

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Mayorkas:

We write today to express our strong support for the Cahokia Sewer Water District's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant for application for Fiscal Year 2020. We would also like to draw your attention to the uniquely horrific situation this area continues to experience without assistance for water system repairs and improvements.

The Cahokia water district includes the town of Centreville, which has experienced frequent flooding and resulting sewage overflows for decades. It is not uncommon for residents to see human waste residue in the grass, and many rely on donation of bottled water to avoid drinking their tap water.

This issue presents a timely humanitarian crisis for 5,000 people in Southern Illinois, most of whom are Black Americans, and many of whom live below the poverty line. The urgency of this story was recently picked up by national news, appearing in [The Guardian](#) last month.

While the residents have long sought assistance, their local government entities struggle to meet local match requirements for federal grants. However, with a median household income of less than \$15,000, we believe Centreville could find reprieve in the BRIC program's lower 10 percent local match requirement, which is reserved for small impoverished communities with repetitive losses.

We urge you to please provide Cahokia's application the careful consideration it deserves and to recognize the residents' dire need for assistance. The families of Centreville deserve to live in sanitary and decent conditions.

We stand ready to provide any more information that may be of assistance to you or your staff.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator