

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 119-

22

OFFERED BY MS. SALINAS OF OREGON

At the end of title VI, add the following:

1 **SEC. ____ . RURAL PARTNERSHIP AND PROSPERITY ACT.**

2 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 (1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
4 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
5 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
6 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

7 (2) RURAL; RURAL AREA.—The terms “rural”
8 and “rural area” have the meaning given those
9 terms in section 343(a)(13)(A) of the Consolidated
10 Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C.
11 1991(a)(13)(A)).

12 (b) RURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM GRANTS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of
14 appropriations under paragraph (10), the Secretary
15 shall establish a program to make multiyear grant
16 awards to coordinate Federal, nonprofit, and for-
17 profit investment in rural areas.

18 (2) GRANT REQUIREMENTS.—

1 (A) TERM.—The term of a grant awarded
2 under paragraph (1) shall be not less than 2
3 years and not more than 5 years.

4 (B) AWARDS.—Except as provided in sub-
5 paragraphs (C) and (D), the State offices of the
6 rural development mission area shall be respon-
7 sible for reviewing applications for grant awards
8 under paragraph (1) and selecting eligible ap-
9 plicants described in paragraph (4) for those
10 grant awards.

11 (C) TRIBAL AWARDS.—Except as provided
12 in subparagraph (D), in the case of grants
13 under paragraph (1) allocated to Indian Tribes
14 under paragraph (3)(A)(ii), the national office
15 of the rural development mission area shall be
16 responsible for reviewing applications for grant
17 awards under paragraph (1) and selecting eligi-
18 ble applicants described in paragraph (4) for
19 those grant awards.

20 (D) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—If the
21 amount appropriated under paragraph (10) for
22 a fiscal year is less than or equal to
23 \$300,000,000, the national office of the rural
24 development mission area shall be responsible
25 for reviewing applications for grant awards

1 under paragraph (1) and selecting eligible ap-
2 plicants described in paragraph (4) for those
3 grant awards—

4 (i) on a competitive basis; and

5 (ii) by giving priority to areas that
6 have higher nonmetropolitan poverty levels
7 and lower population levels, while ensuring
8 that grants under this section are awarded
9 in diverse geographic regions of the United
10 States.

11 (3) GRANT ALLOCATION.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
13 paragraph (2)(D), the Secretary shall allocate
14 funding for grants under paragraph (1)—

15 (i) for each State based on a formula
16 determined by the Secretary in accordance
17 with subparagraph (B); and

18 (ii) for Indian Tribes in such amounts
19 as the Secretary determines to be appro-
20 priate, subject to the condition that the
21 total amount allocated to Indian Tribes
22 under this subparagraph shall not be less
23 than 5 percent of the amount appropriated
24 under paragraph (10), with Indian Tribes
25 located in areas that have higher poverty

1 levels and lower populations receiving high-
2 er levels of funding.

3 (B) ALLOCATION REQUIREMENTS.—

4 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
5 develop a graduated scale to allocate fund-
6 ing for States under subparagraph (A)(i)
7 based on the nonmetropolitan poverty and
8 population levels in each State.

9 (ii) LIMITATION.—The amount allo-
10 cated to any State under clause (i) shall
11 not exceed 5 percent of the amount appro-
12 priated under paragraph (10).

13 (C) SMALL STATE EXCEPTION TO FOR-
14 MULA.—Notwithstanding subparagraphs (A)(i)
15 and (B)(i), the Secretary shall ensure that each
16 State is allocated an amount for grants under
17 this subsection that is sufficient to fulfill the
18 purposes of the program established under this
19 subsection, as determined by the Secretary.

20 (D) REALLOCATION.—If a State or Indian
21 Tribe does not use funds allocated to the State
22 or Indian Tribe under this paragraph, the Sec-
23 retary may reallocate the unused funds to 1 or
24 more other States or Indian Tribes, each of

1 which has used all of the funding allocated to
2 the State or Indian Tribe under this paragraph.

3 (4) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—To be eligible to
4 receive a grant under paragraph (1), an applicant
5 shall—

6 (A) propose to serve a rural area;

7 (B) be composed of a partnership of 2 or
8 more of—

9 (i) an instrumentality or political sub-
10 division of a State, such as a municipality,
11 county, district, or authority;

12 (ii) a nonprofit corporation or associa-
13 tion with significant ties to the rural area
14 described in subparagraph (A), including
15 through—

16 (I) association with, or control
17 by, 1 or more public bodies in the
18 rural area;

19 (II) broadly based ownership and
20 control by members of the rural area;
21 or

22 (III) a substantial public funding
23 contribution to the rural area through
24 taxes, revenue bonds, other local gov-

1 ernment sources, or substantial vol-
2 untary community funding;

3 (iii) a cooperative with significant ties
4 to the rural area described in subpara-
5 graph (A);

6 (iv) a for-profit entity with a signifi-
7 cant presence in the rural area described
8 in subparagraph (A);

9 (v) an institution of higher edu-
10 cation—

11 (I) with a significant contribution
12 to or presence in the rural area de-
13 scribed in subparagraph (A); and

14 (II) that includes representatives
15 who are members of the rural area;
16 and

17 (vi) an Indian Tribe—

18 (I) in a rural area described in
19 subparagraph (A); and

20 (II) with demonstrated support
21 from the Tribal council or duly elected
22 Tribal executive of the appropriate
23 Tribal government; and

24 (C) demonstrate cooperation among the
25 members of the partnership described in sub-

1 paragraph (B) necessary to complete com-
2 prehensive, asset-based rural development
3 through eligible activities described in para-
4 graph (3).

5 (5) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible appli-
6 cant described in paragraph (4) that receives a
7 grant under paragraph (1) may use the grant funds
8 in rural areas—

9 (A) to coordinate Federal, State, regional,
10 or Tribal initiatives to reduce duplicative efforts
11 with respect to Federal investments;

12 (B) to leverage non-Federal financial and
13 technical resources;

14 (C) to complete comprehensive
15 predevelopment activities and planning;

16 (D) to create public-private partnerships
17 and attract private investment;

18 (E) to support eligible operational activi-
19 ties, including staffing, of the eligible appli-
20 cants, except that a for-profit entity may not
21 use the grant funds for the purpose described
22 in this subparagraph;

23 (F) to provide capital to existing or new
24 projects, subject to the condition that not more

1 than 50 percent of the grant funds may be used
2 for that purpose;

3 (G) to support regional projects and initia-
4 tives;

5 (H) to address economic recovery from
6 emergencies and natural or man-made disas-
7 ters; and

8 (I) to develop strategic community invest-
9 ment plans described in section 379H(d) of the
10 Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act
11 (7 U.S.C. 2008v(d)).

12 (6) INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible appli-
13 cant described in paragraph (4) that receives a
14 grant under paragraph (1) may not use the grant
15 funds—

16 (A) to fund operational activities, including
17 staffing, at a for-profit institution;

18 (B) to purchase or lease real property; or

19 (C) to support a non-rural area.

20 (7) SELECTION CRITERIA.—In awarding grants
21 under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall give pri-
22 ority to an eligible applicant described in paragraph
23 (4) that proposes to serve—

24 (A) a rural area with a significant change
25 in population;

1 (B) a rural area with significant workforce
2 changes or changes in major employers;

3 (C) an economically distressed rural area,
4 as determined by the Secretary;

5 (D) a rural area that has historically re-
6 ceived minimal Federal funding, as determined
7 by the Secretary; or

8 (E) a rural area for the purpose of job re-
9 tention and economic stabilization, as deter-
10 mined by the Secretary.

11 (8) MATCHING FUNDS.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
13 graph (B), an eligible applicant described in
14 paragraph (4) that receives a grant under para-
15 graph (1) shall provide non-Federal matching
16 funds in the form of cash or an in-kind con-
17 tribution in an amount that is not less than 25
18 percent of the amount of the grant.

