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TITLE VI—RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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3 **SEC. 6001. DEFINITION OF RURAL.**

4 Not later than 60 days after the date of the enact-
5 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall pre-
6 pare and submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the

1 House of Representatives and the Committee on Agri-
2 culture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report
3 that—

4 (1) assesses the varying definitions of “rural”
5 used by the Department of Agriculture;

6 (2) describes the effects those varying defini-
7 tions have on the programs administered by the De-
8 partment of Agriculture; and

9 (3) makes recommendations for ways to better
10 target funds provided through rural development
11 programs.

12 **SEC. 6002. WATER, WASTE DISPOSAL, AND WASTEWATER**
13 **FACILITY GRANTS.**

14 Section 306(a)(2)(B)(vii) of the Consolidated Farm
15 and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)(B)(vii))
16 is amended by striking “2002 through 2007” and insert-
17 ing “2008 through 2012”.

18 **SEC. 6003. RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS.**

19 Section 306(a)(11)(D) of the Consolidated Farm and
20 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(11)(D)) is
21 amended by striking “2007” and inserting “2012”.

22 **SEC. 6004. RURAL WATER AND WASTEWATER CIRCUIT**
23 **RIDER PROGRAM.**

24 Section 306(a)(22)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and
25 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(22)(C)) is

1 amended by striking “\$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2003”
2 and inserting “\$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2008”.

3 **SEC. 6005. TRIBAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ESSENTIAL**
4 **COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**

5 Section 306(a)(25)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and
6 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(25)(C)) is
7 amended by striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting
8 “2008 through 2012”.

9 **SEC. 6006. EMERGENCY AND IMMINENT COMMUNITY**
10 **WATER ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM.**

11 Section 306A(i)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and
12 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926a(i)(2)) is amended
13 by striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
14 through 2012”.

15 **SEC. 6007. WATER SYSTEMS FOR RURAL AND NATIVE VIL-**
16 **LAGES IN ALASKA.**

17 Section 306D(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and
18 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926d(d)(1)) is amend-
19 ed by striking “2001 through 2007” and inserting “2008
20 through 2012”.

1 **SEC. 6008. GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO FI-**
2 **NANCE THE CONSTRUCTION, REFURBISHING,**
3 **AND SERVICING OF INDIVIDUALLY-OWNED**
4 **HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEMS IN**
5 **RURAL AREAS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW**
6 **OR MODERATE INCOMES.**

7 Section 306E(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
8 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926e(d)) is amended by
9 striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
10 through 2012”.

11 **SEC. 6009. RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.**

12 (a) **AUTHORITY TO AWARD MULTI-YEAR GRANTS.—**
13 Section 310(B)(e)(6) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
14 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)(6)) is amended by
15 striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

16 “(6) Grants awarded to centers that have re-
17 ceived no prior funding under this subsection shall
18 be made for a period of 1 year. The Secretary shall
19 evaluate programs receiving assistance under this
20 subsection. If the Secretary determines it to be in
21 the best interest of the program, the Secretary may
22 award grants for a period of more than 1 year, but
23 not more than 3 years, to centers that have success-
24 fully met the goals under paragraph (3) in providing
25 services under this subsection, as determined by the
26 Secretary.”.

1 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
2 310B(e)(9) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)(9)) is amended
3 by striking “2007” and inserting “2012”.

4 **SEC. 6010. APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR**
5 **RURAL AREAS PROGRAM.**

6 Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
7 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932) is amended by adding
8 at the end the following:

9 “(i) APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR
10 RURAL AREAS PROGRAM.—

11 “(1) DEFINITION OF NATIONAL NONPROFIT AG-
12 RICULTURAL ASSISTANCE INSTITUTION.—In this
13 subsection, the term ‘national nonprofit agricultural
14 assistance institution’ means an organization that—

15 “(A) is described in section 501(c)(3) of
16 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt
17 from taxation under 501(a) of that Code;

18 “(B) has staff and offices in multiple re-
19 gions;

20 “(C) operates national sustainable agri-
21 culture technical assistance programs; and

22 “(D) provides the technical assistance
23 through toll-free hotlines, a website, publica-
24 tions, and work shops.

1 “(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall es-
2 tablish a national appropriate technology transfer
3 for rural areas program to assist agricultural pro-
4 ducers that are seeking information to help the agri-
5 cultural producers—

6 “(A) reduce input costs;

7 “(B) conserve energy resources;

8 “(C) diversify operations through new en-
9 ergy crops and energy generation facilities; and

10 “(D) expand markets for the agricultural
11 commodities produced by the producers through
12 use of sustainable farming practices.

13 “(3) IMPLEMENTATION.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
15 carry out the program under this subsection by
16 making a grant to, or offering to enter into a
17 cooperative agreement with, a national non-
18 profit agricultural assistance organization.

19 “(B) COST SHARE.—A grant made, or co-
20 operative agreement entered into, under sub-
21 paragraph (A) shall provide 100 percent of the
22 cost of providing information pursuant to para-
23 graph (2).

24 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

25 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-

1 retary to carry out this subsection \$5,000,000 for
2 each fiscal year.”.

3 **SEC. 6011. GRANTS TO IMPROVE TECHNICAL INFRASTRUC-**
4 **TURE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF RURAL**
5 **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.**

6 Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
7 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1981–2008r), as amended by
8 section 5025 of this Act, is amended by inserting after
9 section 365 the following:

10 **“SEC. 366. GRANTS TO IMPROVE TECHNICAL INFRASTRUC-**
11 **TURE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF RURAL**
12 **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
14 program to award grants to rural health facilities for the
15 purpose of assisting the facilities in—

16 “(1) purchasing health information technology
17 to improve quality in health care and patient safety;
18 or

19 “(2) improving health care quality and patient
20 safety, including the development of—

21 “(A) quality improvement support struc-
22 tures to assist rural health systems and profes-
23 sionals—

24 “(i) achieve greater integration of per-
25 sonal and population health services; and

1 “(ii) address safety, effectiveness,
2 patient- or community-centeredness, timeli-
3 ness, efficiency, and equity; and

4 “(B) innovative approaches to the financ-
5 ing and delivery of health services to achieve
6 rural health quality goals.

7 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 “(1) HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—
9 The term ‘health information technology’ includes
10 total expenditures incurred for—

11 “(A) purchasing, leasing, and installing
12 computer software and hardware, including
13 handheld computer technologies, and related
14 services;

15 “(B) making improvements to computer
16 software and hardware;

17 “(C) purchasing or leasing communications
18 capabilities necessary for clinical data access,
19 storage, and exchange;

20 “(D) services associated with acquiring,
21 implementing, operating, or optimizing the use
22 of computer software and hardware and clinical
23 health care informatics systems;

24 “(E) providing education and training to
25 eligible entity staff on information systems and

1 technology designed to improve patient safety
2 and quality of care; and

3 “(F) purchasing, leasing, subscribing, or
4 servicing support to establish interoperability
5 that—

6 “(i) integrates patient-specific clinical
7 data with well-established national treat-
8 ment guidelines;

9 “(ii) provides ongoing, continuous
10 quality improvement functions that allow
11 providers to assess improvement rates over
12 time and against averages for similar pro-
13 viders; and

14 “(iii) integrates with larger health
15 networks.

16 “(2) RURAL AREA.—The term ‘rural area’
17 means any area of the United States that is not—

18 “(A) included within the boundaries of any
19 city, town, borough, or village, whether incor-
20 porated or unincorporated, with a population of
21 more than 20,000 inhabitants; or

22 “(B) the urbanized area contiguous and
23 adjacent to such a city or town.

24 “(3) RURAL HEALTH FACILITY.—The term
25 ‘rural health facility’ means any of the following:

1 “(A) SOLE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL.—A
2 hospital (as defined in section 1886(a)(2) of the
3 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(a)(2))).

4 “(B) CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL.—A crit-
5 ical access hospital (as defined in section
6 1861(mm)(1) of the Social Security Act (42
7 U.S.C. 1395x(mm)(1))).

8 “(C) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH
9 CENTER IN RURAL AREAS.—A Federally quali-
10 fied health center (as defined in section
11 1861(aa)(4) of the Social Security Act (42
12 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)(4)) that is located in a rural
13 area.

14 “(D) RURAL PHYSICIAN OR RURAL PHYSI-
15 CIAN GROUP PRACTICE.—A physician or physi-
16 cian group practice that is located in a rural
17 area.

18 “(E) RURAL HEALTH CLINIC.—A rural
19 health clinic (as defined in section 1861(aa)(2)
20 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
21 1395x(aa)(2))).

22 “(F) MEDICARE DEPENDENT HOSPITAL.—
23 A medicare-dependent, small rural hospital (as
24 defined in section 1886(d)(5)(G)(iv) of the So-

1 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C.
2 1395ww(d)(5)(G)(iv))).

3 “(c) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—The Secretary shall deter-
4 mine the amount of a grant awarded under this section.

5 “(d) FURNISHING THE SECRETARY WITH INFORMA-
6 TION.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this sec-
7 tion shall furnish the Secretary with such information as
8 the Secretary may require to—

9 “(1) evaluate the project for which the grant is
10 made; and

11 “(2) ensure that assistance provided under the
12 grant is expended for the purposes for which the
13 grant is made.

14 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
15 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
16 out this section not more than \$30,000,000 for each of
17 the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.”.

18 **SEC. 6012. RURAL ENTREPRENEUR AND MICROENTER-**
19 **PRISE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

20 Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
21 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1981–2008r), as amended by
22 sections 5025 and 6011 of this Act, is amended by insert-
23 ing after section 366 the following:

1 **“SEC. 367. RURAL ENTREPRENEUR AND MICROENTER-**
2 **PRISE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

3 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED MICRO-
5 ENTREPRENEUR.—The term ‘economically disadvan-
6 taged microentrepreneur’ means an owner, majority
7 owner, or developer of a microenterprise that has the
8 ability to compete in the private sector but has been
9 impaired because of diminished capital and credit
10 opportunities, as compared to other microentre-
11 preneurs in the industry.

12 “(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’
13 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
14 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
15 Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

16 “(3) INTERMEDIARY.—The term ‘intermediary’
17 means a nonprofit entity that provides assistance—

18 “(A) to a microenterprise development or-
19 ganization; or

20 “(B) for a microenterprise development
21 program.

22 “(4) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.—The term
23 ‘low-income individual’ means an individual with an
24 income (adjusted for family size) of not more than
25 80 percent of the national median income.

1 “(5) MICROCREDIT.—The term ‘microcredit’
2 means a business loan or loan guarantee of not more
3 than \$50,000 that is provided to a rural entre-
4 preneur.

5 “(6) MICROENTERPRISE.—The term ‘micro-
6 enterprise’ means—

7 “(A) a sole proprietorship; or

8 “(B) a business entity with not more than
9 10 full-time-equivalent employees.

10 “(7) MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ORGA-
11 NIZATION.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘microenter-
13 prise development organization’ means a non-
14 profit entity that—

15 “(i) provides training and technical
16 assistance to rural entrepreneurs; and

17 “(ii) facilitates access to capital or an-
18 other service described in subsection (b)
19 for rural entrepreneurs.

20 “(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘microenter-
21 prise development organization’ includes an or-
22 ganization described in subparagraph (A) with
23 a demonstrated record of delivering services to
24 economically disadvantaged microentrepreneurs,
25 or an effective plan to develop a program to de-

1 liver microenterprise services to rural entre-
2 preneurs effectively, as determined by the Sec-
3 retary.

4 “(8) MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PRO-
5 GRAM.—The term ‘microenterprise development pro-
6 gram’ means a program administered by a qualified
7 organization serving a rural area.

