

1 **TITLE VI—RURAL**
2 **DEVELOPMENT**

3 **SEC. 601. DEFINITION OF RURAL.**

4 Not later than 60 days after the date of the enact-
5 ment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit
6 to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Rep-
7 resentatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
8 and Forestry of the Senate a report that—

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

11 (2) describes the effects those varying defini-
12 tions have on the programs administered by the De-
13 partment of Agriculture; and

14 (3) makes recommendations for ways to better
15 target funds provided through rural development
16 programs.

17 **SEC. 602. WATER OR WASTE DISPOSAL GRANTS.**

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

1 **SEC. 603. RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS.**

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

5 **SEC. 604. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE RURAL WATER AND**
6 **WASTEWATER CIRCUIT RIDER PROGRAM.**

7 Section 306(a)(22)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and
8 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(22)(C)) is
9 amended by striking “\$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2003
10 and each fiscal year thereafter” and inserting
11 “\$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through
12 2012”.

13 **SEC. 605. TRIBAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ESSENTIAL**
14 **COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**

15 Section 306(a)(25)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and
16 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(25)(C)) is
17 amended by striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting
18 “2008 through 2012”.

19 **SEC. 606. EMERGENCY AND IMMINENT COMMUNITY WATER**
20 **ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM.**

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

1 **SEC. 607. WATER SYSTEMS FOR RURAL AND NATIVE VIL-**
2 **LAGES IN ALASKA.**

3 Section 306D(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and
4 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926d(d)(a)) is amend-
5 ed by striking “2001 through 2007” and inserting “2008
6 through 2012”.

7 **SEC. 608. GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO FI-**
8 **NANCE THE CONSTRUCTION, REFURBISHING,**
9 **AND SERVICING OF INDIVIDUALLY-OWNED**
10 **HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEMS IN**
11 **RURAL AREAS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW**
12 **OR MODERATE INCOMES.**

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

17 **SEC. 609. RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.**

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

22 “(6) Grants awarded to centers that have re-
23 ceived no prior funding under this subsection shall
24 be made for a period of 1 year. The Secretary shall
25 evaluate programs receiving assistance under this
26 subsection. If the Secretary determines it to be in

1 the best interest of the program, the Secretary may
2 award grants for a period of more than 1 year, but
3 not more than 3 years, to centers that have success-
4 fully met the goals under paragraph (3) in providing
5 services under this subsection, as determined by the
6 Secretary.”.

7 (b) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
8 PRIATIONS.—Section 310B(e)(9) of such Act (7 U.S.C.
9 1932(e)(9)) is amended by striking “2007” and inserting
10 “2012”.

11 **SEC. 610. GRANTS TO IMPROVE TECHNICAL INFRASTRUC-**
12 **TURE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF RURAL**
13 **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.**

14 Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
15 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1981–2008r) is amended by in-
16 serting after section 365 the following:

17 **“SEC. 366. GRANTS TO IMPROVE TECHNICAL INFRASTRUC-**
18 **TURE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF RURAL**
19 **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.**

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

23 “(1) purchasing health information technology
24 to improve quality in health care and patient safety;
25 or

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

3 “(A) quality improvement support struc-
4 tures to assist rural health systems and profes-
5 sionals—

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

8 “(ii) address safety, effectiveness,
9 patient- or community-centeredness, timeli-
10 ness, efficiency, and equity; and

11 “(B) innovative approaches to the financ-
12 ing and delivery of health services to achieve
13 rural health quality goals.

14 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—
16 The term ‘health information technology’ includes
17 total expenditures incurred for—

18 “(A) purchasing, leasing, and installing
19 computer software and hardware, including
20 handheld computer technologies, and related
21 services;

22 “(B) making improvements to computer
23 software and hardware;

1 “(C) purchasing or leasing communications
2 capabilities necessary for clinical data access,
3 storage, and exchange;

4 “(D) services associated with acquiring,
5 implementing, operating, or optimizing the use
6 of computer software and hardware and clinical
7 health care informatics systems;

8 “(E) providing education and training to
9 eligible entity staff on information systems and
10 technology designed to improve patient safety
11 and quality of care; and

12 “(F) purchasing, leasing, subscribing, or
13 servicing support to establish interoperability
14 that—

15 “(i) integrates patient-specific clinical
16 data with well-established national treat-
17 ment guidelines;

18 “(ii) provides ongoing, continuous
19 quality improvement functions that allow
20 providers to assess improvement rates over
21 time and against averages for similar pro-
22 viders; and

23 “(iii) integrates with larger health
24 networks.

