

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 30, 2019

Michael Mills,
Economic Development Representative for Oregon
Economic Development Administration
Seattle Regional Office
915 2nd Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, WA 98174

Dear Mr. Mills,

We are writing to support the City of Hermiston's grant application for development of the South Hermiston Industrial Park (SHIP). The project will consist of design, engineering, roadways and water infrastructure that will allow the community to diversify its economy and support light industrial businesses.

The city is working through plant closure and severe cutbacks from two large employers since November of 2017, which affected more than 500 workers or nearly 7% of its civilian labor force. Despite these serious setbacks, the city does have a strong employer base with solid agricultural, technology and warehouse economies, and opportunity to build on its location and access to energy, transportation and fiber infrastructure.

Hermiston is a good fit for EDA grant funding, both in terms of the need to diversify its employer base and the community's vision and ability to capitalize on existing infrastructure. It is our understanding that development of the SHIP allows smaller employers to locate within the city and benefit from the community's considerable assets.

Hermiston has planned this facility in a previously undeveloped location with good access to Interstates 84 and 82, as well as access to rail transport. Further, due to its near proximity to Tri-Cities, Washington, the community can draw from a large potential workforce with a variety of skills.

We therefore encourage you to give this request from the City of Hermiston for EDA grant funding full and fair consideration. This is an important infrastructure project with significant potential impacts for supporting stable, family wage jobs in a rural Eastern Oregon community.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Greg Walden
Member of Congress