8 “(9) MICROENTREPRENEUR.—The term ‘micro-
9 entrepreneur means’ the owner, operator, or devel-
10 oper of a microenterprise.

11 “(10) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means
12 the rural entrepreneur and microenterprise program
13 established under subsection (b)(1).

14 “(11) QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION.—The term
15 ‘qualified organization’ means—

16 “(A) a microenterprise development orga-
17 nization or microenterprise development pro-
18 gram that has a demonstrated record of deliv-
19 ering microenterprise services to rural entre-
20 preneurs, or an effective plan to develop a pro-
21 gram to deliver microenterprise services to rural
22 entrepreneurs effectively, as determined by the
23 Secretary;

24 “(B) an intermediary that has a dem-
25 onstrated record of delivering assistance to

1 microenterprise development organizations or
2 microenterprise development programs;

3 “(C) an Indian tribe, the tribal government
4 of which certifies to the Secretary that there is
5 no microenterprise development organization or
6 microenterprise development program under the
7 jurisdiction of the Indian tribe;

8 “(D) a group of 2 or more organizations or
9 Indian tribes described in any of subparagraphs
10 (A) through (C) that agree to act jointly as a
11 qualified organization under this section; or

12 “(E) for purposes of subsection (b), a pub-
13 lic college or university that has a demonstrated
14 record of delivering assistance to microenter-
15 prise development organizations or microenter-
16 prise development programs.

17 “(12) RURAL AREA.—The term ‘rural area’
18 means any area of the United States that is not—

19 “(A) included within the boundaries of any
20 city, town, borough, or village, whether incor-
21 porated or unincorporated, with a population of
22 more than 20,000 inhabitants; or

23 “(B) the urbanized area contiguous and
24 adjacent to such a city or town.

1 “(13) RURAL CAPACITY-BUILDING SERVICE.—
2 The term ‘rural capacity-building service’ means a
3 service provided to an organization that—

4 “(A) is, or is in the process of becoming,
5 a microenterprise development organization or
6 microenterprise development program; and

7 “(B) serves rural areas for the purpose of
8 enhancing the ability of the organization to pro-
9 vide training, technical assistance, and other re-
10 lated services to rural entrepreneurs.

11 “(14) RURAL ENTREPRENEUR.—The term
12 ‘rural entrepreneur’ means a microentrepreneur, or
13 prospective microentrepreneur—

14 “(A) the principal place of business of
15 which is in a rural area; and

16 “(B) that is unable to obtain sufficient
17 training, technical assistance, or microcredit
18 elsewhere, as determined by the Secretary.

19 “(15) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘tribal
20 government’ means the governing body of an Indian
21 tribe.

22 “(b) RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MICRO-
23 ENTERPRISE PROGRAM.—

1 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall es-
2 tablish a rural entrepreneurship and microenterprise
3 program.

4 “(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the program
5 shall be to provide low-income individuals and mod-
6 erate-income individuals with—

7 “(A) the skills necessary to establish new
8 small businesses in rural areas; and

9 “(B) continuing technical and financial as-
10 sistance as individuals and business starting or
11 operating small businesses.

12 “(3) GRANTS.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
14 make a grant under the program to a qualified
15 organization—

16 “(i) to provide training, operational
17 support, or a rural capacity-building serv-
18 ice to a qualified organization to assist the
19 qualified organization in developing micro-
20 enterprise training, technical assistance,
21 market development assistance, and other
22 related services, primarily for business with
23 10 or fewer full-time-equivalent employees;

24 “(ii) to assist in researching and de-
25 veloping the best practices in delivering

1 training, technical assistance, and micro-
2 credit to rural entrepreneurs; and

3 “(iii) to carry out such other projects
4 and activities as the Secretary determines
5 to be consistent with the purposes of this
6 section.

7 “(B) DIVERSITY.—In making grants under
8 this paragraph, the Secretary shall ensure, to
9 the maximum extent practicable, that grant re-
10 cipients include qualified organizations—

11 “(i) of varying sizes; and

12 “(ii) that serve racially and ethnically
13 diverse populations.

14 “(C) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

15 “(i) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of
16 any grant made to a qualified organization
17 under this paragraph, the Secretary shall
18 require the qualified organization to match
19 not less than 25 percent of the total
20 amount of the grant.

21 “(ii) SOURCES.—In addition to cash
22 from non-Federal sources, a matching
23 share provided by the qualified organiza-
24 tion may include indirect costs or in-kind

1 contributions funded under non-Federal
2 programs.

3 “(4) RURAL MICROLOAN AND TECHNICAL AS-
4 SISTANCE PROGRAM.—

5 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—In carrying out
6 the program, the Secretary may carry out a
7 rural microloan program.

8 “(B) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the rural
9 microloan program shall be to provide technical
10 and financial assistance through qualified orga-
11 nizations to sole proprietorships and small busi-
12 nesses located in rural areas with a particular
13 focus on businesses with 10 or fewer full-time
14 equivalent employees.

15 “(C) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.—In car-
16 rying out the rural microloan program, the Sec-
17 retary may—

18 “(i) make loans to qualified organiza-
19 tions for the purpose of making short-
20 term, fixed interest rate microloans to
21 startup, newly established, and growing
22 rural microbusiness concerns; and

23 “(ii) in conjunction with the loans,
24 provide grants in accordance with subpara-
25 graph (E) to the organizations for the pur-

1 pose of providing intensive marketing,
2 management, and technical assistance to
3 small business concerns that are borrowers
4 under this paragraph.

5 “(D) LOAN DURATION; INTEREST RATES;
6 CONDITIONS.—

7 “(i) LOAN DURATION.—A loan made
8 by the Secretary under this paragraph
9 shall be for a term of 20 years.

10 “(ii) APPLICABLE INTEREST RATES.—
11 A loan made by the Secretary under this
12 paragraph to a qualified organization shall
13 bear an annual interest rate of at least 1
14 percent.

15 “(iii) DEFERRAL OF INTEREST AND
16 PRINCIPAL.—The Secretary may permit
17 the deferral of payments, for principal and
18 interest, on a loan made under this para-
19 graph for a period of not more than 2
20 years, beginning on the date the loan is
21 made.

22 “(E) GRANT AMOUNTS.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as other-
24 wise provided in this section, each qualified
25 organization that receives a loan under this

1 paragraph shall be eligible to receive a
2 grant to provide marketing, management,
3 and technical assistance to small business
4 concerns that are borrowers or potential
5 borrowers under this subsection.

6 “(ii) MAXIMUM AMOUNT FOR MICRO-
7 ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZA-
8 TIONS.—Each microenterprise development
9 organization that receives a loan under this
10 paragraph shall receive an annual grant in
11 an amount equal to not more than 25 per-
12 cent of the total outstanding balance of
13 loans made to the microenterprise develop-
14 ment organization under this paragraph,
15 as of the date the grant is made.

16 “(iii) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

17 “(I) IN GENERAL.—As a condi-
18 tion of any grant made to a qualified
19 organization under this subparagraph,
20 the Secretary shall require the quali-
21 fied organization to match not less
22 than 15 percent of the total amount
23 of the grant.

24 “(II) SOURCES.—In addition to
25 cash from non-Federal sources, a

1 matching share provided by the quali-
2 fied organization may include indirect
3 costs or in-kind contributions funded
4 under non-Federal programs.

5 “(c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than
6 10 percent of assistance received by a qualified organiza-
7 tion for a fiscal year under this section may be used to
8 pay administrative expenses.

9 “(d) FURNISHING THE SECRETARY WITH INFOR-
10 MATION.—A qualified organization that receives a grant
11 under subsection (b)(3) or loan under subsection (b)(4)
12 shall furnish the Secretary by December 1 such informa-
13 tion as the Secretary may require to ensure that assistance
14 provided under the grant or loan is expended for the pur-
15 poses for which the grant or loan is made.

16 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
18 out this section not more than \$20,000,000 for each of
19 the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.”.

20 **SEC. 6013. CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED IN CONSIDERING AP-**
21 **PLICATIONS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**
22 **PROJECTS.**

23 Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
24 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1981–2008r), as amended by

1 sections 5025, 6011, and 6012 of this Act, is amended
2 by inserting after section 367 the following:

3 **“SEC. 368. CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED IN CONSIDERING AP-**
4 **PLICATIONS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**
5 **PROJECTS.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall review the
7 income demographics, population density, and seasonal
8 population increases of eligible communities for each pro-
9 gram authorized or modified by, or funded pursuant to,
10 an amendment made by title VI of the [2007 Farm Bill]
11 or section 306, 306A, 306C, 306D, 306E, 310(c), 310(e),
12 310B(b), 310B(c), 310B(e), or 379B, or subtitle F, G,
13 H, or I of this Act, and which proposes to serve a rural
14 area (as defined by the applicable law).

15 “(b) DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION.—In deter-
16 mining whether to approve an application submitted under
17 a program referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
18 shall consider the application less favorably when com-
19 pared to other applications to the extent that—

20 “(1) the application indicates that the median
21 household income in the area is greater in the appli-
22 cation;

23 “(2) the application indicates that the area is
24 more densely populated in the application; and

1 “(3) the application indicates that the seasonal
2 population increase in the area is greater in the ap-
3 plication, and the Secretary determines that the pop-
4 ulation increase enhances the ability of the applicant
5 to secure other funds for the activities described in
6 the application.

7 “(c) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue regu-
8 lations to establish the applicable limitations that a rural
9 area cannot exceed in order to remain eligible for a pro-
10 gram referred to in subsection (a).”.

11 **SEC. 6014. NATIONAL SHEEP INDUSTRY IMPROVEMENT**
12 **CENTER.**

13 (a) FUNDING.—Section 375(e)(6) of the Consolidated
14 Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008j(e)(6))
15 is amended by striking paragraphs (B) and (C) and insert-
16 ing the following:

17 “(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
18 TIONS.—There are authorized to be appro-
19 priated to the Secretary to carry out this sec-
20 tion \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
21 2008 through 2012.”.

22 (b) ELIMINATION OF REQUIREMENT TO PRIVATIZE
23 REVOLVING FUND.— Section 375 of such Act (7 U.S.C.
24 2008j) is amended by striking subsection (j).

1 **SEC. 6015. NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNER-**
2 **SHIP.**

3 Section 378(g)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and
4 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008m(g)(1)) is amend-
5 ed by striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
6 through 2012”.

7 **SEC. 6016. HISTORIC BARN PRESERVATION.**

8 Section 379A(c)(4) of the Consolidated Farm and
9 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008o(c)(4)) is amend-
10 ed by striking “2002 through 2007” and inserting “2008
11 through 2012”.

12 **SEC. 6017. GRANTS FOR NOAA WEATHER RADIO TRANSMIT-**
13 **TERS.**

14 Section 379B(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
15 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008p(d)) is amended by
16 striking “2002 through 2007” and inserting “2008
17 through 2012”.

18 **SEC. 6018. DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY.**

19 (a) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section
20 382M(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Develop-
21 ment Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-12(a)) is amended by striking
22 “2001 through 2007” and inserting “2008 through
23 2012”.

24 (b) **TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.**—Section 382N of
25 such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-13) is amended by striking
26 “2007” and inserting “2012”.

1 **SEC. 6019. NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGIONAL AUTHOR-**
2 **ITY.**

3 (a) FEDERAL SHARE OF ADMINISTRATIVE EX-
4 PENSES.—Section 383B(g)(1) of the Consolidated Farm
5 and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-1(g)(1)) is
6 amended—

7 (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “2002”
8 and inserting “2007”;

9 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “2003”
10 and inserting “2008”; and

11 (3) in subparagraph (C), by striking “2004”
12 and inserting “2009”.

13 (b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section
14 383B(d)(6)(A) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-1(d)(6)(A))
15 is amended by inserting “and resource conservation” after
16 “development”.

17 (c) ELIMINATION OF PRIORITIZATION RANKING OF
18 ACTIVITIES TO BE FUNDED.—Section 383C(b)(2) of such
19 Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-2(b)(2)) is amended by striking
20 “activities in the following order of priority” and inserting
21 “following activities”.

22 (d) ELIMINATION OF ISOLATED AREA OF DISTRESS
23 DESIGNATION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 383F(a) of such Act
25 (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-5(a)) is amended—

1 (A) by adding “and” at the end of para-
2 graph (1);

3 (B) by striking “; and” at the end of para-
4 graph (2) and inserting a period; and

5 (C) by striking paragraph (3).

6 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section
7 383F(b) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-5(b)) is
8 amended—

9 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and iso-
10 lated areas of distress”; and

11 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “or iso-
12 lated areas of distress”.

13 (e) REDUCTION OF MINIMUM FUNDS ALLOCATION
14 FOR DISTRESSED COUNTIES.—Section 383F(b)(1) of
15 such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-5(b)(1)) is amended by strik-
16 ing “75” and inserting “50”.

17 (f) ELIMINATION OF PROHIBITION ON PROVIDING
18 FUNDS TO NONDISTRESSED COUNTIES.—Section 383F of
19 such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-5) is amended by striking sub-
20 section (c) and redesignating subsection (d) as subsection
21 (c).

22 (g) INCLUSION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY AMONG OB-
23 JECTS OF MINIMUM FUNDS ALLOCATION.—Section
24 383F(c) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-5(c)), as so reded-
25 ignated by subsection (a) of this section, is amended—

1 (1) in the subsection heading, by inserting “RE-
2 NEWABLE ENERGY,” after “TELECOMMUNI-
3 CATION,”; and

4 (2) by inserting “renewable energy,” after
5 “telecommunication”.

6 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
7 383M(a) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-12(a)) is amended
8 by striking “2002 through 2007” and inserting “2008
9 through 2012”.

10 (i) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 383N of
11 such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-13) is amended by striking
12 “2007” and inserting “2012”.

13 **SEC. 6020. RURAL STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM.**

14 Section 385E of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
15 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009dd-4) is amended—

16 (1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the
17 following:

18 “(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
20 out this subtitle not more than \$25,000,000 for each of
21 the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.”; and

22 (2) in subsection (b), by striking “transferred
23 by the Secretary to the National Board” and insert-
24 ing “made available to the Secretary”.

1 **SEC. 6021. EXPANSION OF 911 ACCESS.**

2 Section 315(b) of the Rural Electrification Act of
3 1936 (7 U.S.C. 904e(b)) is amended by striking “2002
4 through 2007” and inserting “2008 through 2012”.

5 **SEC. 6022. ACCESS TO BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**
6 **SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 601(b) of the Rural Elec-
8 trification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(b)) is amended
9 by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

10 “(2) ELIGIBLE RURAL COMMUNITY.—The term
11 ‘eligible rural community’ means any area of the
12 United States that is not—

13 “(A) included within the boundaries of any
14 city, town, borough, or village, whether incor-
15 porated or unincorporated, with a population of
16 more than 20,000 inhabitants; or

17 “(B) the urbanized area contiguous and
18 adjacent to such a city or town.”.

19 (b) PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICATIONS.—

20 (1) DEFINITION.—Section 601(b) of such Act
21 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(b)), as amended by subsection (a)
22 of this section, is amended by adding at the end the
23 following:

24 “(3) INCUMBENT SERVICE PROVIDER.—The
25 term ‘incumbent service provider’ means, with re-
26 spect to an application submitted pursuant to this

1 section, an entity that is providing broadband serv-
2 ices to at least 5 percent of the service area pro-
3 posed in the application.”.

4 (2) PRIORITY BASED ON NUMBER OF INCUM-
5 BENT SERVICE PROVIDERS.—Section 601(c) of such
6 Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb(c)) is amended by adding at
7 the end the following:

8 “(3) APPLICATIONS PRIORITIZED BASED ON
9 NUMBER OF INCUMBENT SERVICE PROVIDERS.—

10 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In making or guaran-
11 teeing loans under paragraph (1), the Secretary
12 shall give priority, in the following order, to ap-
13 plications from eligible rural communities that
14 have—

15 “(i) no incumbent service provider;

16 “(ii) 1 incumbent services provider; or

17 “(iii) 2 incumbent service providers,

18 except that the communities served must
19 compose no more than 25 percent of the
20 total area to be served.

21 “(B) PROHIBITIONS.—In carrying out this
22 section, the Secretary may not—

23 “(i) make a loan to any community in
24 which there are 3 or more incumbent serv-
25 ice providers; or

1 “(ii) make a loan for new construction
2 to any community in which more than 75
3 percent of the households may obtain af-
4 fordable broadband service, on request,
5 from at least 1 incumbent service pro-
6 vider.”.

7 (c) INCREASE IN MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SUBSCRIBER
8 LINES THAT MAY BE SERVED BY AN ELIGIBLE ENTI-
9 TY.—Section 601(d)(3) of such Act (7 U.S.C.
10 950bb(d)(3)) is amended by striking “2” and inserting
11 “10”.

12 (d) LIMITATION ON FUNDS TO ENTITIES WITH
13 MORE THAN 2 PERCENT OF SUBSCRIBER LINES.—Sec-
14 tion 601(d) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb(d)) is amended
15 by adding at the end the following:

16 “(4) LIMITATION ON FUNDS TO ENTITIES WITH
17 MORE THAN 2 PERCENT OF SUBSCRIBER LINES.—
18 Not more than 25 percent of the loans made under
19 this section in a single fiscal year may be approved
20 for entities that serve more than 2 percent of the
21 telephone subscriber lines in the United States.”.

22 (e) ADEQUACY OF SECURITY.—Section 601 of such
23 Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb) is amended by redesignating sub-
24 sections (h) through (j) as subsections (i) through (k), re-
25 spectively, and inserting after subsection (g) the following:

1 “(h) ADEQUACY OF SECURITY.—The Secretary shall
2 ensure that the type, amount and method of security used
3 to secure any loan or loan guarantee provided under this
4 section is commensurate to the risk involved with the loan
5 or loan guarantee, particularly when the loan or loan guar-
6 antee is issued to a financially healthy, strong, and stable
7 entity.”.

8 (f) GENERAL REPORT ON PROGRAM.—Section 601 of
9 such Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb), as amended by subsection (e)
10 of this section, is amended by redesignating subsections
11 (k) and (l) as subsections (l) and (m), respectively, and
12 inserting after subsection (j) the following:

13 “(k) GENERAL PROGRAM REPORT.—Not later than
14 December 1 of each year, the Secretary shall prepare and
15 submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of
16 Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
17 tion, and Forestry of the Senate a report that details for
18 the preceding fiscal year—

19 “(1) the loans made under this section;

20 “(2) the communities served under this section;

21 “(3) the length of time to approve applications
22 submitted pursuant to this section; and

23 “(4) the outreach efforts undertaken by the De-
24 partment of Agriculture to encourage persons in

1 areas without broadband service to submit applica-
2 tions pursuant to this section.”.

3 (g) NATIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL TELECOMMUNI-
4 CATIONS ASSESSMENT.—Section 601 of such Act (7
5 U.S.C. 950bb), as amended by subsections (e) and (f) of
6 this section, is amended by redesignating subsections (l)
7 and (m) as subsections (m) and (n), respectively, and in-
8 serting after subsection (k) the following:

9 “(l) NATIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL TELECOMMUNI-
10 CATIONS ASSESSMENT.—

11 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTER.—The Sec-
12 retary shall designate a National Center for Rural
13 Telecommunications Assessment (in this subsection
14 referred to as the ‘Center’).

15 “(2) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall use the
16 following criteria in making the designation:

17 “(A) The Center must be an entity with a
18 focus on rural policy research and a minimum
19 of 5 years experience in rural telecommuni-
20 cations research and assessment.

21 “(B) The Center must be capable of as-
22 sessing broadband services in rural areas.

23 “(C) The Center must have significant ex-
24 perience with other rural economic development
25 centers and organizations in the assessment of

1 rural policies and formulation of policy solu-
2 tions at the local, State, and Federal level.

3 “(3) BOARD.—The management of the Center
4 shall be vested in a board of directors that is capable
5 of oversight of the duties set forth in paragraph (4).

6 “(4) DUTIES.—The Center shall—

7 “(A) assess the effectiveness of programs
8 provided under subsection (b) in increasing
9 broadband penetration and purchase in rural
10 areas, especially in those rural communities
11 identified by the Secretary as having no service
12 before award of a broadband loan or loan guar-
13 antee under subsection (b);

14 “(B) develop assessments of broadband
15 availability in rural areas, working with existing
16 rural development centers selected by the Cen-
17 ter;

18 “(C) identify policies and initiatives at the
19 local, State and Federal level that have in-
20 creased broadband penetration and purchase in
21 rural areas;

22 “(D) conduct a national study of rural
23 households and businesses focusing on the
24 adoption of, barriers to, and utilization of
25 broadband services; and

1 “(E) provide reports to the public on the
2 activities undertaken under this section.

3 “(5) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The Center
4 shall report by December 1 of each year to the Sec-
5 retary its activities, the results of its research, and
6 any such information the Secretary may request re-
7 garding the prior fiscal year. In reporting to the
8 Secretary the Center shall include the following:

9 “(A) Assessments of the programs pro-
10 vided under subsection (b).

11 “(B) Annual assessments on broadband
12 availability in rural areas under consideration
13 by the Center.

14 “(C) Annual assessments on the effects of
15 the policy initiatives identified in paragraph
16 (2)(C).

17 “(D) Results from the national study of
18 rural households and businesses conducted
19 under paragraph (4)(D).

20 “(6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
21 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
22 retary to carry out this subsection not more than
23 \$1,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through
24 2012.”.

1 (h) FUNDING.—Section 601(m) of such Act (7
2 U.S.C. 950bb(l)) as so redesignated by subsections (e)
3 through (g) of this section, is amended—

4 (1) by striking paragraph (1);

5 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), and
6 (4) as paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively;

7 (3) in paragraph (1)(B) (as so redesignated),
8 by striking “2007” and inserting “2012”;

9 (4) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated), by
10 striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
11 through 2012”; and

12 (5) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated), by
13 adding at the end the following:

14 “(D) ELIGIBLE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES.—
15 Of the amounts made available under subpara-
16 graph (A) for a fiscal year, 10 percent shall be
17 reserved for entities serving eligible tribal com-
18 munities.

19 “(E) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any
20 amounts in the reserve established for eligible
21 tribal communities for a fiscal year under sub-
22 paragraph (D) that are not obligated by June
23 30 of the fiscal year shall be available to the
24 Secretary to make loans and loan guarantees

1 under this section to eligible entities in any
2 State, as determined by the Secretary.”.

3 (i) **EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO ISSUE LOANS.**—
4 Section 601(n) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb(m)), as so
5 redesignated by subsections (d) through (f) of this section,
6 is amended by striking “2007” and inserting “2012”.

7 **SEC. 6023. COMMUNITY CONNECT GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 Title VI of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7
9 U.S.C. 950bb) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing:

11 **“SEC. 602. COMMUNITY CONNECT GRANT PROGRAM.**

12 “(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall estab-
13 lish a grant program to be known as the ‘Community Con-
14 nect Grant Program’ to provide financial assistance to eli-
15 gible applicants to provide broadband transmission service
16 that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced edu-
17 cational, health care, and public safety services.

