

ERIN HOUCHIN
9TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
COMMITTEE ON RULES
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1409
March 26, 2026

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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:

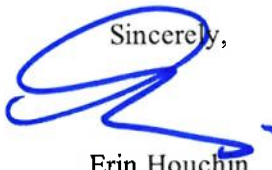
I am requesting funding for the Monon South Trail – Salem Extension in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is the City of Salem, located at 509 Tucker Street, Salem, Indiana 47167. The funding would be used for the construction of approximately 1.5 miles of new multi-use trail and associated infrastructure improvements along the former Monon rail corridor. The trail segment will connect distressed rural populations in a designated Opportunity Zone to pathways for work, education, and healthcare. Construction includes a paved and compacted aggregate surface trail on existing railroad ballast within right-of-way owned by Radius Indiana, a nine-county regional economic development agency developing the longest recreational trail in the State of Indiana.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it converts an underutilized former rail corridor into productive public infrastructure serving an economically distressed area. This segment specifically connects Opportunity Zone populations to jobs, education, and healthcare, addressing both economic and public health needs. The Monon South Trail is the largest Next Level Trails funding recipient in Indiana history, with the State of Indiana committing \$29.5 million through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, including \$5.5 million to purchase the corridor from CSX through a rail banking agreement. Additional non-federal commitments include \$1,000,000 from the State of Indiana READI Program and \$1,000,000 from Radius Indiana. Federal investment here leverages tens of millions in existing state commitments, ensuring those dollars reach their full potential and delivering lasting public value for a historically underserved region.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is consistent with purposes authorized in 42 U.S.C.5305(a)(2).

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
Indiana's 9th Congressional District