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

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

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

9 “(3) RURAL HEALTH FACILITY DEFINED.—The
10 term ‘rural health facility’ means any of the fol-
11 lowing:

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

15 “(B) CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL.—A crit-
16 ical access hospital (as defined in section
17 1861(mm)(1) of the Social Security Act (42
18 U.S.C. 1395x(mm)(1))).

19 “(C) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH
20 CENTER IN RURAL AREAS.—A Federally quali-
21 fied health center (as defined in section
22 1861(aa)(4) of the Social Security Act (42
23 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)(4)) that is located in a rural
24 area.

1 “(D) RURAL PHYSICIAN OR RURAL PHYSI-
2 CIAN GROUP PRACTICE.—A physician or physi-
3 cian group practice that is located in a rural
4 area.

5 “(E) RURAL HEALTH CLINIC.—A rural
6 health clinic (as defined in section 1861(aa)(2)
7 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
8 1395x(aa)(2))).

9 “(F) MEDICARE DEPENDENT HOSPITAL.—
10 A medicare-dependent, small rural hospital (as
11 defined in section 1886(d)(5)(G)(iv) of the So-
12 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C.
13 1395ww(d)(5)(G)(iv))).

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

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

20 “(1) evaluate the project for which the grant is
21 made; and

22 “(2) ensure that assistance provided under the
23 grant is expended for the purposes for which the
24 grant is made.

1 “(e) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
2 PRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to
3 the Secretary to carry out this section not more than
4 \$30,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through
5 2012.”.

6 **SEC. 611. RURAL ENTREPRENEUR AND MICROENTERPRISE**
7 **ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

8 Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
9 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1981–2008r), as amended by
10 section 610 of this Act, is amended by inserting after sec-
11 tion 366 the following:

12 **“SEC. 367. RURAL ENTREPRENEUR AND MICROENTER-**
13 **PRISE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

14 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 “(1) ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED MICRO-
16 ENTREPRENEUR.—The term ‘economically disadvan-
17 tagged microentrepreneur’ means an owner, majority
18 owner, or developer of a microenterprise that has the
19 ability to compete in the private sector but has been
20 impaired because of diminished capital and credit
21 opportunities, as compared to other microentre-
22 preneurs in the industry.

23 “(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’
24 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the

1 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
2 Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

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

5 “(A) to a microenterprise development or-
6 ganization; or

7 “(B) for a microenterprise development
8 program.

9 “(4) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.—The term
10 ‘low-income individual’ means an individual with an
11 income (adjusted for family size) of not more than
12 80 percent of the national median income.

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

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

19 “(A) a sole proprietorship; or

20 “(B) a business entity with not more than
21 10 full-time-equivalent employees.

22 “(7) MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ORGA-
23 NIZATION.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘microenter-
2 prise development organization’ means a non-
3 profit entity that—

4 “(i) provides training and technical
5 assistance to rural entrepreneurs; and

6 “(ii) facilitates access to capital or an-
7 other service described in subsection (b)
8 for rural entrepreneurs.

9 “(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘microenter-
10 prise development organization’ includes an or-
11 ganization described in subparagraph (A) with
12 a demonstrated record of delivering services to
13 economically disadvantaged microentrepreneurs,
14 or an effective plan to develop a program to de-
15 liver microenterprise services to rural entre-
16 preneurs effectively, as determined by the Sec-
17 retary.

18 “(8) MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PRO-
19 GRAM.—The term ‘microenterprise development pro-
20 gram’ means a program administered by an organi-
21 zation serving a rural area.

