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

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
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April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for the **Center for Growth, New Markets, Innovation, and Cyber Awareness** through the Small Business Initiatives account in fiscal year 2023. The entity to receive funding for this project is University of Mississippi, located at 100 Barr Hall, University, MS 38677.

The funding would be used to launch the Center for Growth, New Markets, Innovation, and Cyber Awareness, which will connect resources to assist Mississippi small businesses and create an innovative approach to entrepreneurial economic development. The Center will utilize virtual sites and MS-SBDC centers across the state to provide technology commercialization, business growth strategies, market and financial analysis, international trade, and cybersecurity and resiliency preparation for Mississippi businesses. Working with Mississippi State University, the Center will also pilot a Hub to support the objectives of the Mississippi Cyber Initiative for training, education, and workforce development. The Hub for Cyber Awareness will be a museum-like, self-directed experience and open to the public. The Hub will include virtual reality, interactive displays, and education activities. The experience will inform participants about the fundamental safety recommendations for protecting cell phones, personal computers, home video equipment, and the growing number of connected devices used in our homes and businesses. The Hub will offer guest speakers and more advanced training opportunities for small business on topics such as responding to a ransomware attack or meeting federal and industrial contract requirements for cybersecurity. Most importantly, this initiative will provide a successful model to help Mississippi small businesses be proactive in addressing cybersecurity issues. The Center is designed to provide maximum assistance to strengthen the small business ecosystem within the state of Mississippi, particularly for the following types of businesses/underserved populations: women-owned, rural-based, and socially and economically disadvantaged small firms that traditionally have not accessed resources.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in these projects.

Sincerely,



Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

TK/smr