

# WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER

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November 19, 1999

Dan B -  
FOR REPLY  
BC SIG

Hon. Sean Maloney  
Deputy Staff Secretary  
The White House  
West Wing, Ground Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Sean,

I hope all is well with you and your family... and that perhaps you're able to spend as much time with them as you'd like.

The Governor would appreciate your getting his new book, "The Blue Spruce", to the President and the First Lady. It's a great read not only for children, but for adults too.

Enjoy Thanksgiving and all the best.

Warm regards,

Mary

New York  
Washington, DC  
Paris  
London

# THE BLUE SPRUCE

MARIO CUOMO



Illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen

I met the Blue Spruce a long time ago when I was a boy. I believed from the very beginning that it was more than just a beautiful tree.

In those days my imagination was livelier. I felt the great Spruce understood my words and thoughts and even tried to speak back to me. But I never heard the Spruce more clearly than I did years later when I was fully grown, in a tough political race for Governor, far behind and discouraged. A chance glimpse at an old business card describing my Father's small grocery store, reminded me of a day in the life of the great tree that I will never forget again. It was a recollection that gave me the inspiration I needed to overcome my timidity and go on to be Governor of the great State of New York.

Listen to the Blue Spruce, and to Papa: they can do the same for you.

—Mario Cuomo



TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

1501 North Pierce, Suite 104 ■ Little Rock, Arkansas 72207  
(501) 663-2288 ■ FAX (501) 663-3106

*Handwritten initials*

November 8, 1999

99 NOV 19 PM4:50

Secretary Rodney Slater  
Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

11-19-99

*To Burkhardt for reply?*  
*Yes* ☒ *No* ☐

Re: FY 2000 Allocation of FTA RTAP I

Dear Secretary Slater:

Last week we learned that former FTA staff recommendation to reduce the Transit Assistance Program. These much needed technical assistance and training to rural and human service organizations that help those in need in every Arkansas county made arbitrarily based on misleading statistics and totally void of any consultation with the affected parties or Congress.

*Agency liaison?*  
*Yes* ☒ *No* ☐

10 19 PM3:35

FTA's design is that all of the states' funds appropriated by Congress will be reduced in FY 2000 from the FY 1999 allocation by taking money "off the top" for a national program contract for which FTA did not pursue an earmark. Previously, these national program funds were taken from a \$30 million planning and research budget. When Mr. Linton had only \$2.9 million for discretionary projects from money in the planning and research in the FY 2000 budget, FTA determined other expenses had priority over the needs of our states. Consequently, they decided to circumvent congressional intent and take away \$525,000 (ten percent) of the authorized \$5,250,000 RTAP budget meant to go to the states to help our rural citizens.

FTA argues that the reduction will have a "minimal impact" on smaller states; however, I beg to differ. Any reduction will impact our service to Arkansas community transportation services. For many years now, Arkansas' RTAP allocation has basically remained status quo, ranging from \$87,800 to \$89,800. TEA-21 gave us hope, and we have anxiously anticipated an increase in these funds. The FY 1999 allocation of \$104,000 was a godsend and the FY2000 anticipated allocation of almost \$102,000 was to be another real boost.

The Board of Directors of Arkansas Transit Association is the advisory group for our states, RTAP program and utilizes these funds through a grant program to train drivers, attendants, mechanics and supervisors across the state.



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November 8, 1999

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Secretary Rodney Slater  
Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: FY 2000 Allocation of FTA RTAP Funds

Dear Secretary Slater:

Last week we learned that former FTA Administrator Linton approved a FTA staff recommendation to reduce the state allocations of RTAP, the Rural Transit Assistance Program. These much-needed funds support essential technical assistance and training to rural transit systems and the many health and human service organizations that provide daily transportation services to those in need in every Arkansas county. This FTA decision, as it turns out, was made arbitrarily based on misleading staff direction and totally void of any consultation with the affected parties or Congress.