18 “(b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible for a grant under
19 this section, the applicant must—

20 “(1) be legally organized as an incorporated
21 tribal organization, an Indian tribe, or tribal organi-
22 zation, as defined in subsections (b) and (c) of sec-
23 tion 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
24 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(b) and (c)),
25 a State or local unit of government, or other legal

1 entity, including a cooperative, private corporation,
2 or limited liability company organized on a for-profit
3 or not-for-profit basis;

4 “(2) have the legal capacity and authority to
5 own and operate broadband facilities as proposed in
6 its application, to enter into contracts, and to other-
7 wise comply with applicable Federal statutes and
8 regulations; or

9 “(3) be in an eligible rural community (as de-
10 fined in section 601(b)(2) of the Rural Electrifica-
11 tion Act of 1936).

12 “(c) INELIGIBLE GRANT PURPOSES.—A grant made
13 under this section may not be used—

14 “(1) to finance the duplication of any
15 broadband transmission service provided by another
16 entity; or

17 “(2) with respect to facilities, to provide local
18 exchange telecommunications service to any person
19 or entity receiving the service.

20 “(d) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this sec-
21 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to grants that will
22 enhance community access to telemedicine and distance
23 learning resources.

24 “(e) MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
2 grant under subsection (a), a grant applicant shall
3 provide a matching contribution of at least 15 per-
4 cent of the grant amount requested, in funds and in-
5 kind contributions in a proportion to be determined
6 by the Secretary.

7 “(2) LIMITATIONS.—

8 “(A) Costs incurred by or on behalf of an
9 applicant, for facilities, installed equipment, or
10 other services rendered before submission of a
11 completed application shall not be considered to
12 be for an eligible grant purpose or a matching
13 contribution.

14 “(B) Any financial assistance from Federal
15 sources shall not be considered to be a match-
16 ing contribution for purposes of this section,
17 unless there is a Federal statutory exception
18 specifically authorizing the Federal financial as-
19 sistance to be so considered.

20 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
21 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
22 out this section not more than \$25,000,000 for each of
23 the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.”.

1 **SEC. 6024. AGRICULTURE INNOVATION CENTER DEM-**
2 **ONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

3 Section 6402(i) of the Farm Security and Rural In-
4 vestment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law
5 107–171) is amended to read as follows:

6 “(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
7 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
8 out this section \$6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
9 2008 through 2012.”.

10 **SEC. 6025. RURAL FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MED-**
11 **ICAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

12 Section 6405 of the Farm Security and Rural Invest-
13 ment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note) is amended to
14 read as follows:

15 **“SEC. 6405. RURAL FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MED-**
16 **ICAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

17 “(a) GRANTS.—The Secretary shall award grants to
18 eligible entities to—

19 “(1) enable the entities to provide for improved
20 emergency medical services in rural areas; and

21 “(2) pay the cost of training firefighters and
22 emergency medical personnel in firefighting, emer-
23 gency medical practices, and responding to haz-
24 ardous materials and bioagents in rural areas.

25 “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
26 under this section, an entity shall—

1 “(1) be—

2 “(A) a State emergency medical services
3 office;

4 “(B) a State emergency medical services
5 association;

6 “(C) a State office of rural health;

7 “(D) a local government entity;

8 “(E) an Indian tribe (as defined in section
9 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
10 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b));

11 “(F) a State or local ambulance provider;

12 or

13 “(G) any other entity determined appro-
14 priate by the Secretary; and

15 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
16 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
17 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
18 quire, that includes—

19 “(A) a description of the activities to be
20 carried out under the grant; and

21 “(B) an assurance that the applicant will
22 comply with the matching requirement of sub-
23 section (e).

1 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity shall use amounts
2 received under a grant made under subsection (a) only in
3 rural areas to—

4 “(1) hire or recruit emergency medical service
5 personnel;

6 “(2) recruit or retain volunteer emergency med-
7 ical service personnel;

8 “(3) train emergency medical service personnel
9 in emergency response, injury prevention, safety
10 awareness, and other topics relevant to the delivery
11 of emergency medical services;

12 “(4) fund training to meet State or Federal
13 certification requirements;

14 “(5) provide training for firefighters and emer-
15 gency medical personnel for improvements to the
16 training facility, equipment, curricula, and per-
17 sonnel;

18 “(6) develop new ways to educate emergency
19 health care providers through the use of technology-
20 enhanced educational methods (such as distance
21 learning);

22 “(7) acquire emergency medical services vehi-
23 cles, including ambulances;

24 “(8) acquire emergency medical services equip-
25 ment, including cardiac defibrillators;

1 “(9) acquire personal protective equipment for
2 emergency medical services personnel as required by
3 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration;
4 and

5 “(10) educate the public concerning
6 cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, in-
7 jury prevention, safety awareness, illness prevention,
8 and other related emergency preparedness topics.

9 “(d) PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants under this
10 section, the Secretary shall give preference to—

11 “(1) applications that reflect a collaborative ef-
12 fort by 2 or more of the entities described in sub-
13 paragraphs (A) through (G) of subsection (b)(1);
14 and

15 “(2) applications submitted by entities that in-
16 tend to use amounts provided under the grant to
17 fund activities described in any of paragraphs (1)
18 through (5) of subsection (c).

19 “(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may
20 not make a grant under this section to an entity unless
21 the entity agrees that the entity will make available (di-
22 rectly or through contributions from other public or pri-
23 vate entities) non-Federal contributions toward the activi-
24 ties to be carried out under the grant in an amount equal
25 to 5 percent of the amount received under the grant.