19 (B) WAIVER.—

20 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
21 waive the requirement under subparagraph
22 (A) based on the demonstrated need of the
23 eligible applicant or the population served
24 by the eligible applicant, as determined by
25 the Secretary, including—

1 (I) an eligible applicant serving
2 an area with a higher nonmetropolitan
3 poverty level;

4 (II) an eligible applicant serving
5 a Tribal population; and

6 (III) an eligible applicant com-
7 posed of a partnership that includes
8 an entity described in paragraph
9 (4)(B)(i).

10 (ii) JUSTIFICATION.—The Secretary
11 shall provide to the Committee on Agri-
12 culture of the House of Representatives
13 and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
14 tion, and Forestry of the Senate a jus-
15 tification for each waiver provided under
16 clause (i).

17 (C) PROVIDERS.—Non-Federal matching
18 funds under subparagraph (A) may be provided
19 by any member of the applicable partnership
20 described in paragraph (4)(B).

21 (9) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall carry
22 out this section in coordination with the Rural Part-
23 ners Network established by section 6306 of the Ag-
24 riculture Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C.
25 2204b–3).

1 (10) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to
3 be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as
4 are necessary to carry out this sub section.

5 (B) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
6 may retain not more than 2 percent of the
7 amounts made available to carry out this sub-
8 section for administration of the program estab-
9 lished under this subsection.

10 (c) RURAL PARTNERSHIP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
11 GRANTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of
13 appropriations under paragraph (7), the Secretary
14 shall establish a program to award grants, on a com-
15 petitive basis, for up to a 5-year period, to be ad-
16 ministered at the national level through the Under
17 Secretary for Rural Development, for the purpose of
18 advising on and assisting rural community organiza-
19 tions with—

20 (A) Federal grant management and the de-
21 velopment of financial management systems;

22 (B) housing or community economic devel-
23 opment projects; and

24 (C) the development of placemaking plans
25 and applications for Federal grants.

1 (2) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—To be eligible to
2 receive a grant under paragraph (1), an applicant
3 shall be a qualified private or nonprofit intermediary
4 organization, including an institution of higher edu-
5 cation with an existing community development and
6 planning program, including an extension program,
7 that has demonstrated experience and capacity to
8 provide technical assistance on community develop-
9 ment and planning in rural areas.

10 (3) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible appli-
11 cant described in paragraph (2) that receives a
12 grant under paragraph (1) may use the grant funds
13 to support the capacity building and economic devel-
14 opment of identified rural areas and local partners
15 in those rural areas through the following activities:

16 (A) Training and supporting local staff, in-
17 cluding relating to systems development and
18 support.

19 (B) Identifying vetted technical consultants
20 for planning and designing physical infrastruc-
21 ture.

22 (C) Facilitating coordination between Fed-
23 eral agencies and local partners.

24 (D) Providing expertise on developing pub-
25 lic-private partnerships.

1 (E) Development and project
2 predevelopment activities.

3 (F) Grant writing and grant management
4 activities.

5 (4) INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible appli-
6 cant described in paragraph (2) that receives a
7 grant under paragraph (1) may not use the grant
8 funds—

9 (A) to fund staffing at a for-profit entity;

10 (B) to purchase or lease real property,
11 buildings, or equipment;

12 (C) to support a non-rural area; or

13 (D) for research and development.

14 (5) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under para-
15 graph (1), the Secretary may give priority to an eli-
16 gible applicant described in paragraph (2) that
17 serves—

18 (A) a nonmetropolitan area with a high
19 poverty level; or

20 (B) an Indian Tribe with demonstrated
21 support from the Tribal council or duly elected
22 Tribal executive of the appropriate Tribal gov-
23 ernment.

24 (6) MATCHING FUNDS.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
2 graph (B), an eligible applicant described in
3 paragraph (2) that receives a grant under para-
4 graph (1) shall provide non-Federal matching
5 funds in an amount that is not less than 30
6 percent of the amount of the grant.

7 (B) WAIVER.—

8 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
9 waive the requirement under subparagraph
10 (A) based on the demonstrated need of the
11 area in which activities using the grant are
12 to be carried out, as determined by the
13 Secretary.

14 (ii) JUSTIFICATION.—The Secretary
15 shall provide to the Committee on Agri-
16 culture of the House of Representatives
17 and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
18 tion, and Forestry of the Senate a jus-
19 tification for each waiver provided under
20 clause (i).