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

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

4 “(11) QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION.—The term
5 ‘qualified organization’ means—

6 “(A) a microenterprise development orga-
7 nization or microenterprise development pro-
8 gram that has a demonstrated record of deliv-
9 ering microenterprise services to rural entre-
10 preneurs, or an effective plan to develop a pro-
11 gram to deliver microenterprise services to rural
12 entrepreneurs effectively, as determined by the
13 Secretary;

14 “(B) an intermediary that has a dem-
15 onstrated record of delivering assistance to
16 microenterprise development organizations or
17 microenterprise development programs;

18 “(C) an Indian tribe, the tribal government
19 of which certifies to the Secretary that there is
20 no microenterprise development organization or
21 microenterprise development program under the
22 jurisdiction of the Indian tribe;

23 “(D) a group of 2 or more organizations or
24 Indian tribes described in any of subparagraphs

1 (A) through (C) that agree to act jointly as a
2 qualified organization under this section; or

3 “(E) for purposes of subsection (b), a pub-
4 lic college or university that has a demonstrated
5 record of delivering assistance to microenter-
6 prise development organizations or microenter-
7 prise development programs.

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

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

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

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

19 “(A) is, or is in the process of becoming,
20 a microenterprise development organization or
21 microenterprise development program; and

22 “(B) serves rural areas for the purpose of
23 enhancing the ability of the organization to pro-
24 vide training, technical assistance, and other re-
25 lated services to rural entrepreneurs.

1 “(14) RURAL ENTREPRENEUR.—The term
2 ‘rural entrepreneur’ means a microentrepreneur, or
3 prospective microentrepreneur—

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

6 “(B) that is unable to obtain sufficient
7 training, technical assistance, or microcredit
8 elsewhere, as determined by the Secretary.

9 “(15) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘tribal
10 government’ means the governing body of an Indian
11 tribe.

12 “(b) RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MICRO-
13 ENTERPRISE PROGRAM.—

14 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall es-
15 tablish a rural entrepreneurship and microenterprise
16 program.

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

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

22 “(B) continuing technical and financial as-
23 sistance as individuals and business starting or
24 operating small businesses.

25 “(3) GRANTS.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
2 make a grant under the program to a qualified
3 organization—

4 “(i) to provide training, operational
5 support, or a rural capacity-building serv-
6 ice to a qualified organization to assist the
7 qualified organization in developing micro-
8 enterprise training, technical assistance,
9 market development assistance, and other
10 related services, primarily for business with
11 10 or fewer full-time-equivalent employees;

12 “(ii) to assist in researching and de-
13 veloping the best practices in delivering
14 training, technical assistance, and micro-
15 credit to rural entrepreneurs; and

16 “(iii) to carry out such other projects
17 and activities as the Secretary determines
18 to be consistent with the purposes of this
19 section.

20 “(B) DIVERSITY.—In making grants under
21 this paragraph, the Secretary shall ensure, to
22 the maximum extent practicable, that grant re-
23 cipients include qualified organizations—

24 “(i) of varying sizes; and

1 “(ii) that serve racially and ethnically
2 diverse populations.

3 “(C) COST-SHARING.—

4 “(i) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal
5 share of the cost of a project carried out
6 using funds from a grant made under this
7 paragraph shall be 75 percent.

8 “(ii) SOURCES.—In addition to cash
9 from non-Federal sources, a matching
10 share provided by the qualified organiza-
11 tion may include indirect costs or in-kind
12 contributions funded under non-Federal
13 programs.

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

16 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—In carrying out
17 the program, the Secretary may carry out a
18 rural microloan program.

19 “(B) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the rural
20 microloan program shall be to provide technical
21 and financial assistance through qualified orga-
22 nizations to sole proprietorships and small busi-
23 nesses located in rural areas with a particular
24 focus on businesses with 10 or fewer full-time
25 equivalent employees.

1 “(C) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.—In car-
2 rying out the rural microloan program, the Sec-
3 retary may—

4 “(i) make loans to qualified organiza-
5 tions for the purpose of making short-
6 term, fixed interest rate microloans to
7 startup, newly established, and growing
8 rural microbusiness concerns; and

9 “(ii) in conjunction with the loans,
10 provide grants in accordance with subpara-
11 graph (E) to the organizations for the pur-
12 pose of providing intensive marketing,
13 management, and technical assistance to
14 small business concerns that are borrowers
15 under this paragraph.

