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COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4605

April 30, 2009

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S 131 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S 146 A The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services
SD 133
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services
SH 125
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Senator Cochran, Senator Durbin, and Senator Collins:

As you initiate your efforts to draft the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010, I respectfully request your consideration of the following projects, listed in alphabetical order.

These requests are submitted in accordance with the proper constitutional role that Congress performs in the federal appropriations process. I examined these projects for the Commonwealth of Virginia based on two principle factors: first, they must represent a wise and prudent investment of tax dollars; second, requests for such projects are considered in an open, transparent manner.

In formulating this submission, my staff has gone to extraordinary lengths to screen all requests carefully to validate their merits. This process included face-to-face meetings in nearly all cases to assess and evaluate the projects of requesting entities.

Center for Innovative Technology Mine Safety Program, Herndon, VA - \$500,000

- Funds will be used to develop advanced mine safety equipment and the deployment of a mine safety system in an active coal mine. This technology will save lives by quickly finding personnel and ensuring vital communication links are maintained in extremely harsh conditions due to mine explosions and collapses. Furthermore, this project will enhance economic development in Southwest Virginia where the innovative communications technology will be researched, tested and developed.

Virginia Center for Innovative Technology's (CIT) intends to take a previously developed wireless mesh backbone and augment it with additional sensors for the environmental monitoring system that CIT is prototyping with Fiscal Year 2009 funds. Specifically, the Fiscal Year 2009 project addresses carbon monoxide sensors. With Fiscal Year 2010 monies, CIT will complement the system and develop dust monitoring, gas sensing, vibration sensing, and/or other sensors.

The wireless mesh backbone now supports tracking and communications; CIT's work would enable it to provide more support for the safety of miners and emergency personnel.

CIT will serve as the program manager and advocacy lead on the project, and will partner with several other private and public sector entities for this project. Innovative Wireless Technology, located in Lynchburg, VA, will assist CIT with the advanced communications systems; Pyott-Boone Electronics, in Tazewell, VA, will be researching and developing monitoring and mining industry communications solutions. In the public sector, the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy and Virginia Tech University will also be assisting with an array of needs associated with the project.

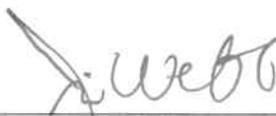
Virginia Community College System's Northern Virginia Community College Retraining Displaced Workers, Richmond, VA - \$600,000

- Funds will be used to develop a program that trains displaced workers in the latest skills related to Geographical Information Systems (GIS). GIS has recently been recognized by the federal government as a field in which significant growth is expected in the next few years. GIS technology is used for scientific investigations, resource management, asset management, archaeology, environmental impact assessment, urban planning, cartography, criminology, geographic history, marketing, logistics, and other purposes. This project will provide the capacity for the Northern Virginia Community College to create on-line GIS courses to be used at other campuses in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). With these funds, VCCS campuses across Virginia would be able to offer a GIS Studies Certificate or an Associate Degrees with a GIS specialization. This project involves funding for workforce training services. Specifically, the funds would be used for instructional design services; web design services; content creation services; and program review and evaluation.

I certify that neither I, nor my immediate family, has a pecuniary interest in any of the congressional directed spending items requested, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate. I further certify that I have posted a description of the items requested on my official website, along with the accompanying justification.

I appreciate your consideration of these important initiatives and look forward to working closely with you on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Should you or your staff have any questions regarding these requests please do not hesitate to contact my office. Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



Jim Webb
United States Senator