

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

March 31, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the University of North Carolina Wilmington, Maritime Cyber Security: Standards Advancement, Research and Workforce Development in fiscal year 2024. The entity to receive funding for this project is the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, located at 601 S. College Road, Wilmington, North Carolina 28403. The funding would be used to develop a curriculum program at UNC Wilmington, titled Maritime Cyber Security: Standards Advancement, Research and Workforce Development. The program will continue technology research, train a future workforce in this important area, and develop standards that can be shared on a national basis. The effort will assist the federal government, on an ongoing basis, to develop best practices and procedures to cost-effectively reduce cyber risks to the maritime industry.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it builds on federal efforts to bolster research and workforce development within the cybersecurity industry with a specific focus on the maritime industry and its threats. The White House (*National Maritime Cybersecurity Plan, 2020*), the Government Accountability Office (GAO) (*Coast Guard Workforce Planning Actions Needed to Address Growing Cyberspace Mission Demands, 2022*), and the Atlantic Council (*Signaling for Cooperation on Maritime Cybersecurity, 2021*) have all pointed to the maritime cybersecurity workforce as a specific area of need in our national security workforce, and an industry regulated heavily by the federal government. Cyber-attacks on the maritime industry's operational technology (OT) systems have increased by 900% over the last three years.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes described in section 272 of title 15, United States Code. I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

