



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1408

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Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Perry County Rural Water Expansion. The entity to receive funding for this project is Perry County, Indiana.

The funding would be used to expand public drinking water infrastructure in rural Perry County, Indiana to serve households that currently lack reliable access to potable water. The project will construct new water distribution lines and related infrastructure to extend service from existing utility systems to unserved areas identified through a countywide water interest survey. Many residents in these rural areas currently rely on hauled water or private wells that may be unreliable, costly to maintain, or vulnerable to water quality issues. Extending public drinking water service will improve public health, ensure access to regulated potable water, and increase resilience for rural residents. In addition to addressing household water needs, the expansion will open additional acreage for residential and economic development opportunities in Perry County.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because Perry County contains numerous rural areas where residents remain without access to public drinking water service. As shown in the Perry County Water Interest Survey conducted in 2021 and updated in 2023 and 2024, many residents currently rely on private wells or hauled water due to the absence of public water infrastructure. Expanding water infrastructure in Perry County is uniquely challenging due to geography and land constraints. The county is widely considered the most hilly and forested county in Indiana, with more than 60,000 acres of federally managed land within the Hoosier National Forest. Combined with steep terrain, valleys, and creek crossings, these conditions significantly increase the cost of constructing and extending water distribution lines to rural households. In 2025 alone, approximately \$500,000 was invested in water line extensions, successfully providing service to roughly 20 additional families. Based on this experience, additional investment would allow Perry County to expand service to hundreds of additional households.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300j-12. I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family. 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 "Mark B. Messmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Mark Messmer
Member of Congress