



HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF MICHIGAN

Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

1. The sponsoring representative's first name:
Mark
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:
Tisdell
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.
N/A
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
Common Ground
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
30200 Telegraph Rd Suite 300 Bingham Farms, MI 48025
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:
n/a
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:
Rep. Samantha Steckloff - District 19
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. The \$175,000 appropriation supports the continuation of the Victim Assistance Program (VAP), which provides crisis intervention and long-term support to victims of crime in Oakland County. This program has filled critical gaps in public safety and health, especially following mass violence incidents like the Oxford High School and Rochester Hills shootings. By supporting victims, first responders, and families, the program offers a clear public benefit that promotes healing, safety, and community resilience. It is an appropriate use of taxpayer money because it funds a public service that was previously

supported by federal and state grants, and now requires supplemental support due to increased demand. This appropriation does not violate Article IV, Section 30 of the Michigan Constitution, as it is not a gift or gratuitous payment to a private entity, but rather a lawful expenditure for services that fulfill a public function traditionally supported by government.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

175000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["None"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Julia Aronica – Board Chair; Eric Dobrusin – Chair-Elect; Rhonda Laurencelle, PhD – Secretary; Don Campbell – Treasurer; Kay White – Immediate Past Chair; Tracy Aronoff; Katie Bressette; Judith Christie; Mark DiVitto; Amanda Hamilton; Jaime Hope, MD; Lesley Fairrow; Fred Fechheimer; Cathy McNamara; Greg Moore; Purvi Patel; Tawana Nettles-Robinson; John Randle Sr.; Lisa Samerdyke; Noel Villajuan; Kathy Walgren; David P. Wood, Jr., MD

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

Immediately upon receipt until such funds are exhausted

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



NEW ADDRESS as of May 1, 2024
30200 Telegraph Road Suite 300
Bingham Farms, MI 48025
Resource & Crisis Hub: 800-231-1127
www.Commongroundhelps.org

February 6, 2025

Dear Legislator,

Board of Trustees

Julia Aronica
Board Chair
Eric Dobrusin
Chair-Elect
Rhonda Laurencelle, PhD
Secretary
Don Campbell
Treasurer
Kay White
Immediate Past Chair

Tracy Aronoff
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Thank you for taking the time to meet with us to discuss a \$175,000 supplemental appropriation request to support the continuation of our Victim Assistance Program (VAP).

The Victim Assistance Program has been a critical part of Common Ground's services for over 20 years. Initially, VAP was supported by a Victim of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant called the CVAN grant. When the State of Michigan changed course and discontinued the CVAN grant program, the Common Ground Board voted to continue the VAP program through private fundraising due to the ongoing need for these services in our community.

By way of background, in the wake of the Oxford High School mass violence event on November 30, 2021, it was this privately funded staff from Common Ground who were at Oxford high school supporting first responders and school staff in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy. In the weeks and months that followed, Common Ground's advocates continued to support the victims and the greater Oxford community in their healing. Later, Common Ground managed a longer-term response with the support of the US Justice Department and Michigan VOCA administrators at MDHHS.

Fast forward to today, Common Ground runs three Resiliency Centers in Michigan, supporting the Oxford, East Lansing, and Rochester Hills communities. Like Oxford, Common Ground's Victim Assistance staff was again called after the shooting at the Rochester Hills splashpad to work with the Oakland County Sheriff's deputies to support the injured victims and their families. Advocates spread out to five area hospitals on that Saturday evening, sitting by the bedside of every injured victim for as long as they wanted and needed, some into the early hours of the morning. Then in the weeks following, they stayed in close contact with the victims, offering support, paying for rides, arranging services, and educating them about the support services available to them. None of these efforts were publicly funded but supporting these victims was the right thing to do and an honor for staff at Common Ground.

Fundraising is challenging, and while we have been able to rely on community support to prop up the program enough to meet basic community needs, the recent mass violence events mentioned above have made it very clear that we need additional funding to sustain and build this program to continue to meet the more complex needs of crime victims in Oakland County.

Thanks in advance for your consideration of this important appropriation.

Sincerely,

Janet Sarkos
Chief Crisis Officer
Common Ground