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FTA's design is that all of the states' funds appropriated by Congress will be reduced in FY 2000 from the FY 1999 allocation by taking money "off the top" for a national program contract for which FTA did not pursue an earmark. Previously, these national program funds were taken from a \$30 million planning and research budget. When Mr. Linton had only \$2.9 million for discretionary projects from money in the planning and research in the FY 2000 budget, FTA determined other expenses had priority over the needs of our states. Consequently, they decided to circumvent congressional intent and take away \$525,000 (ten percent) of the authorized \$5,250,000 RTAP budget meant to go to the states to help our rural citizens.

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The Board of Directors of Arkansas Transit Association is the advisory group for our states, RTAP program and utilizes these funds through a grant program to train drivers, attendants, mechanics and supervisors across the state.

We are currently training more than 1000 students per year. The federal funds, along with our own monies, support a nationally-recognized, premier program. We utilize a full-time staff trainer/educational coordinator to travel around the state meeting the needs of our transit systems and community services agencies. The courses we offer include defensive and safe driving, emergency evacuation, drug and alcohol supervisory and safety-sensitive training, first aid, CPR, bloodborne pathogens, handling passengers with special needs and others. We save these organizations considerable time and expense by not having to send their personnel to Little Rock for instruction.

We carefully and tightly budget the RTAP program each year to provide services as economically as possible. As in the real world, we are not immune from the growing costs of training programs, gasoline, telephones and computers, utilities, hotels, rent, audits, salaries and insurance. ATA's member organizations have come to depend upon our training services. We have helped lower their insurance rates, increased operational efficiency and even saved a life when the driver knew how to evacuate her wheelchair-bound passenger after an accident. These member agencies – from Jefferson County Comprehensive Care in the Delta, to the Franklin County Senior Citizens in the River Valley, to North Arkansas Transportation Service in the Ozarks – cannot afford dues that would make up the \$10,000 we will lose under FTA's plan.

This entire RTAP program is important. It matters in the real world. A reduction of \$10,000 in our program may not sound like a bunch of money to the folks at 400 Seventh Street, SW, in Washington, but it makes a lot of difference here at 1501 North Pierce in Little Rock.

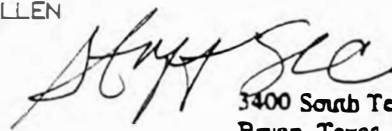
Please, Mr. Secretary. Encourage FTA to find \$525,000 somewhere else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ann H. Gilbert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ann" and last name "Gilbert" clearly legible.

Ann H. Gilbert  
Executive Director

cc: President Bill Clinton  
Ark. Senate and Congressional Delegation  
Ark. Representative Steve Jones  
CTAA Director Dale Marsico  
ATA Board of Directors



3400 South Texas Avenue  
Bryan, Texas 77802  
Tel (409) 846-9359  
Fax (409) 776-7272

## Bryan-College Station Community Health Clinic Coalition

November 4, 1999

The Honorable President William J. Clinton  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Clinton:

Our community of Bryan assistance and intervent  
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108 loan.

Since the city felt there would be no problem with this loan, as it fit clearly within the scope and bounds of approved projects, the lead agency, Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc., with the City of Bryan acting as the Project Manager, entered into a construction contract to have the facility built—with the completion date being at or around December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999.

Early in the construction phase, the City of Bryan encountered a barrier to the acquisition of the HUD 108 loan. HUD required that the loan be collateralized. Yet, the property upon which the building was being constructed was purchased with FTA dollars and could not, under FTA regulations, have a lien placed upon the property.

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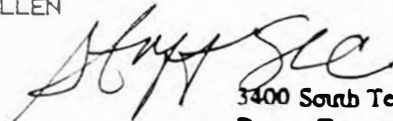
11-19-99

To Burkhardt for reply?  
Yes ☒ No ☐

Agency liaison?  
Yes ☒ No ☐

B.

Serving the Whole Family through Quality,  
Compassion and Caring!



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## Bryan-College Station Community Health Clinic Coalition

November 4, 1999

The Honorable President William J. Clinton  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Clinton:

99 NOV 19 10:35

Our community of Bryan-College Station, Texas, is in need of your immediate assistance and intervention. As a part of your administration's "Healthy Communities" initiative, local not-for-profit agencies, a transit authority, as well as private and public supporters, began a daunting challenge to build a community health center for the working poor and their children who could not afford traditional medical care within our community.

