

SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

SECOND DISTRICT, GEORGIA

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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1002

May 16, 2025

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The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

I write to you today with profound regret and concern over the termination of the City of Thomasville, Georgia's \$19.8 million Community Change Grant Assistance Agreement No. 5F 03D33925. This funding, officially accepted by the Thomasville City Council in February 2025, is essential to safeguarding the health, safety, and economic prosperity of the community.

I understand that the primary mission of this project is to replace a severely deteriorated section of the city's municipal wastewater collection system, an infrastructure component that connects two-thirds of Thomasville's residents to their wastewater treatment facility. As you know, proper treatment of wastewater, including sewage, industrial discharge, and stormwater runoff, is essential to preventing the spread of disease and safeguarding our natural resources. The proposed modernization efforts are designed to reduce these public health risks and ensure long-term environmental resilience. Terminating this grant jeopardizes not only the integrity of the community's water systems but also the well-being of residents and local economic growth. The cost of abandoning this project now will be far more costly than the upfront investment needed today.

This grant was purportedly rescinded on the basis that it does not adhere to the Environmental Protection Agency's funding priorities, particularly the principles of merit, fairness, and excellence. This couldn't be farther from the truth, and I strongly urge you to reconsider this regrettable decision, as the funding in question is vital to protecting the health and safety of this largely rural community. The city's current infrastructure is highly susceptible to sewer overflows and mainline collapses, and the path the wastewater travels crosses multiple bodies of water, significantly increasing the risk of environmental contamination.

In addition to upgrading critical water infrastructure, the grant would have supported the construction and rehabilitation of the city's historic districts, including Dewey City, Fletcherville,

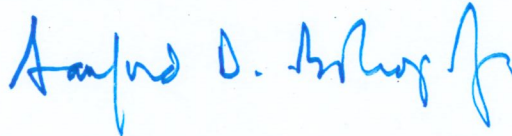
and Stevens Street. This initiative aims to rehabilitate both single-family and multi-family historic residences, enhance energy efficiency, lower energy costs, and preserve the architectural heritage of these neighborhoods. By addressing these issues, the project not only supports historic preservation and increasing housing stock, but it supports broader economic revitalization efforts. The grant reflects a lengthy and meticulous planning process by the city and community groups.

The EPA was created by Congress to protect the health of the American people and provide the resources they need to construct world class infrastructure in their communities. The people of Thomasville, Georgia are depending on this funding to ensure their community remains a safe and desirable place to raise a family. I urge you to take all steps to reverse this faulty decision in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

If you have any questions or if I can be of assistance, please contact either me or my Deputy Chief of Staff Jonathan Halpern at (202) 226-6512.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sanford D. Bishop, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress