

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 10, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We are writing to urge you to include a provision addressing a rural housing problem in any upcoming legislation the House considers prior to September 30, 2012. We have enclosed proposed language that could be used in the upcoming continuing resolution (CR) as well as future omnibus appropriations packages, which would resolve this issue for the next fiscal year and thus enable us to develop a long-term approach.

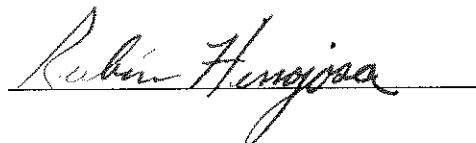
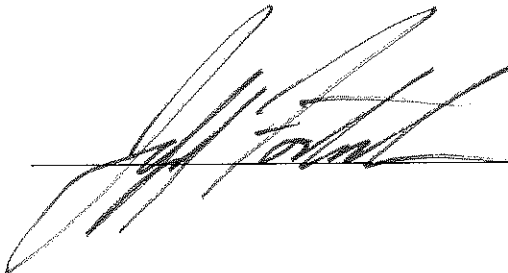
This important issue affects hundreds of rural communities throughout the United States. Unless action is taken by September 30, 2012, 923 communities will no longer be eligible for funding under critical U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs.

In 2000, Congress enacted a grandfather clause that allowed any community that was "rural" in 1990 to continue to be eligible for USDA Rural Development funding until the 2010 Census, as long as it had a population below 25,000. This grandfather clause will expire on October 1, 2012, and under the new definition, 923 communities currently eligible for USDA Rural Development programs will be cut off from what is often their only source of federal housing funding. To be eligible after October 1, 2012, these communities must fall within the original—and very restrictive—definition.

We continue to work with many of our colleagues to extend the current grandfather clause. During its consideration of the Farm Bill, the Senate passed by voice vote an amendment to continue the grandfather clause for ten years for those communities eligible for USDA rural housing programs. The provision also increased the population cap on communities previously eligible to 35,000. Due to jurisdictional issues, we were unable to consider such a provision during the House Agriculture Committee markup of the bill, but hope to address the issue during conference. In addition, we continue to promote H.R. 273, the *Rural Housing Preservation Act*. This measure, which has 16 bipartisan cosponsors, would preserve the definition of "rural" under current law until 2020 Census data is available.

Thank you for your attention this matter.

Sincerely,



Kathleen C. Hochup

Emel Balay

Michael W. Merchant

JH

Bill Cassidy

None Lark

Rina S. Nages

Raid M. Hijabre

Jill Song

John C. Conway

C.W. Boustany Jr.

Emel

Phil Colford

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Jay McTay

Rush Holt

Tim Griffin

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Debi Ludwig

Darin Moore

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Tim Ryan

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Tim Johnson

Jim Langewan

Reck Zasser

Cynthia M. Lummis

And V. Amos

John L.

Kathy Costa

Mike Thompson

Jim Sacchetti

Joe Courtney

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Da Young

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Jimmy V. Costello

John M. K.

Bernie P. Thompson

Shelley Moore Capito

Bob Fil

Mike Smith

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John F. Tierney

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Bill Owens

William P. Keating

Rodney Alexander

Gregg Harper

Tim G

Joe Heck

Walter B. Jones

Bennett P. Thompson

Todd K. Platts

Steve Seave

Carlson

Frank A. LoBiondo

Aeneas G. Ellmers

Ben Chandler

Mary and Mack

Sam R. Tipton

Wally Herges

Bill Johnson

T. J.

Leonard Lane

Paul A. Spear

Lou Barletta

Bill Shust

Bob Myers

Mike McIntyre

Suzanne Brannon

Milw Rm

Hy Allen

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Robert E And

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Howard Goble

Ch. Rm

Ben Ell

Vicky Hartley

Kurt Schwahn

Tom J. Wang

Rosa L DeLauro

Steve Wang

Ray Wahl

Brett Guthrie

Fly fishing

~~Art R~~

Larry Kinell

Proposed Rural Housing Definition Legislative Language Rep. Jeff Fortenberry

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any area eligible for rural housing programs of the Rural Housing Service on June 30, 2012, shall remain eligible for such programs until September 30, 2013.

Fortenberry
Hinojosa
Filner
Boustany
LoBiondo
Capito
Tim Ryan
Costa
Michaud
Boren
Gosar
Cassidy
Manzullo
Bennie Thompson
Grijalva
Canseco
Capps
McIntyre
Castor
Guinta
Luetkemeyer
Reyes
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Cicilline
Pingree
Matheson
Holt
Courtney
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Hochul
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Mike Ross
Mike Thompson
Crawford
Garamendi
Amodei
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DeLauro
Chandler

Brad Miller
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Terry