This cooperative effort would build a 22,500 square foot health facility on property that was purchased with Federal Transportation Authority funds and would be adjacent to the regional urban and rural transit transfer station for the seven counties of the Brazos Valley.

Over \$2,200,000 was raised from private individuals, foundations, and two municipalities—the City of Bryan and the City of College Station. The City of Bryan committed \$1.2 million to the project contingent upon approval of a HUD 108 loan.

Since the city felt there would be no problem with this loan, as it fit clearly within the scope and bounds of approved projects, the lead agency, Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc., with the City of Bryan acting as the Project Manager, entered into a construction contract to have the facility built—with the completion date being at or around December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999.

Early in the construction phase, the City of Bryan encountered a barrier to the acquisition of the HUD 108 loan. HUD required that the loan be collateralized. Yet, the property upon which the building was being constructed was purchased with FTA dollars and could not, under FTA regulations, have a lien placed upon the property.

*Serving the Whole Family through Quality  
Compassion and Caring!*

November 4, 1999

Page 2

The City of Bryan, Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. and Brazos Transit District have worked diligently for the past four months to resolve the bureaucratic conflict that threatens the project. To date, neither the FTA nor HUD has been willing to offer some waiver around the departmental requirements...and with seven weeks left before construction of the project is complete, the project is in jeopardy of being shut down until some resolve is found.

It seems reasonable that if members of the project could have the opportunity to plead this case with either Secretary Rodney Slater or Secretary Andrew Cuomo that a solution could be found and the poor and needy of our community would reap the benefits of a responsive federal government.

Therefore, I am requesting your office assist me in setting up a meeting with either Secretary Slater or Secretary Cuomo sometime during the week of December 9-12, 1999.

Sincerely,



Gardner Osborn  
Bryan-College Station Community Health Center, Coalition Member

encl. Project Summary

**Proposal for Funding**  
**Bryan-College Station Community Health Center**

Brazos Valley Community Action, Inc. (BVCAA), a private not for profit agency (partnered with the Brazos Maternal and Child Health, Inc. (Prenatal Clinic), Texas A&M University's Departments of Community Health and Counseling Clinic), and the local dental community is building the Bryan-College Station Community Health Center of the Brazos Valley (CHC). The CHC will provide needed primary health care and health education services for uninsured and low-income residents of the Brazos Valley area.

**Project Description.** BVCAA, Inc. staff, in collaboration with seven local partners, proposes to construct a Community Health Center of Brazos Valley (CHC) for the residents of Brazos County and the surrounding environs. The partners include the Brazos Maternal & Child Health Clinic (Prenatal Clinic), Texas A&M University (TAMU) Departments of Health and Education Psychology, Brazos Transit Systems, the cities of Bryan and College Station, as well as a commitment from the Brazos Dental Society to staff the proposed dental clinic with volunteer dentists upon the project's completion. The Project will constitute construction of a 22,000 square foot community health clinic on the site of the regional public transit transfer station. The partners expect that the CHC will achieve these objectives:

- *Increase and improve availability of affordable health care and collaboration of agencies and organizations through construction and operation of the one-stop consolidated health care facility*
- *Expand the scope and capacity of services currently offered, as well as implement new services (dental, counseling, health education and program evaluation)*
- *Promote wellness and empowerment through increased preventive medicine and community health education—via staff and volunteers—within the target population and the community, at large*
- *Provide health related research and program evaluation opportunities by Texas A&M University . . . so as to enhance the quality of health education and prevention outreach techniques throughout the community, state and nation*

The Facility will serve a target population of approximately 35,000 individuals annually. At a time when the availability of public funds for the health care of the medically indigent is decreasing, health care providers and community leaders must respond creatively to the increasing demand for affordable health care in their communities. The CHC is just such a response. The services that will be available at the proposed center are listed below.

