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## United States Senate

January 27, 2020

Peter T. Gaynor, Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. Gaynor:

I write in support of the application by the Town of Plains, in Sanders County, Montana for a FEMA Resilient Infrastructure Facility Project grant. Plains is facing imminent threat of failure to their Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) facility due to ongoing erosion along the banks of the Clark Fork River. This failure would leave the Town without sewage treatment for the community and would release raw sewage into the river creating a serious health crisis and environmental damage. Plains is seeking to be proactive and move their lagoon prior to a disaster occurring. In 2018, an approximate 5-year flood event wholly surrounded the WWTP facility and washed out the access road and brought the river three feet from the treatment lagoons.

This proposed FEMA Resilient Infrastructure Facility project relocates the WWTP to a location outside of the 100-year floodplain. Some grants have already been awarded to the Town to facilitate relocation of the WWTP. Each grant is significant but still leaves Plains in need of financial assistance to reach the estimated \$6.0 Million dollar project cost. Plains is a financially challenged community. The 2010 decennial census data for the Town of Plains lists the Median Household Income (MHI) as \$27,995, or 48.56 percent of the US MHI. The town's poverty rate is 26.9 percent and the major employers, timber and mining, are on the decline. Unlike Montana's low unemployment rate of 3.3 percent, Sanders County's is 10.7 percent.

Thank you for your attention to this application. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would also appreciate you informing my office of the eventual decision on this application.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester  
United States Senator