

April 19, 2023

FROM: City of Hudson Mayor Kamal Johnson and  
Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **Rep. Molinaro Requests Federal Funding for Wellness Hub in Columbia County**

United States Representative Marc Molinaro (NY-19) today announced he is requesting \$5 million in federal funds for the Wellness Hub in Columbia County.

The Wellness Hub is a project designed to bring together supportive services and housing for mental health and substance use disorders in one location, which will be sited on a donated parcel in Greenport. It is currently in the planning phase.

Hudson Mayor Kamal Johnson began the Transitions to Treatment Task Force in 2020 with Cheryl Roberts, executive director of the Greenburger Center for Social and Criminal Justice. The Wellness Hub, a key initiative of the Task Force, is designed to close the area's gaps in treating serious mental health and substance use disorders and homelessness.

"The Greenburger Center has enthusiastically facilitated the Wellness Hub process for the last three-and-a-half years under the leadership of Mayor Kamal Johnson and with support and hard work from Columbia County Department of Social Services Commissioner Bob Gibson, county Human Services and Columbia County Mental Health Center Director of Community Services Dan Almasi, Keith Stack of Twin County Recovery Services, David Rossetti of the Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene counties, and Brian Stewart of Columbia Memorial Hospital," said the Greenburger Center's Cheryl Roberts.

Roberts added, "The Wellness Hub is a simple concept. By putting services in one place and making it easy for people to get help and support, a crisis can be avoided and the whole community benefits. A \$5 million grant from Congressman Molinaro is exactly what the Wellness Hub and Columbia County needs now to take it to the next step. The Greenburger Center is grateful for the congressman's interest and support of the Wellness Hub, and to Paul Colarusso. Without Paul's generous land donation to the Greenburger Center, the Wellness Hub would not be possible."

Mayor Johnson said, "This is one of those projects that can have a huge impact in our community. I appreciate Congressman Molinaro for putting in this funding request. This just goes to show the importance of local and federal governments working together."

Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell said he wished to thank Rep. Molinaro for moving the \$5 million request forward in the House Appropriations Committee. "In addition, I would like to thank Cheryl Roberts and the Greenburger Center for their work on this project, as well as Commissioner of Social Services Bob Gibson, county Human Services and Columbia County Mental Health Center Director of Community Services Dan Almasi, Twin County Recovery Services' Keith Stack, and Paul Colarusso."

Each year, the House Appropriations Committee collects community development project requests from members of Congress for consideration in the upcoming appropriations bill. These requests provide direct funding to local government or non-profit entities to carry out specific projects that benefit the local community. The Wellness Hub is one of 15 projects submitted by Rep. Molinaro.

The \$5 million for the Wellness Hub is the highest amount requested of Rep. Molinaro's 15 submitted projects. This year, Rep. Molinaro is seeking a total of \$41 million in federal funding from the House Appropriations Committee for community projects in New York's 19th Congressional District.

Rep. Molinaro said, "I'm fighting to secure investments in Upstate New York and uplift our communities. These transformative projects will improve our infrastructure, provide essential services to our veterans, expand mental health care, and enhance the quality of life for all residents. I am immensely proud to be working to making Upstate New York a better place to live, work, and raise a family."