1 “(f) EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.—In this sec-
2 tion, the term ‘emergency medical services’—

3 “(1) means resources used by a qualified public
4 or private nonprofit entity, or by any other entity
5 recognized as qualified by the State involved, to de-
6 liver medical care outside of a medical facility under
7 emergency conditions that occur as a result of—

8 “(A) the condition of the patient; or

9 “(B) a natural disaster or similar situa-
10 tion; and

11 “(2) includes (compensated or volunteer) serv-
12 ices delivered by an emergency medical services pro-
13 vider or other provider recognized by the State in-
14 volved that is licensed or certified by the State as an
15 emergency medical technician or the equivalent (as
16 determined by the State), a registered nurse, a phy-
17 sician assistant, or a physician that provides services
18 similar to services provided by such an emergency
19 medical services provider.

20 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
22 appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this sec-
23 tion not more than \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal
24 years 2008 through 2012.

1 “(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than
2 10 percent of the amount appropriated under para-
3 graph (1) for a fiscal year may be used for adminis-
4 trative expenses.”.

5 **SEC. 6026. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL MARKET DEVEL-**
6 **OPMENT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) DEFINITION OF MID-TIER VALUE CHAIN.—Sec-
8 tion 231(a) of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of
9 2000 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law 106–224) is
10 amended by adding at the end the following:

11 “(3) MID-TIER VALUE CHAIN.—The term ‘mid-
12 tier value chain’ means local and regional supply
13 networks that link independent producers with busi-
14 nesses and cooperatives that market value-added ag-
15 ricultural products in a manner that—

16 “(A) targets and strengthens the profit-
17 ability and competitiveness of small and me-
18 dium-sized family farms, as defined in regula-
19 tions pursuant to Section 302 of the Consoli-
20 dated Farm and Rural Development Act; and

21 “(B) obtains agreement from the eligible
22 agricultural producer group, farmer or rancher
23 cooperative, or majority-controlled producer-
24 based business venture engaged in the value
25 chain in the method for price determination.”.

1 (b) FUNDING; RESERVATION OF FUNDS; GRANT
2 AWARD CRITERIA.—Section 231(b) of such Act (7 U.S.C.
3 1621 note; Public Law 106–224) is amended—

4 (1) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the
5 following:

6 “(4) FUNDING.—Not later than 30 days after
7 the date of the enactment of this paragraph, on Oc-
8 tober 1, 2008, and on each October 1 thereafter
9 through October 1, 2012, of the funds of the Com-
10 modity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall make
11 available to carry out this subsection \$30,000,000,
12 to remain available until expended.

13 “(5) RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR PROJECTS
14 TO BENEFIT BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS
15 OR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND
16 RANCHERS AND MID-TIER VALUE CHAINS.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
18 reserve 10 percent of the amounts made avail-
19 able under paragraph (4) to fund projects that
20 benefit beginning farmers and ranchers (as de-
21 fined in section 343(a)(11) of the Consolidated
22 Farm and Rural Development Act) or socially
23 disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (as defined
24 in section 355(e) of such Act).

1 “(B) MID-TIER VALUE CHAINS.—The Sec-
2 retary shall reserve 10 percent of the amounts
3 made available under paragraph (4) to fund ap-
4 plications of eligible entities described in para-
5 graph (1) that propose to develop mid-tier value
6 chains.

7 “(C) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any
8 amounts in the reserves established under sub-
9 paragraphs (A) and (B) that are not obligated
10 by June 30 of the fiscal year shall be available
11 to the Secretary to make grants under this sec-
12 tion to eligible entities in any State, as deter-
13 mined by the Secretary.”; and

14 (2) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(6) CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED IN AWARDING
16 GRANTS.—In awarding grants under this section,
17 the Secretary shall consider an application more fa-
18 vorably when compared to other applications to the
19 extent that the project contributes to increasing op-
20 portunities for operators of small and medium-size
21 farms and ranches structured as family farms (as
22 defined in regulations prescribed under section 302
23 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development
24 Act).”.

1 **SEC. 6027. TELEMEDICINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING SERV-**
2 **ICES IN RURAL AREAS.**

3 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
4 2335A of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade
5 Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 950aaa-5) is amended by striking
6 “2007” and inserting “2012”.

7 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1(b) of
8 Public Law 102–551 (7 U.S.C. 950aaa note) is amended
9 by striking “2007” and inserting “2012”.

10 **SEC. 6028. GUARANTEES FOR BONDS AND NOTES ISSUED**
11 **FOR ELECTRIFICATION OR TELEPHONE PUR-**
12 **POSES.**

13 Section 313A(f) of the Rural Electrification Act of
14 1936 (7 U.S.C. 940c-1(f)) is amended by striking “2007”
15 and inserting “2012”.

16 **SEC. 6029. COMPREHENSIVE RURAL BROADBAND STRAT-**
17 **EGY.**

18 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
19 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit
20 to the President, the Committee on Agriculture of the
21 House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agri-
22 culture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report
23 describing a comprehensive rural broadband strategy that
24 includes—

25 (1) recommendations—

1 (A) to promote interagency coordination of
2 Federal agencies in regards to policies, proce-
3 dures, and targeted resources, and to improve
4 and streamline the polices, programs, and serv-
5 ices;

6 (B) to coordinate among Federal agencies
7 regarding existing rural broadband or rural ini-
8 tiatives that could be of value to rural
9 broadband development;

10 (C) to address both short- and long-term
11 solutions and needs assessments for a rapid
12 build-out of rural broadband solutions and ap-
13 plications for Federal, State, regional, and local
14 government policy makers;

15 (D) to identify how specific Federal agency
16 programs and resources can best respond to
17 rural broadband requirements and overcome ob-
18 stacles that currently impede rural broadband
19 deployment; and

20 (E) to promote successful model deploy-
21 ments and appropriate technologies being used
22 in rural areas so that State, regional, and local
23 governments can benefit from the cataloging
24 and successes of other State, regional, and local
25 governments; and

- 1 (2) a description of goals and timeframes to
- 2 achieve the strategic plans and visions identified in
- 3 the report.