April 27th, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

I am requesting $426,462 for the Chestnut Family Health Center Dental Clinic in fiscal year 2022. The entity to receive funding for this project is Chestnut Health Systems located at 1003 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Bloomington, IL 61701. The clinic itself is located at 702 W. Chestnut Street, Bloomington, IL 61701.

The funding would be used to fully equip four operatories, one lab, a reception area, and offices to make the dental clinic operational. The location is already a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and is a natural fit for the dental services Chestnut aims to provide. The space is ready to go as part of previous construction and renovations, but they lack the funding to equip the space which is where this request comes in. Oral health services provided will include basic dental screenings, oral health hygiene instruction and education, oral prophylaxis, application of fluorides, placement of dental sealants and X-rays. Additionally, based on identified patient and community need, Chestnut plans to offer additional dental services, such as diagnosis and treatment of tooth ailments.

Fifty percent of McLean County’s Medicaid recipients never see a dentist. The average cost of a Medicaid enrollee’s inpatient hospital treatment for dental problems is nearly ten times higher than the cost of preventive care delivered in a dentist’s office. Notably, Children living in poverty are five times more likely to have fair or poor oral health compared to other children. Lack of dental care has been identified as one of the top 5 health issues in the United Way of McLean County’s Community Needs Assessment since 2014. A federally qualified health center providing oral health services is the most affordable way for McLean County to meet the needs of the community.

I thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Rodney Davis
Member of Congress