16 “(D) LOAN DURATION; INTEREST RATES;
17 CONDITIONS.—

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

21 “(ii) APPLICABLE INTEREST RATES.—
22 A loan made by the Secretary under this
23 paragraph to a qualified organization shall
24 bear an annual interest rate of at least 1
25 percent.

1 “(iii) DEFERRAL OF INTEREST AND
2 PRINCIPAL.—The Secretary may permit
3 the deferral of payments, for principal and
4 interest, on a loan made under this para-
5 graph for a period of not more than 2
6 years, beginning on the date the loan is
7 made.

8 “(E) GRANT AMOUNTS.—

9 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as other-
10 wise provided in this section, each qualified
11 organization that receives a loan under this
12 paragraph shall be eligible to receive a
13 grant to provide marketing, management,
14 and technical assistance to small business
15 concerns that are borrowers or potential
16 borrowers under this subsection.

17 “(ii) MAXIMUM AMOUNT FOR MICRO-
18 ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZA-
19 TIONS.—Each microenterprise development
20 organization that receives a loan under this
21 paragraph shall receive an annual grant in
22 an amount equal to not more than 25 per-
23 cent of the total outstanding balance of
24 loans made to the microenterprise develop-

1 ment organization under this paragraph,
2 as of the date the grant is made.

3 “(iii) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

4 “(I) IN GENERAL.—As a condi-
5 tion of any grant made to a qualified
6 organization under this subparagraph,
7 the Secretary shall require the quali-
8 fied organization to match not less
9 than 15 percent of the total amount
10 of the grant.

11 “(II) SOURCES.—In addition to
12 cash from non-Federal sources, a
13 matching share provided by the quali-
14 fied organization may include indirect
15 costs or in-kind contributions funded
16 under non-Federal programs.

17 “(c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than
18 10 percent of assistance received by a qualified organiza-
19 tion for a fiscal year under this section may be used to
20 pay administrative expenses.

21 “(d) FURNISHING THE SECRETARY WITH INFOR-
22 MATION.—A qualified organization that receives a grant
23 under subsection (b)(3) or loan under subsection (b)(4)
24 shall furnish the Secretary by December 1 such informa-
25 tion as the Secretary may require to ensure that assistance

1 provided under the grant or loan is expended for the pur-
2 poses for which the grant or loan is made.

3 “(e) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
4 PRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to
5 the Secretary to carry out this section not more than
6 \$20,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through
7 2012”.

8 **SEC. 612. NATIONAL SHEEP INDUSTRY IMPROVEMENT CEN-
9 TER.**

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

14 “(B) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF
15 APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be
16 appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this
17 section \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
18 2008 through 2012.”.

19 (b) ELIMINATION OF REQUIREMENT TO PRIVATIZE
20 REVOLVING FUND.— Section 375 of such Act (7 U.S.C.
21 2008j) is amended by striking subsection (j).

22 **SEC. 613. NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP.**

23 Section 378(g)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and
24 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008m(g)(1)) is amend-

1 ed by striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
2 through 2012”.

3 **SEC. 614. HISTORIC BARN PRESERVATION.**

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

8 **SEC. 615. GRANTS FOR NOAA WEATHER RADIO TRANSMIT-**
9 **TERS.**

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

14 **SEC. 616. DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY.**

15 (a) **LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-**
16 **PRIATIONS.**—Section 382M(a) of the Consolidated Farm
17 and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-12(a)) is
18 amended by striking “2001 through 2007” and inserting
19 “2008 through 2012”.

20 (b) **TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.**—Section 382N of
21 such Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-13) is amended by striking
22 “2007” and inserting “2012”.

1 **SEC. 617. 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 igned 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) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
7 PRIATIONS.—Section 383M(a) of such Act (7 U.S.C.
8 2009bb-12(a)) is amended by striking “2002 through
9 2007” and inserting “2008 through 2012”.

10 **SEC. 618. RURAL STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM.**

11 Section 385E of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
12 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009dd-4) is amended to read
13 as follows:

14 **“SEC. 385E. LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
15 PRIATIONS.**

16 “There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
17 retary to carry out this subtitle not more than
18 \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through
19 2012.”.

