

WASHINGTON, D.C. -

Congressman John W. Olver (D-1st District) announced today that the fiscal year 2009 omnibus appropriations bill approved by Congress includes a little over \$5.5 million in federal assistance for various projects in Franklin County.

Congressman Olver is a member of the Appropriations Committee and Chairman of the Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee and worked to include the funding in the omnibus spending legislation. The omnibus represents nine out of eleven annual appropriations bills pulled together into one package. The bill will fund most of the federal government's domestic activities in 2009. The projects and their included dollar amounts are: **\$1.9 Million for Franklin Regional Transit Center**

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This project will contribute towards the final design and construction of the Franklin Regional Transit Center. The Center, located at the corner of Bank Row and Olive Street in downtown Greenfield, will be the hub for public transit, paratransit, private transit, and taxi service for greater Franklin County.

"Such a facility will be a great boon to Greenfield and Franklin County," Congressman John Olver said. "We have seen the success of multimodal transportation centers in other communities, and I am excited to see that success replicated in Greenfield."

For additional information, please contact:

Tina Conte, FRTA Administrator, 413-774-2262.

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\$1.615 Million for Replacement of Retaining Walls on Route 116, Ashfield & Conway

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This project consists of replacing two concrete retaining walls that provide structural support to Route 116 along the South River. At present, these walls have reached the end of their service life and are experiencing crumbling concrete, soil and gavel washout, and erosion of the walls' foundations. When complete, the project will benefit the Route 116 corridor communities from

Adams to Conway that depend on the road for local and regional trips and efficient access to jobs and services via Route 91.

“A wall failure at any of these locations could result in the closure of Route 116, which would be a nightmare for the drivers who depend on this stretch,” Congressman John Olver said. “Investing in this roadway will ensure the safety of our drivers for years to come as well as reduce the overall cost of the project by making the necessary repairs now before the walls fail.”

For additional information, please contact:

Peter Niles, P.E., District Highway Director, MassHighway District One, 413-637-5700.

\$1,000,000 for Montague Combined Sewer Overflow Reduction & Water Pollution Control Facility Improvements Project

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This project will reduce combined sewer overflow, increase the treatment capacity and reliability of the Water Pollution Control Facility while stabilizing sewer user rates for citizens and businesses.

Congressman John Olver said, “The residents and businesses of the Towns of Montague and Gill will benefit greatly from these upgrades and improvements to their water pollution control facility, as will the Connecticut River and the rare wetland and wildlife species located within the area.”

For additional information, please contact:

Frank Abbondanzio, Town Administrator, 413-863-3200 x110.

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\$570,900 for Rural Development’s Wisdom Way Solar Village Demonstration & Education Center

Rural Development Inc. (RDI) will use this funding for the construction of a ‘near zero net

energy' Demonstration and Education Center. The Center will host education sessions for affordable housing developers from around the nation as well as for the public; other builders; and technical, architectural, and university students. The Center will use the same renewable building technologies as those used throughout Wisdom Way Solar Village, RDI's proto-typical 20 unit affordable housing development. Additionally, this will be a fully accessible building that will be used as a community center for the Solar Village and available for public meetings.

“

As a nation, we must reduce our consumption of energy, build housing that will be more affordable for its residents as energy costs continue to rise, and build housing that is more respectful of our environment,” Congressman John Olver said. “RDI has created a successful model for accomplishing these goals.

The Demonstration and Education Center will allow them to teach others how to do the same.”

For additional information, please contact:

Robin Sherman, RDI Executive Director, 413-863-9781.

\$238,000 for Community Health Center of Franklin County Information Technology Upgrade

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This funding will contribute towards the Community Health Center (CHC) of Franklin County's efforts to update and modernize its operations. Specifically, the CHC will integrate a new practice management system connecting all four of the CHC's sites, and replace the current accounting and billing systems and introduce electronic systems to replace paper charts with electronic medical records (EMR) and computerized physician order entry (CPOE).

“Health centers across the country are gravely understaffed and are seeing an ever increasing number of patients,” said Congressman John Olver. “All Franklin County Community Health Center patients will benefit from a decrease in the operating costs for the Health Center. Additionally, this funding will reduce the number of medical errors while ensuring that caregivers are provided with the most valid and up-to-date clinical data no matter what site they visit.”

For additional information, please contact:

Bridgette Madden, Executive Director, 413-772-3748.

\$150,000 for Historic Deerfield Structure Rehabilitation Project

Historic Deerfield, Inc. will use these funds to upgrade the condition of its nationally acclaimed antique buildings in order to increase annual tourism at the museum and throughout the Pioneer Valley.

“Historic Deerfield’s Main Street is truly one of America’s Treasures. Anyone wishing to step back in time can take a walk along the mile-long street and see America as it existed over 330 years ago,”
,” Congressman John Olver said. “This funding will ensure that Deerfield’s historic structures remain a draw for tourists for years to come.”

For additional information, please contact:

Philip Zea

,
President,
(413) 774-5581

\$71,300 for Greenfield Community College’s SIMS Project

The funding will be used to expand the simulated instructional mannequin system (SIMS) within the community college system along the Northern Tier, allowing for all areas of healthcare to utilize SIMS as a training tool. Participating colleges will include MWCC, Greenfield Community College and Berkshire Community College. The total funding for the project is \$214,000. Each institution will receive one third of the total funding, or \$71,300.

"These ‘virtual hospitals’ provide excellent training opportunities for faculty and students as well as regional health care employers, physicians, incumbent nurses, and health care professionals,”

Congressman John Olver said. "In these difficult economic times, it is necessary to provide resources to our local community colleges to retrain those who have recently become un

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Regina Curtis, Director of Development, (413) 775-1426

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