

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader, United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-224
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader, United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building, Room H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building, Room H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the Rural Network, we write to endorse the critical investments in our communities found in American Rescue Plan Act. The Rural Network is a coalition of more than 80 national, regional, state, local and grassroots organizations working with and in small, rural and tribal communities across the United States. This legislation provides critical investments in badly needed areas of the COVID-19 pandemic response. The American Rescue Plan would provide resources in rural communities throughout the country as families and businesses seek to respond from the challenges posed by COVID-19. As in so many facets throughout the country, people in distressed communities and in communities of color have suffered disproportionately – communities that are appropriately targeted in the legislation.

While we endorse this legislation, we also look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to consider future actions that can be taken to invest in rural community economic development and infrastructure, particularly through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency that features a set of programs uniquely tailored rural communities, with an emphasis on those communities facing the greatest economic challenges. We plan to work closely with Congress and the Administration to ensure that these programs are robustly funded through grant funds that are badly needed in small rural and tribal communities to ensure an economic recovery that is equitable and fair for communities of all sizes, with a specific emphasis on the most vulnerable communities among us.

Sincerely,

California Center for Rural Policy
Center for Rural Strategies
Center on Rural Innovation
Coastal Enterprise, Inc.
Communities Unlimited, Inc.
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
Cooperative Development Institute
e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems
Enterprise Community Partners
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Fahe
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
Housing Assistance Council
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Main Street Project
National Association of Counties

National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
National Cooperative Business Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National NeighborWorks Association
Northern Initiatives
Partners for Rural America
Partners for Rural Transformation
Pivotal New Mexico
RCAP Solutions
Rethinking Rural
Rural Coalition
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
Rural Community College Alliance
Rural Development Initiatives
Rural School and Community Trust
RuralOrganizing.org
Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition
Salmon Valley Stewardship
Siuslaw Institute
Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation