

Trump Administration Highlights Record Levels of Investment in 2020 to Build Rural American Prosperity

USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today highlighted the department's [investments in 2020 that are building prosperity](#) and strengthening the nation's rural businesses and communities.

“Under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, USDA invested a record \$40 billion in rural communities in 2020,” Brand said. “This assistance is helping increase economic opportunities and improving the quality of life for rural residents across the 50 states and all U.S. territories.

Brand added, “USDA responded with urgency to help those affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. We worked to bring high-speed internet capacity, modern community facilities, and upgraded water and wastewater infrastructure to rural areas. We helped provide homeownership opportunities and reliable electricity. We invested in businesses and family-supporting jobs, because when rural America thrives, all of America thrives.”

Below is a summary of USDA's Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 accomplishments:

Connecting Rural America to High-Speed Broadband

- Invested \$1.3 billion to support rural broadband expansion through the [ReConnect Pilot Program](#). Included in this total is \$85 million provided through the CARES Act. In total, these investments are connecting approximately 280,000 households, 19,978 farms and 10,053 businesses to high-speed internet.
- Invested \$187 million in broadband through the [Telecom Infrastructure](#) and Community Connect programs. These investments are connecting 58,249 households in rural communities to high-speed internet.

Improving Rural Infrastructure

- Invested a record \$6.3 billion in 125 projects to [upgrade or build electric infrastructure](#). These investments will benefit 10.7 million customers by improving electric service reliability across 34 states.
- Invested \$801 million in Smart Grid technology to improve electric system operations and monitor grid security for rural electric customers.
- Invested \$2.1 billion to expand access to [safe drinking water and improve wastewater management systems](#). These investments will improve the reliability of local water supply for 2.1 million rural Americans.

- Invested \$140 million through the [Community Facilities Programs](#) in rural infrastructure projects such as roads, airports and transportation improvements.

Bolstering Rural Economic Development

- Invested \$22.4 million through the [Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program \(HBIIP\)](#) to increase the availability of renewable fuels derived from U.S. agricultural products. These investments will help increase biofuels sales by a projected 150 million gallons annually.
- Invested \$1.7 billion to assist 384 rural businesses through the [Business and Industry \(B&I\) Loan Guarantee Program](#). Included in this total was \$326 million provided through the CARES Act. These investments created or saved nearly 18,000 jobs.
- Invested more than \$386 million in 2,304 loan and grants through the [Rural Energy for America Program](#) (REAP) for energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy systems, and energy development assistance in rural businesses. These investments are projected to generate or save more than 1.8 billion kWh.

Improving Rural Quality of Life

- Invested \$1.5 billion in loans and grants through the [Community Facilities Programs](#) that funded the construction or modernization of 1,683 essential community facilities such as rural hospitals, educational institutions and public safety facilities. These investments will benefit 20 million rural residents, across all 50 states, Guam, Virgin Islands and the Western Pacific.
- Invested \$71.5 million through the [Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program](#) in 116 distance learning and telemedicine projects. These investments will benefit 12 million rural residents, making it easier for them to access healthcare and educational opportunities without having to travel long distances.
- Invested \$24 billion in direct and guaranteed loans through the [Single Family Housing Programs](#) to help 143,795 low- and moderate-income families buy homes in all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Enhancing Customer Service

- Cut red tape to increase private investment in rural America by making it easier for lenders to access four flagship loan programs under the [OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative](#).
- Took immediate actions to assist rural residents, businesses and communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, USDA launched a [Federal Rural Resource Guide](#), provided loan forbearances, halted evictions, and made additional funding available under existing programs. For more information, visit our [COVID-19 response page](#).
- Streamlined regulations to ease customer access to CARES Act programs, infrastructure improvements, business development, housing, community facilities and high-speed internet access in rural areas.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.



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