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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
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October 20, 2021

We are writing to express our support for the Redevelopment Assistance Capitol Program (RACP) grant application for funding submitted by Beth Sholom Synagogue in Elkins Park, PA to repair the original glass roof structure of the historic building that is in desperate need of repair.

Beth Sholom has sat on the top of a hill on the main corridor of 611 overlooking much of Elkins Park, PA since it was built in 1951. It is a structure known globally as the only synagogue designed by the renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright. It was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 2007. The Synagogue was singled out by the American Institute of Architects and the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the seventeen Wright buildings most worthy of preservation. Wright began the project in 1953 and the building was dedicated in September of 1959, five months after his death.

As such a unique roof structure ages, Beth Sholom has found itself needing to make significant repairs to restore its renowned building and preserve the history of its origin for generations to come. However, they cannot complete the proposed scope of work without help. The funds needed to see the project through far exceed their ability to fundraise independently. The roof currently leaks in multiple locations creating possible damage to their preserved main sanctuary and they are concerned of the long term and excessive repair that would be needed if they do not handle the situation as soon as possible. The current uptick in significant storms in the area also make them nervous to prolong the start of this project much further as possible storm damage to the weakened structure from aging could have dire effects.

Beth Sholom is a vibrant and active synagogue serving over 1300 families. It houses two congregations, a Judaica shop and a small museum dedicated to its history within its walls and is an integral part of the large Jewish community in our area. Along with weekly services, they offer numerous educational, religious, cultural, and social activities for all ages. If granted, the RACP assistance would have a lasting impact on many of our constituents and we fully support their efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,



Representative Napoleon J. Nelson
154th Legislative District



Representative Benjamin V. Sanchez
153rd Legislative District

cc: Leader Joanna E. McClinton

cc: Chairman Matthew Bradford