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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

May 12, 2014

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

I write in support of the application submitted by Hudson Opera House, Inc. for funding from the Community Facilities Loan Program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This funding will allow for the completed restoration of the Hudson Opera House, which will help grow the local economy of Hudson, New York.

The Hudson Opera House was built in 1855 and served as Hudson's City Hall until it was abandoned in 1962 and fell into disrepair. It features a large performance hall on the second floor, which is New York State's oldest surviving theater. The Opera House represents a truly historic site, and has hosted a number of important visitors, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Susan B. Anthony, and President Theodore Roosevelt. Since 1991, Hudson Opera House, Inc. has invested nearly \$3 million to restore the first floor of the building, and last year, the site offered over 800 events. In order to be accessible to all residents and visitors, Hudson Opera House has made many of the featured concerts, lectures, readings, after-school programs, toddler and senior programs, ongoing exhibitions, and large-scale community events either free or subsidized.

The requested funding will be used to further rehabilitate the second floor performance hall and backstage spaces into a 300-seat theater. Restoring the theater would not only allow the opera house to improve its programming, but would also provide revenue-generating opportunities. The funds would also be used to rehabilitate other parts of the building, including exterior masonry repairs, lead and asbestos treatment, window restoration, restored mechanical systems, and the construction of a new elevator tower. The revitalization of the Hudson Opera House will provide the City of Hudson and its surrounding areas with necessary community programming and a venue for tourism attraction, both of which are critical for the vibrancy of the region's community and economy.

I ask that you please give this application your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member, Andrew Usyk.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator