

**BRIAN BABIN, D.D.S.**

36TH DISTRICT, TEXAS  
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March 13, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, the Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for Lamar State College-Orange Healthcare Training Center (Lumberton, Texas) in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is Lamar State College Orange Lumberton, located at 344 S. Main Street, Lumberton, TX 77657.

The funding would be used for construction/renovation to expand capacity for post-secondary technical program offerings at its existing Lumberton facility (344 South Main Street, Lumberton, TX 77657), serving Lumberton and surrounding rural areas in Southeast Texas. This project will renovate and modernize the existing space to establish a healthcare training facility specifically designed to house nursing and physical therapist assistant programs. The facility will be equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, ensuring students gain hands-on experience aligned with current, employer-driven practices.

The expansion responds to a critical and growing need for qualified healthcare professionals in the 36th Congressional District and across the United States. The nation requires more than 200,000 registered nurses annually to meet healthcare demand and replace retiring professionals. Employment for physical therapist assistants is projected to grow 16 percent through 2034. Workforce shortages extend across allied health fields, exacerbated by an aging population, rising chronic disease and behavioral health challenges, and rapid advancements in care delivery. These trends underscore the urgent need for accessible, high-quality healthcare training in rural communities.

Through strong partnerships with healthcare stakeholders in the region, LSCO is positioned to address these workforce pressures by providing rural students and working adults with local

access to essential healthcare education. This project will create a modern, learner-centered environment that equips current and future healthcare providers with the skills needed to meet local and regional healthcare demands. By investing in infrastructure that directly addresses workforce shortages and improves access to education, this project represents a responsible and high-impact use of taxpayer dollars, ensuring long-term benefits for residents of the 36th Congressional District and Southeast Texas.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it directly addresses critical healthcare workforce shortages in rural and medically underserved communities. By expanding Lamar State College-Orange's postsecondary healthcare programs in Lumberton, this project provides local access to high-quality nursing and physical therapist assistant education and training, which are essential to meeting both current and projected healthcare demands in the region. Residents in the district often face barriers, including long travel distances to educational programs, limited local training opportunities, and workforce shortages in essential healthcare fields.

The project benefits the public by producing a pipeline of well-trained, locally educated healthcare professionals who will remain in the region, thereby improving patient access to care and strengthening the overall healthcare system. The facility will incorporate modern, state-of-the-art technologies, ensuring students gain hands-on experience aligned with employer needs, thereby increasing employment readiness and supporting economic growth.

This investment represents a responsible use of taxpayer dollars because it leverages existing infrastructure, builds on strong local partnerships, and directly addresses an urgent and measurable community need. By expanding educational capacity in a rural area with high demand for healthcare professionals, the project maximizes return on investment by improving workforce outcomes, supporting public health, and strengthening local healthcare delivery for years to come.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 7 U.S. Code section 1926(a). I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Babin". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress