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April 12, 2019

Mr. Anthony Linardos, State Director
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development
10 Ferry Street, #218
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Mr. Linardos,

I am pleased to write in support of the City of Franklin's Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) application through USDA – Rural Development. The City of Franklin has been accessing such funds since 2016, and should the City be approved for RBDG funding again in 2019, monies will allow for establishing a project that will utilize the federal Opportunity Zone Program. These funds will enable the grantee to ensure the Opportunity Zone Program in Franklin will realize significant benefits for the community.

Since the City began receiving RBDG funding, it has resulted in many community successes. The City of Franklin has many outstanding socio-economic needs, including a ranking by the New Hampshire Community Development Authority, citing the City of Franklin as the third neediest of the state's 269 municipalities based on economic stress and unique community challenges. Continued funding provided through RBDG will enable the City to focus on ten properties, assemble a team of project consultants, marketing, outreach to potential investors and to have each parcel evaluated to fully leverage the Opportunity Zone Program benefiting Franklin's residents and the greater Merrimack County region.

I encourage a timely review and decision on this application. Please keep my office informed as the process moves forward by contacting Amy Slattery of my staff at (603) 226-1002 or Amy.Slattery@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress