

H. MORGAN GRIFFITH
9TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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March 31, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding in the amount of \$7,000,000.00 for the U.S. 121/460 Poplar Creek Phase A & B Paving project in fiscal year 2024. Sponsoring this project is Virginia Coalfields Expressway Authority, with offices located at 527 E. Main Street, Lebanon, VA 24266.

The Coalfields Expressway – a designated Congressional High Priority Corridor – is a proposed four-lane limited-access highway (in its entirety) that will provide a modern, safe, and efficient transportation artery through the coalfields region of far Southwest Virginia and southern West Virginia. Completion of the Coalfields Expressway will link Interstates 64 and 77 in West Virginia with Route 23 in Virginia, which links to interstates in Kentucky and Tennessee. Sections of Coalfields Expressway also overlap federally-designated Corridor Q: Route 460, which is currently being constructed/developed.

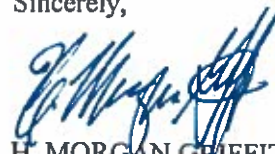
The Coalfields Expressway will provide a much needed and more efficient pathway through the coalfields region of Southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia. By providing safe and rapid access to communities along the Expressway, it will greatly improve interstate commerce between disadvantaged portions of Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Coalfields Expressway will also provide improved access to the Breaks Interstate Park, the largest tourism destination in the region. As an area ravaged by economic depression with the exit of much of the coal industry, Southwest Virginia stands to benefit greatly from increased connectivity with our surrounding states.

This particular project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it would fund the design, construction, and oversight to add additional lanes to approximately five (5) miles of U.S. 121/U.S. 460 between the corporate limits of the Town of Grundy, Virginia and Southern Gap (Poplar Creek Phase A & B), which will increase the marketability of Buchanan County's premiere economic development location, the Southern Gap industrial park and mixed-use development.

This project has a Federal nexus because it is for the purposes authorized in the Surface transportation block grant (23 U.S.C. § 133).

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, appearing to read "H. Morgan Griffith", written over a faint, illegible background.

H. MORGAN GRIFFITH
Member of Congress