tax dollars to New York. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today.