**1) BVCAA**

- \*Pediatric Primary Care [expanded]
- \*Adult Primary Care [expanded]
- \*Women's Health
- \*Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)
- \*Family Case-Management
- \*Eligibility
- \*Dental Clinic [new]
- \*Class A Pharmacy

**2) Brazos Maternal & Child Health, Inc.: Prenatal Health Care**

### 3) TAMU School of Rural Public Health

#### **\*Community Health Education Laboratory (CHEL) [new]**

- Health Education for CHC patients & community at large
- Evaluation of behavior intervention efforts of service providers  
(Practicum site for Ph.D. students in Community Health Education)

### 4) TAMU Department of Education Psychology

#### **\*Comprehensive Psychological Counseling Services for target population (Practicum site for Ph.D. students in Educational Psychology) [expanded]**

### 5) Brazos Transit System: Providing public transportation of patients

**Project Beneficiaries.** The CHC will benefit a population that includes uninsured individuals and Medicaid recipients within the service delivery area. More specifically, the target population for this center is low-income residents who do not have private health insurance.

Approximately 33% of County residents, or 44,551 persons, live at or below 150% FPL (U.S. Census, 1990 and TAMU Special Services, 1994). An estimated 8,910 of these households do not have private health insurance (HealthSmart survey, 1995). According to the Texas Department of Health, 18,698 of these persons at or below 150% FPL are Medicaid eligible in Brazos County. The target population for this project then is approximately 34,772 individuals, or the sum of uninsured and Medicaid eligible persons.

**Project Benefits. Availability.** The current availability of affordable medical and dental care does not meet the needs of community residents as indicated by the community health assessment. Each of the participating agencies is primarily constrained in its ability to provide needed services by space limitations. The construction of the CHC will enable agencies to expand existing services and add new ones. Existing services will be expanded through two efforts. First new construction and renovation will yield additional medical and program space. Second, a greater portion of the partners' current program funds will be applied to direct services as operating costs be reduced through cost sharing. The building will be owned by BVCAA; however, there will be no rental costs for participating agencies and agencies will share a number of operational costs. The CHC will also make available 4 new services to the community: affordable dental care, coordinated health education for CHC patients, and the evaluation of existing health education efforts throughout the community and region, and out-patient psychological counseling.

**Accessibility.** The construction of the CHC will improve the accessibility to affordable health care for the target populations in four important ways. First, the co-location of every local affordable health care provider in one clinic will simplify the patient's efforts to obtain a variety of needed services. Second, the chosen site for the facility is adjacent to the BTS Brazos Valley Transfer Point. All potential patients will be within one bus ride of the Facility. For Brazos County residents that bus ride will not exceed 20 minutes in length. CHC patients may access BTS via the adjacent terminal to travel to and from the center. Third, the partners will ultimately share eligibility and support staff to improve coordination and referral services for the patient among the different health providers. Finally, bilingual staff will be available in every program for non-English speaking patients.

**Expenditure Budget.** Total cost for new construction and furnishing the project will be \$2,200,000.

| <b>Funding.</b> | <b>Construction Phase</b>  | <b>Committed</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------|
|                 | City of Bryan              | \$1,200,000      |
|                 | Episcopal Health Charities | \$ 500,000       |
|                 | Meadows Foundation         | \$ 165,000       |
|                 | City of College Station    | \$ 126,000       |
|                 | Brown Foundation           | \$ 70,000        |
|                 | Astin Foundation           | \$ 20,000        |
|                 | Dansby Foundation          | \$ 10,000        |
|                 | Private Donation           | \$ 5,300         |

**Agency Background.** Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. (BVCAA) is a private non-profit, 501©3, agency. The agency was established in 1972 and is composed of three divisions: 1) Health Services, 2) Community Services, 3)) Fiscal Services. Brazos Transit Systems is a sister agency, a political subdivision of the State of Texas and operates the largest rural transit system in North America—stretching over 35 Texas Counties. The two agencies operate under a central administration that has its administration headquarters in Bryan, Texas.

BVCAA is well qualified to implement and maintain the capital project described below. The agency has a long history in the development, implementation, and maintenance of capital projects and service delivery programs. The most recent of these capital projects is the Brazos Transit System's Brazos Valley Transfer Point. It is located on 6 acres of property, including BVCAA's Family Health Clinic in Bryan, TX. Brazos Transit acquired the property through a federal transportation grant. Agency staff chose the property, and designed and constructed the transit hub according to the ideas and suggestions received from local government officials, business community representatives, user representatives, and community members. The Transfer Point was opened November 1, 1995.

**The BC-SCHC is scheduled to open by February 1, 2000!**