

Community Project Funding



Community Project Funding allows Members of Congress to request direct federal funding for specific projects benefiting the communities they represent. The funds are provided through the annual appropriations bills drafted by the House Committee on Appropriations, on which Congressman Case serves. These funds can finance a wide variety of public projects and activities, including the construction and renovation of facilities, the expansion of existing programs and funds need to support the planning and design of future initiatives.

Congress did not allow funding like this from 2011 to 2021. However, in 2021 and for the two-year 117th Congress, Members on both sides of the aisle agreed to lift the moratorium and restore the ability of Members to directly fund local needs. The Committee's updated guidelines included increased transparency and accountability rules to prevent abuse.

There is no guarantee that Community Project Funding will continue in the two-year 118th Congress, which commences in January 2023.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

Ban on For-Profit Recipients.

For-profit entities cannot receive Community Project Funding. All requests must be directed to a unit of government or non-profit entity.

State, local or Tribal governmental Entities as Grantees.

Members are encouraged to consider public entities as primary grantees to oversee the completion of the project.

Non-Profits as Grantees.

For Community Project Funding requests directed to a non-profit organization, Members must provide evidence that the recipient is a nonprofit organization by either supplying the Employer Identification Number or an Internal Revenue Service determination letter.

One-Year Funding.

Request cannot include multiyear funding. However, the performance period will depend on the appropriations account from which the project is funded and may be longer than one year.

Matching Requirements.

Several federal programs eligible for Community Project Funding requests require a state or local match. The Committee will not waive these matching requirements. This does not mean that matching funds must be in-hand prior to requesting a project but local officials must have a plan to meet such requirements for such a project to be viable.

Community Support

Members are required to provide evidence of community engagement and support to display the compelling factors in their decision to select the requested projects. Community support is crucial to determining which projects should receive federal funding. Examples of community support include, but are not limited to:

1. Letters of support from elected community leaders (e.g. mayors or other officials);
2. Press articles highlighting the need for the requested Community Project Funding;
3. Support from newspaper editorial boards;
4. Projects listed on official state plans, community development plans or other publicly available planning documents; or
5. Resolutions passed by city councils or boards.

These are intended to be examples of the type of information that may be presenting to the Committee. It is not an exhaustive list.

Public Transparency and Accountability

Funding Cap

The Appropriations Committee will limit Community Project Funding to no more than 1 percent of discretionary spending.

Limit on Number of Requests.

Members were able to submit a maximum of 15 requests for Fiscal Year 2023. This number could change in the future. Additionally, there is no assurance that any or all Community Project Funding requests submitted by Members will be approved by the Committee in the amounts requested or at all.

Mandatory Audit.

All Community Project Funding is subject to an audit by the independent Government Accountability Office.

Financial Disclosure.

All Members requesting projects must sign and provide to the Committee for each proposal a financial disclosure certification stating that they do not have any financial interest in the projects they request, nor do any of their immediate family members.

Request in Writing.

Any Member requesting Community Project Funding must do so in writing. This request will include the Member's name, the name and location of the intended recipient and the purpose of the project.

Requests Posted Online.

All Community Project Funding requests will be made online by Members simultaneously with their programmatic and report language requests to the Appropriations Committee.

1. Members are required to post their requested projects online no earlier than 15 days after the submission deadline. This allows the Committee to review requests and make sure they include the proper information and disclosures.
2. The information that Members must post online:
 - Proposed recipient. (Legal name along with tax status)
 - Address of the recipient.
 - Project title and description.
 - Amount of the request.
 - Explanation of request, including purpose and justification for why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds.
 - Member's signed financial disclosure stating there is no conflict of interest.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does Congressman Case decide which requests to sponsor?

Given the Committee's limits on the number of Community Project Funding requests that each Member may sponsor, Congressman Case utilizes a three-pronged approach when determining whether to support a proposed project, which includes 1) consulting with Hawai'i state and county governments and neighborhood boards, non-profit organizations and other community groups, and individual constituents, 2) applying his own knowledge and understanding of the District's needs and 3) considering whether the project could obtain federal funding through other means, whether existing federal programs or his own work on the House Committee on Appropriations, or whether Community Project Funding offers the only practical avenue for federal funding of worthy projects. He also focuses on one-time needs as opposed to normal annual funding assistance.

Do I need to provide a detailed budget of the proposed project?

Yes. The Committee requires that Members include a detailed budget breakout in their formal submission to the Committee specifically describing how the requested funding would be used. For example, amounts for salaries for providers or instructors, educational materials, exhibits, supplies, evaluation activities, equipment, construction materials, travel costs, etc.

What is Congressionally Directed Spending?

The Senate has a similar funding process that is called "Congressionally Directed Spending." While the House and Senate generally synchronize the list of eligible accounts, there will be some difference between the two chambers. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will each make their lists of eligible accounts available on their respective websites before any submission deadlines.

Additional Resources

House Appropriations Committee guidelines

<https://appropriations.house.gov/transparency>

List of projects sponsored by Rep. Case in the past

www.case.house.gov/services/funding-disclosures.htm