

Congress of the United States

STACEY E. PLASKETT
VIRGIN ISLANDS

House of Representatives

2059 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC

Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2026

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting funding for the **VIDA Agricultural Infrastructure Cistern Project** in fiscal year 2027. The public entity project sponsor to receive funding for this project is the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, located in the U.S. Virgin Islands at 1 Estate Lower Love, Kingshill, St. Croix, VI 00850. The anticipated location of the project is Par. 3 VI Corp (Estate Adventure) and Rem Par 4 VI Corp (Estate Lower Love), St. Croix, VI 00850.

The requested funding of \$2,000,000 would be used by the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture (VIDA) to construct four 100,000-gallon enclosed water cisterns on 147.5 acres of leased farm plots on St. Croix. VIDA manages public farmland leased to eligible residents to support farming enterprises and food production across the territory. Currently, 53 producers on these plots rely entirely on VIDA for irrigation infrastructure. The existing system — sourced from sediment retention ponds and water wells — is vulnerable to saltwater intrusion, groundwater depletion, and daily evaporative loss due to the Virgin Islands' high ambient temperatures. These cisterns will significantly enhance irrigation infrastructure, augment existing water storage capacity, and support VIDA's expansion of leased farm acreage to serve additional producers. This funding is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it will strengthen agricultural productivity, food security, and economic development in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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,



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress