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HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 9, 2024

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and  
Science  
H-310 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and  
Science  
2102 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

I am requesting funding for Columbus State University's Campus Safety Equipment Upgrades. The entity to receive funding for this project is Columbus State University, located at 4225 University Ave, Columbus, GA 31907. The funding would be used for campus safety equipment upgrades which include:

Seven new license plate readers which provide live video feeds, and leverage artificial intelligence and machine-learning-powered technology to provide 24/7 community coverage. Our cameras would network with a network that has expansive coverage of connected communities to provide more data and more opportunities to solve crime. This technology reports some communities have seen up to a 100% solved rate on homicides, and up to an 80% decrease in residential burglaries.

New blue-light emergency phones on campus. A recent survey of our existing emergency call boxes on our campuses showed that 20 of the 34 phones were not working. A part-time employee with knowledge of analog technology was hired to inspect the call boxes and discovered that many were operational but were never programmed for the dial tones. Replacing the boxes is part of the university's ongoing efforts to modernize our infrastructure, and transition from analog systems. This transition includes replacing elevator controls and call boxes gradually migrating to more advanced technologies that provide a more efficient and reliable system.

Two new police cars to help offset an aging fleet on campus. The department has 28 sworn officers and only 15 vehicles assigned to it. Several are donated from other departments and cannot be used for day-to-day activities. One has a current value of just

\$577 and another has had over \$18,000 in repairs to date. Police vehicles serve several essential functions within law enforcement agencies. These vehicles are a critical tool for ensuring public safety and responding to emergencies. Our vehicles are equipped to respond quickly to emergencies. They can navigate through traffic, reach the scene of a crime, accident, or other emergency rapidly, and provide immediate assistance. They also serve a critical role for routine patrols in neighborhoods and communities adjacent to our campus, and most importantly on our campuses. Their presence helps deter criminal activity and provides a sense of security to the public.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because this project is important to the Columbus region because Columbus State University is a large economic engine for the region. Ensuring a safe campus will continue allowing it to draw students from across the state and host events that bring visitors to Columbus. This project will serve Columbus State University students, staff, and faculty along with visitors to campus both downtown and on the main campus.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes described in section 1701(b)(8) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. § 10381(b)(8)). I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Drew Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".

Member of Congress