21 (7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to
23 be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as
24 are necessary to carry out this subsection.

1 (B) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
2 may retain not more than 2 percent of the
3 amounts made available to carry out this sub-
4 section for administration of the program estab-
5 lished under this subsection.

6 (d) RURAL PARTNERS NETWORK.—Section 6306 of
7 the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C.
8 2204b–3) is amended—

9 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**COUN-**
10 **CIL ON RURAL COMMUNITY INNOVATION AND**
11 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**” and inserting
12 “**RURAL PARTNERS NETWORK**”;

13 (2) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “council”
14 and inserting “network”;

15 (3) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the
16 following:

17 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established a
19 Rural Partners Network (referred to in this section
20 as the ‘Network’).

21 “(2) SUCCESSOR.—The Network shall be the
22 successor to the Council on Rural Community Inno-
23 vation and Economic Development established by
24 this section (as in effect on the day before the date
25 of enactment of this subsection).”;

1 (4) in subsection (c)—

2 (A) in paragraph (1)—

3 (i) by striking subparagraphs (C),
4 (D), (N), (Q), (R), (S), (T), (V), (X), (Y),
5 and (Z);

6 (ii) by redesignating subparagraphs
7 (E) through (M), (O), (P), (U), (W), and
8 (AA) as subparagraphs (C) through (K),
9 (L), (M), (N), (O), and (X), respectively;
10 and

11 (iii) by inserting after subparagraph
12 (O) (as so redesignated) the following:

13 “(P) The Federal Deposit Insurance Cor-
14 poration.

15 “(Q) The Appalachian Regional Commis-
16 sion.

17 “(R) The Consumer Financial Protection
18 Bureau.

19 “(S) The Social Security Administration.

20 “(T) The Delta Regional Authority.

21 “(U) The Denali Commission.

22 “(V) The Northern Border Regional Com-
23 mission.

24 “(W) The Southeast Crescent Regional
25 Commission.”; and

1 (B) in paragraphs (2) through (4), by
2 striking “Council” each place it appears and in-
3 serting “Network”;

4 (5) in subsection (d), by striking “Council” and
5 inserting “Network”;

6 (6) in subsection (e)—

7 (A) in the subsection heading, by striking
8 “COUNCIL” and inserting “NETWORK”;

9 (B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
10 by striking “Council” and inserting “Network”;

11 (C) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at
12 the end;

13 (D) in paragraph (3), by striking the pe-
14 riod at the end and inserting “; and”; and

15 (E) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(4) to improve the efficiency of Federal assist-
17 ance to rural communities by—

18 “(A) reducing administrative burdens on
19 rural communities to pursue Federal funding;

20 “(B) improving the administrative effi-
21 ciency of Federal economic development pro-
22 grams serving rural communities; and

23 “(C) streamlining and simplifying the ap-
24 plication process for Federal funding opportuni-
25 ties for rural communities.”;

1 (7) in subsection (f), in the matter preceding
2 paragraph (1), by striking “Council” and inserting
3 “Network”;

4 (8) in subsection (g), by striking “Council”
5 each place it appears and inserting “Network”; and

6 (9) by striking subsection (h) and inserting the
7 following:

8 “(h) INNOVATIVE CROSS-AGENCY COORDINATION.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting as
10 Chair of the Network, may carry out innovative
11 strategies for coordinating with other Federal de-
12 partments and agencies with respect to programs
13 that serve rural areas.

14 “(2) PRIORITIES.—In carrying out paragraph
15 (1), the Secretary shall prioritize—

16 “(A) improving ease of access to Federal
17 programs for resource-constrained rural com-
18 munities;

19 “(B) utilizing early technical assistance to
20 reduce duplicative applications and administra-
21 tive costs at the Federal level;

22 “(C) leveraging partnerships with local,
23 State, philanthropic, and private entities to
24 maximize returns on Federal investments;

- 1 “(D) integrating stakeholder and program
- 2 user experience into program design; and
- 3 “(E) targeting areas experiencing economic
- 4 distress, as determined by the Secretary.”.