20 **SEC. 619. EXPANSION OF 911 ACCESS.**

21 Section 315(b) of the Rural Electrification Act of
22 1936 (7 U.S.C. 904e(b)) is amended by striking “2002
23 through 2007” and inserting “2008 through 2012”.

1 **SEC. 620. ACCESS TO BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**
2 **SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.**

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

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

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

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

15 (b) PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICATIONS.—

16 (1) DEFINITION.—Section 601(b) of such Act
17 (7 U.S.C. 950bb(b)), as amended by subsection (a)
18 of this section, is amended by adding at the end the
19 following:

20 “(3) INCUMBENT SERVICE PROVIDER.—The
21 term ‘incumbent service provider’ means, with re-
22 spect to an application submitted pursuant to this
23 section, an entity that is providing data, voice, video,
24 or graphic services to at least 15 percent of the serv-
25 ice area proposed in the application.”.

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

5 “(3) APPLICATIONS PRIORITIZED BASED ON
6 NUMBER OF INCUMBENT SERVICE PROVIDERS.—

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

12 “(i) no incumbent service provider;

13 “(ii) 1 incumbent services provider; or

14 “(iii) 2 incumbent service providers,
15 except that the communities served must
16 compose no more than 25 percent of the
17 total area to be served.

18 “(B) PROHIBITION.—In carrying out this
19 section, the Secretary may not make a loan to
20 any community in which there are 3 or more in-
21 cumbent service providers.[Language is forth-
22 coming further clarifying prioritization]”.

23 (c) INCREASE IN MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SUBSCRIBER
24 LINES THAT MAY BE SERVED BY AN ELIGIBLE ENTI-
25 TY.—Section 601(d)(3) of such Act (7 U.S.C.

1 950bb(d)(3)) is amended by striking “2” and inserting
2 “10”.

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

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

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

17 “(h) ADEQUACY OF SECURITY.—The Secretary shall
18 ensure that the type, amount and method of security used
19 to secure any loan or loan guarantee provided under this
20 section is commensurate to the risk involved with the loan
21 or loan guarantee, particularly when the loan or loan guar-
22 antee is issued to a financially healthy, strong, and stable
23 entity”.

24 (f) GENERAL REPORT ON PROGRAM.—Section 601 of
25 such Act (7 U.S.C. 950bb), as amended by subsection (e)

1 of this section, is amended by redesignating subsections
2 (k) and (l) as subsections (l) and (m), respectively, and
3 inserting after subsection (j) the following:

4 “(k) GENERAL PROGRAM REPORT.—Not later than
5 December 1 of each year, the Secretary shall prepare and
6 submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of
7 Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
8 tion, and Forestry of the Senate a report that details for
9 the preceding fiscal year—

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

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

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

14 “(4) the outreach efforts undertaken by the De-
15 partment of Agriculture to encourage persons in
16 areas without broadband service to submit applica-
17 tions pursuant to this section.”.

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

24 “(l) NATIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL TELECOMMUNI-
25 CATIONS ASSESSMENT.—

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

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

7 “(A) The Center must be an entity with a
8 focus on rural policy research and a minimum
9 of 5 years experience in rural telecommuni-
10 cations research and assessment.

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

13 “(C) The Center must have significant ex-
14 perience with other rural economic development
15 centers and organizations in the assessment of
16 rural policies and formulation of policy solu-
17 tions at the local, State, and Federal level.

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

21 “(4) DUTIES.—The Center shall—

22 “(A) assess the effectiveness of programs
23 provided under subsection (b) in increasing
24 broadband penetration and purchase in rural
25 areas, especially in those rural communities

1 identified by the Secretary as having no service
2 before award of a broadband loan or loan guar-
3 antee under subsection (b);

4 “(B) develop assessments of broadband
5 availability in rural areas, working with existing
6 rural development centers selected by the Cen-
7 ter;

8 “(C) identify policies and initiatives at the
9 local, State and Federal level that have in-
10 creased broadband penetration and purchase in
11 rural areas;

12 “(D) conduct a national study of rural
13 households and businesses focusing on the
14 adoption of, barriers to, and utilization of
15 broadband services; and

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

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

24 “(A) Assessments of the programs pro-
25 vided under subsection (b).

1 “(B) Annual assessments on broadband
2 availability in rural areas under consideration
3 by the Center.

4 “(C) Annual assessments on effects of pol-
5 icy initiatives identified in paragraph (2)(C).

6 “(D) Results from national study of rural
7 households of rural households and businesses
8 as identified in paragraph (4)(D).

9 “(6) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
10 PROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appro-
11 priated to the Secretary to carry out this subsection
12 not more than \$1,000,000 for each of the fiscal
13 years 2008 through 2012.”.

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

17 (1) by striking paragraph (1);

18 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), and
19 (4) as paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively;

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

22 (4) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated, by
23 striking “2003 through 2007” and inserting “2008
24 through 2012”; and

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

3 “(D) ELIGIBLE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES.—
4 Of the amounts made available under subpara-
5 graph (A) for a fiscal year, 10 percent shall be
6 reserved for entities serving eligible tribal com-
7 munities.

8 “(E) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any
9 amounts in the reserve established for eligible
10 tribal communities for a fiscal year under sub-
11 paragraph (D) that are not obligated by June
12 30 of the fiscal year shall be available to the
13 Secretary to make loans and loan guarantees
14 under this section to eligible entities in any
15 State, as determined by the Secretary.”.

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

20 **SEC. 621. COMMUNITY CONNECT GRANT PROGRAM.**

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

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

2 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
3 lish a grant program to be known as the ‘Community Con-
4 nect Grant Program’ to provide financial assistance to eli-
5 gible applicants to provide broadband transmission service
6 that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced edu-
7 cational, health care, and public safety services.

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

10 “(1) be legally organized as an incorporated
11 tribal organization, an Indian tribe, or tribal organi-
12 zation, as defined in subsections (b) and (c) of sec-
13 tion 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
14 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(b) and (c)),
15 a State or local unit of government, or other legal
16 entity, including a cooperative, private corporation,
17 or limited liability company organized on a for-profit
18 or not-for-profit basis;

19 “(2) have the legal capacity and authority to
20 own and operate broadband facilities as proposed in
21 its application, to enter into contracts, and to other-
22 wise comply with applicable Federal statutes and
23 regulations; or

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

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

3 “(1) to finance the duplication of any
4 broadband transmission service provided by another
5 entity; or

6 “(2) with respect to facilities, to provide local
7 exchange telecommunications service to any person
8 or entity receiving the service.

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

13 “(e) MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS.—

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

20 “(2) LIMITATIONS.—

21 “(A) Costs incurred by or on behalf of an
22 applicant, for facilities, installed equipment, or
23 other services rendered before submission of a
24 completed application shall not be considered to

1 be for an eligible grant purpose or a matching
2 contribution.

3 “(B) Any financial assistance from Federal
4 sources shall not be considered to be a match-
5 ing contribution for purposes of this section,
6 unless there is a Federal statutory exception
7 specifically authorizing the Federal financial as-
8 sistance to be so considered.

9 “(f) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
10 PRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to
11 the Secretary to carry out this section not more than
12 \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through
13 2012.”.

14 **SEC. 622. AGRICULTURE INNOVATION CENTER DEM-**
15 **ONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

16 Section 6402(i) of the Farm Security and Rural In-
17 vestment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law
18 107–171) is amended—

19 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2002” and
20 inserting “2007”; and

21 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “2003 and
22 2004” and inserting “2008 and 2009”.

1 **SEC. 623. RURAL FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MED-**
2 **ICAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

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

6 **“SEC. 6405. RURAL FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MED-**
7 **ICAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

8 “(a) GRANTS.—The Secretary shall award grants to
9 eligible entities to—

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

12 “(2) pay the cost of training firefighters and
13 emergency medical personnel in firefighting, emer-
14 gency medical practices, and responding to haz-
15 ardous materials and bioagents in rural areas.

