



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Dylan
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Wegela
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
n/a
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Operation Refuge
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
27717 Carlysle St, Inkster, MI 48141
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
n/a
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Dylan Wegela - HD 26
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. Mother's Pantry, a vital program of Operation Refuge located in Inkster, Michigan, plays a central role in addressing food insecurity and promoting health equity in Wayne County. We are requesting state grant funding to support critical infrastructure upgrades that include the installation of energy-efficient commercial refrigeration units, replacement of aging exterior doors for better insulation and safety, and updates to our food procurement and distribution systems. These improvements are essential to increasing capacity, reducing energy costs, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of

food access services in an underserved community.

The purpose of this grant is to modernize Mother's Pantry's operations in alignment with current food safety standards and environmental sustainability goals. Our aging refrigeration system is unreliable and energy-inefficient, risking spoilage of perishable food and high utility costs that could otherwise go toward food access. The new refrigeration units will allow us to safely store and distribute more fresh produce, dairy, and proteins—items essential for healthy diets but often lacking in food-insecure households. Updated exterior doors will provide better insulation, contribute to energy savings, and improve building security for volunteers and clients. Additional funding will be used to enhance the variety and nutritional value of foods available to clients, ensuring we meet both emergency hunger needs and long-term wellness goals.

This investment will produce a direct and measurable public benefit. Mother's Pantry currently serves over 600 individuals per month, providing critical nutrition assistance to families, seniors, and children in need. By increasing our capacity and efficiency, we will expand our reach to serve even more residents, reduce food waste, and protect the quality of the food we provide. The community benefits not only from improved food access but also from reduced strain on health and social service systems, as hunger is a root cause of chronic illness, poor academic performance, and lost economic productivity.

This grant represents a legitimate public use of taxpayer funds and is consistent with Article IV, § 30 of the Michigan Constitution, which prohibits the use of public funds for private purposes. Operation Refuge is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, and 100% of the funds will be used to improve services for the public good. The facility improvements will not benefit any private individual but will serve the broader public interest by strengthening community infrastructure and promoting equitable access to basic human needs.

Furthermore, the project aligns with statewide goals around energy efficiency, sustainability, and equity. By upgrading to energy-efficient systems, we reduce our environmental footprint while also lowering operating costs—allowing us to invest more in direct services. These improvements will support Michigan's environmental and economic resilience, while also demonstrating responsible stewardship of public resources.

In sum, this grant is an investment in people, public health, and the long-term viability of a trusted community resource. We respectfully request the State of Michigan's support in helping Mother's Pantry continue to feed families, uplift communities, and serve with dignity and impact.

**9. Attach documents here if needed:**

Attachments added to the end of this file.

**10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.**

100000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["Federal", "State", "Local", "Private"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Please see attached document

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

As soon as funds are available

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

Date:

JUN 09 2017

OPERATION REFUGE

27717 CARLYSLE

INKSTER, MI 48141-3263

Employer Identification Number: 26-1752073  
DLN: 26053544003147

Contact Person:

CUSTOMER SERVICE

ID# 31954

Contact Telephone Number:

(877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending:

July 31

Public Charity Status:

170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:

Yes

Effective Date of Exemption:

February 15, 2017

Contribution Deductibility:

Yes

Addendum Applies:

No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

Based on the information you submitted in your application, we approved your request for reinstatement under Revenue Procedure 2014-11. Your effective date of exemption, as listed at the top of this letter, is retroactive to your date of revocation.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar

Letter 947



**27741 Carlisle Inkster, MI 48141 [www.operationrefuge.org](http://www.operationrefuge.org)**

**Operation Refuge Board of Directors**

**Dr. Robert H. Benard MSW D.D. Chairman**

**Mack A. Hall Jr Treasurer**

**Denise W. Franklin Secretary**

**Dana Jordan, MSW Trustee**

**Saif Alsenad BS Trustee**

**Mary C. Jones Trustee**

**Aaron Benard MBA Trustee**

**Harry Ajagu Trustee Attorney**

**Diondra White Trustee**

**Velma J Overman Executive Director**

## Draft Budget Estimate: Mother’s Pantry Infrastructure Upgrades

Total Project Budget: \$100,000

Line Item	Estimated Cost	Notes
Energy-Efficient Freezers & Refrigerators	\$ fifty thousand (\$50,000) (3)	Largest line item; includes walk-in or upright units, installation, and energy-saving features.
Exterior Door Replacement	\$ twenty thousand (\$20,000) (2)	High-efficiency insulated doors for improved energy savings and building security.
Food Shelving & Display Storage Systems	\$ seven thousand five hundred (\$7,500)	Includes commercial-grade shelving units for better organization, visibility, and sanitation.
Project Manager (10%)	\$ ten thousand (\$10,000)	Oversight of procurement, contractor coordination, compliance, and reporting.
Labor & Installation (5%)	\$ five thousand (\$5,000)	General labor for equipment setup, door fitting, shelving assembly.
Contingency/Buffer for Cost Fluctuations	\$ seven thousand five hundred (\$7,500)	Covers unforeseen expenses or cost increases.

### Summary

This budget prioritizes **reliable, energy-efficient refrigeration**, followed by essential **infrastructure improvements** that support food safety, storage, and accessibility. Project management and labor allocations ensure proper oversight and professional installation. Every dollar directly contributes to improving service delivery and protecting the public investment.