

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1409

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Digital Undercover Exploitation and Narcotics Interdiction Initiative in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is City of North Vernon Police Department, located at 101 Madison Avenue, North Vernon, IN 47265.

The funding would be used for expanding proactive investigations targeting narcotics trafficking, human trafficking, and online child exploitation. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because the department's pilot digital investigation initiative known as Operation ICE Pick resulted in 15 individuals charged in cases involving methamphetamine distribution, fentanyl possession, and school-related drug offenses, demonstrating measurable regional impact; this initiative maximizes existing personnel while strengthening law enforcement's ability to identify and disrupt criminal networks, improving public safety across the region.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes described in section 501 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. § 10152).

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,



Erin Houchin

Member of Congress