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

18 “(1) be—

19 “(A) a State emergency medical services
20 office;

21 “(B) a State emergency medical services
22 association;

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

24 “(D) a local government entity;

1 “(E) an Indian tribe (as defined in section
2 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
3 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b));

4 “(F) a State or local ambulance provider;
5 or

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

8 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an
9 application at such time, in such manner, and con-
10 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
11 quire, that includes—

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

14 “(B) an assurance that the applicant will
15 comply with the matching requirement of sub-
16 section (e).

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

20 “(1) hire or recruit emergency medical service
21 personnel;

22 “(2) recruit or retain volunteer emergency med-
23 ical service personnel;

24 “(3) train emergency medical service personnel
25 in emergency response, injury prevention, safety

1 awareness, and other topics relevant to the delivery
2 of emergency medical services;

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

5 “(5) provide training for firefighters and emer-
6 gency medical personnel for improvements to the
7 training facility, equipment, curricula, and per-
8 sonnel;

9 “(6) develop new ways to educate emergency
10 health care providers through the use of technology-
11 enhanced educational methods (such as distance
12 learning);

13 “(7) acquire emergency medical services vehi-
14 cles, including ambulances;

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

17 “(9) acquire personal protective equipment for
18 emergency medical services personnel as required by
19 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration;
20 and

21 “(10) educate the public concerning
22 cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, in-
23 jury prevention, safety awareness, illness prevention,
24 and other related emergency preparedness topics.

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

3 “(1) applications that reflect a collaborative ef-
4 fort by 2 or more of the entities described in sub-
5 paragraphs (A) through (G) of subsection (b)(1);
6 and

7 “(2) applications submitted by entities that in-
8 tend to use amounts provided under the grant to
9 fund activities described in any of paragraphs (1)
10 through (5) of subsection (c).

11 “(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may
12 not make a grant under this section to an entity unless
13 the entity agrees that the entity will make available (di-
14 rectly or through contributions from other public or pri-
15 vate entities) non-Federal contributions toward the activi-
16 ties to be carried out under the grant in an amount equal
17 to 5 percent of the amount received under the grant.

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

20 “(1) means resources used by a qualified public
21 or private nonprofit entity, or by any other entity
22 recognized as qualified by the State involved, to de-
23 liver medical care outside of a medical facility under
24 emergency conditions that occur as a result of—

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

1 “(B) a natural disaster or similar situa-
2 tion; and

3 “(2) includes (compensated or volunteer) serv-
4 ices delivered by an emergency medical services pro-
5 vider or other provider recognized by the State in-
6 volved that is licensed or certified by the State as an
7 emergency medical technician or the equivalent (as
8 determined by the State), a registered nurse, a phy-
9 sician assistant, or a physician that provides services
10 similar to services provided by such an emergency
11 medical services provider.

12 “(g) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
13 PRIATIONS.—

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

18 “(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than
19 10 percent of the amount appropriated under para-
20 graph (1) for a fiscal year may be used for adminis-
21 trative expenses.”.

1 **SEC. 624. RESERVATION OF 10 PERCENT OF VALUE-ADDED**
2 **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT MARKET DEVEL-**
3 **OPMENT GRANT FUNDING FOR PROJECTS**
4 **BENEFITTING BEGINNING FARMERS AND**
5 **RANCHERS OR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED**
6 **FARMERS AND RANCHERS.**

7 Section 231(b) of the Agricultural Risk Protection
8 Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law 106–224)
9 is amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the
10 following:

11 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
12 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
13 retary to carry out this subsection \$40,000,000 for
14 each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

15 “(5) RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR PROJECTS
16 TO BENEFIT BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS
17 OR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND
18 RANCHERS.—

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

1 “(B) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS.—Any
2 amounts in the reserve established under sub-
3 paragraph (A) that are not obligated by June
4 30 of the fiscal year shall be available to the
5 Secretary to make grants under this section to
6 eligible entities in any State, as determined by
7 the Secretary.”.

8 **SEC. 625. TELEMEDICINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING SERV-**
9 **ICES IN RURAL AREAS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2335A of the Food, Agri-
11 culture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C.
12 950aaa-5) is amended by striking “2007” and inserting
13 “2012”.

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