April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger,

I am requesting funding for Sisters of Charity Hospital of Buffalo, New York in fiscal year 2023.

The entity to receive funding for this project is the St. Joe’s Campus of Sisters of Charity Hospital of Buffalo, New York, located at 2605 Harlem Road, Cheektowaga, New York 14225.

Funding will support the conversion of 40 of St. Joseph's medical-surgical beds to inpatient drug and alcohol dependence rehabilitation beds, as part of a total conversion of the fifth floor into a new substance use disorder unit. In eight-county Western New York there are currently 132 chemical dependence rehabilitation beds, and more are sorely needed. Of those 132 beds, 30 are slated to close when Eastern Niagara Hospital closes in 2023. From 2019 to 2020, Erie County experienced a 57% increase in confirmed opioid-elated overdose deaths, from 156 deaths in 2019 to 245 deaths in 2020. In 2021, 177 deaths were confirmed, with more than 100 suspected but pending confirmation. Alcohol use disorders are also on the rise, with a 40% increase in emergency room visits nationally during pandemic, and a 26% increase in alcohol-related deaths from 2019-2020. Catholic Health currently operates a highly regarded 69-bed inpatient treatment unit at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital in Lewiston, in Niagara County NY, on which the St. Joseph project is modeled.

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

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress