

Amendment offered by Rep. Andrea Salinas

Amendment description

The amendment would create a Rural Partnership Grant Program to provide federal support for economic and community development activities in rural areas. The amendment would create a Rural Prosperity Technical Assistance Grant Program to provide rural localities assistance in implementing economic and community development activities, as well as navigating existing federal funding opportunities. Further, the amendment would foster improved cross-agency coordination to improve services provided to rural communities.

AMENDMENT

OFFERED BY MS. SALINAS OF OREGON

At the end of section 10105, add the following:

1 (e) RURAL PARTNERSHIP AND PROSPERITY DEFINI-
2 TIONS.—

3 (1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (A) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian
5 Tribe” has the meaning given the term in sec-
6 tion 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and
7 Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

8 (B) RURAL; RURAL AREA.—The terms
9 “rural” and “rural area” have the meaning
10 given those terms in section 343(a)(13)(A) of
11 the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development
12 Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(13)(A)).

13 (C) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”
14 means the Secretary of Agriculture.

15 (2) RURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM GRANTS.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the avail-
17 ability of appropriations under subparagraph
18 (J), the Secretary shall establish a program to
19 make multiyear grant awards to coordinate

1 Federal, nonprofit, and for-profit investment in
2 rural areas.

3 (B) GRANT REQUIREMENTS.—

4 (i) TERM.—The term of a grant
5 awarded under subparagraph (A) shall be
6 not less than 2 years and not more than
7 5 years.

8 (ii) AWARDS.—Except as provided in
9 clauses (iii) and (iv), the State offices of
10 the rural development mission area shall
11 be responsible for reviewing applications
12 for grant awards under subparagraph (A)
13 and selecting eligible applicants described
14 in subparagraph (D) for those grant
15 awards.

16 (iii) TRIBAL AWARDS.—Except as pro-
17 vided in clause (iv), in the case of grants
18 under subparagraph (A) allocated to In-
19 dian Tribes under subparagraph (C)(i)(II),
20 the national office of the rural development
21 mission area shall be responsible for re-
22 viewing applications for grant awards
23 under subparagraph (A) and selecting eli-
24 gible applicants described in subparagraph
25 (D) for those grant awards.

1 (iv) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—If the
2 amount appropriated under subparagraph
3 (J) for a fiscal year is less than or equal
4 to \$300,000,000, the national office of the
5 rural development mission area shall be re-
6 sponsible for reviewing applications for
7 grant awards under subparagraph (A) and
8 selecting eligible applicants described in
9 subparagraph (D) for those grant
10 awards—

11 (I) on a competitive basis; and

12 (II) by giving priority to areas
13 that have higher nonmetropolitan pov-
14 erty levels and lower population levels,
15 while ensuring that grants under this
16 paragraph are awarded in diverse geo-
17 graphic regions of the United States.

18 (C) GRANT ALLOCATION.—

19 (i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided
20 in subparagraph (B)(iv), the Secretary
21 shall allocate funding for grants under
22 subparagraph (A)—

23 (I) for each State based on a for-
24 mula determined by the Secretary in
25 accordance with clause (ii); and

1 (II) for Indian Tribes in such
2 amounts as the Secretary determines
3 to be appropriate, subject to the con-
4 dition that the total amount allocated
5 to Indian Tribes under this subpara-
6 graph shall not be less than 5 percent
7 of the amount appropriated under
8 subparagraph (J), with Indian Tribes
9 located in areas that have higher pov-
10 erty levels and lower populations re-
11 ceiving higher levels of funding.

12 (ii) ALLOCATION REQUIREMENTS.—

13 (I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
14 shall develop a graduated scale to allo-
15 cate funding for States under clause
16 (i)(II) based on the nonmetropolitan
17 poverty and population levels in each
18 State.

19 (II) LIMITATION.—The amount
20 allocated to any State under subclause
21 (I) shall not exceed 5 percent of the
22 amount appropriated under subpara-
23 graph (J).

24 (iii) SMALL STATE EXCEPTION TO
25 FORMULA.—Notwithstanding clauses (i)(I)

1 and (ii)(I), the Secretary shall ensure that
2 each State is allocated an amount for
3 grants under this paragraph that is suffi-
4 cient to fulfill the purposes of the program
5 established under this paragraph, as deter-
6 mined by the Secretary.

7 (iv) REALLOCATION.—If a State or
8 Indian Tribe does not use funds allocated
9 to the State or Indian Tribe under this
10 subparagraph, the Secretary may reallo-
11 cate the unused funds to 1 or more other
12 States or Indian Tribes, each of which has
13 used all of the funding allocated to the
14 State or Indian Tribe under this subpara-
15 graph.

16 (D) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—To be eligible
17 to receive a grant under subparagraph (A), an
18 applicant shall—

19 (i) propose to serve a rural area;
20 (ii) be composed of a partnership of 2
21 or more of—

22 (I) an instrumentality or political
23 subdivision of a State, such as a mu-
24 nicipality, county, district, or author-
25 ity;

1 (II) a nonprofit corporation or
2 association with significant ties to the
3 rural area described in clause (i), in-
4 cluding through—

5 (aa) association with, or
6 control by, 1 or more public bod-
7 ies in the rural area;

8 (bb) broadly based owner-
9 ship and control by members of
10 the rural area; or

11 (cc) a substantial public
12 funding contribution to the rural
13 area through taxes, revenue
14 bonds, other local government
15 sources, or substantial voluntary
16 community funding;

17 (III) a cooperative with signifi-
18 cant ties to the rural area described in
19 clause (i);

20 (IV) a for-profit entity with a
21 significant presence in the rural area
22 described in clause (i);

23 (V) an institution of higher edu-
24 cation—

1 (aa) with a significant con-
2 tribution to or presence in the
3 rural area described in clause (i);
4 and

5 (bb) that includes represent-
6 atives who are members of the
7 rural area; and

8 (VI) an Indian Tribe—

9 (aa) in a rural area de-
10 scribed in clause (i); and

11 (bb) with demonstrated sup-
12 port from the Tribal council or
13 duly elected Tribal executive of
14 the appropriate Tribal govern-
15 ment; and

16 (iii) demonstrate cooperation among
17 the members of the partnership described
18 in clause (ii) necessary to complete com-
19 prehensive, asset-based rural development
20 through eligible activities described in sub-
21 paragraph (E).

22 (E) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible ap-
23 plicant described in subparagraph (D) that re-
24 ceives a grant under subparagraph (A) may use
25 the grant funds in rural areas—

1 (i) to coordinate Federal, State, re-
2 gional, or Tribal initiatives to reduce dupli-
3 cative efforts with respect to Federal in-
4 vestments;

5 (ii) to leverage non-Federal financial
6 and technical resources;

7 (iii) to complete comprehensive
8 predevelopment activities and planning;

9 (iv) to create public-private partner-
10 ships and attract private investment;

11 (v) to support eligible operational ac-
12 tivities, including staffing, of the eligible
13 applicants, except that a for-profit entity
14 may not use the grant funds for the pur-
15 pose described in this clause;

16 (vi) to provide capital to existing or
17 new projects, subject to the condition that
18 not more than 50 percent of the grant
19 funds may be used for that purpose;

20 (vii) to support regional projects and
21 initiatives;

22 (viii) to address economic recovery
23 from emergencies and natural or man-
24 made disasters; and

1 (ix) to develop strategic community
2 investment plans described in section
3 379H(d) of the Consolidated Farm and
4 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C.
5 2008v(d)).

6 (F) INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible
7 applicant described in subparagraph (D) that
8 receives a grant under subparagraph (A) may
9 not use the grant funds—

10 (i) to fund operational activities, in-
11 cluding staffing, at a for-profit institution;

12 (ii) to purchase or lease real property;

13 or

14 (iii) to support a non-rural area.

15 (G) SELECTION CRITERIA.—In awarding
16 grants under subparagraph (A), the Secretary
17 shall give priority to an eligible applicant de-
18 scribed in subparagraph (D) that proposes to
19 serve—

20 (i) a rural area with a significant
21 change in population;

22 (ii) a rural area with significant work-
23 force changes or changes in major employ-
24 ers;

1 (iii) an economically distressed rural
2 area, as determined by the Secretary;

3 (iv) a rural area that has historically
4 received minimal Federal funding, as de-
5 termined by the Secretary; or

6 (v) a rural area for the purpose of job
7 retention and economic stabilization, as de-
8 termined by the Secretary.

9 (H) MATCHING FUNDS.—

10 (i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause
11 (ii), an eligible applicant described in sub-
12 paragraph (D) that receives a grant under
13 subparagraph (A) shall provide non-Fed-
14 eral matching funds in the form of cash or
15 an in-kind contribution in an amount that
16 is not less than 25 percent of the amount
17 of the grant.

18 (ii) WAIVER.—

19 (I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
20 may waive the requirement under
21 clause (i) based on the demonstrated
22 need of the eligible applicant or the
23 population served by the eligible appli-
24 cant, as determined by the Secretary,
25 including—

1 (aa) an eligible applicant
2 serving an area with a higher
3 nonmetropolitan poverty level;

4 (bb) an eligible applicant
5 serving a Tribal population; and

6 (cc) an eligible applicant
7 composed of a partnership that
8 includes an entity described in
9 subparagraph (D)(ii)(I).

10 (II) JUSTIFICATION.—The Sec-
11 retary shall provide to the Committee
12 on Agriculture of the House of Rep-
13 resentatives and the Committee on
14 Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
15 of the Senate a justification for each
16 waiver provided under subclause (I).

17 (iii) PROVIDERS.—Non-Federal
18 matching funds under clause (i) may be
19 provided by any member of the applicable
20 partnership described in subparagraph
21 (D)(ii).

22 (I) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall
23 carry out this subsection in coordination with
24 the Rural Partners Network established by sec-

1 tion 6306 of the Agriculture Improvement Act
2 of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 2204b–3).

3 (J) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
4 TIONS.—

5 (i) IN GENERAL.—There are author-
6 ized to be appropriated to the Secretary
7 such sums as are necessary to carry out
8 this paragraph.

9 (ii) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
10 may retain not more than 2 percent of the
11 amounts made available to carry out this
12 paragraph for administration of the pro-
13 gram established under this paragraph.

14 (3) RURAL PARTNERSHIP TECHNICAL ASSIST-
15 ANCE GRANTS.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the avail-
17 ability of appropriations under subparagraph
18 (G), the Secretary shall establish a program to
19 award grants, on a competitive basis, for up to
20 a 5-year period, to be administered at the na-
21 tional level through the Under Secretary for
22 Rural Development, for the purpose of advising
23 on and assisting rural community organizations
24 with—

1 (i) Federal grant management and
2 the development of financial management
3 systems;

4 (ii) housing or community economic
5 development projects; and

6 (iii) the development of placemaking
7 plans and applications for Federal grants.

8 (B) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—To be eligible
9 to receive a grant under subparagraph (A), an
10 applicant shall be a qualified private or non-
11 profit intermediary organization, including an
12 institution of higher education with an existing
13 community development and planning program,
14 including an extension program, that has dem-
15 onstrated experience and capacity to provide
16 technical assistance on community development
17 and planning in rural areas.

18 (C) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible ap-
19 plicant described in subparagraph (B) that re-
20 ceives a grant under subparagraph (A) may use
21 the grant funds to support the capacity building
22 and economic development of identified rural
23 areas and local partners in those rural areas
24 through the following activities:

1 (i) Training and supporting local
2 staff, including relating to systems develop-
3 ment and support.

4 (ii) Identifying vetted technical con-
5 sultants for planning and designing phys-
6 ical infrastructure.

7 (iii) Facilitating coordination between
8 Federal agencies and local partners.

9 (iv) Providing expertise on developing
10 public-private partnerships.

11 (v) Development and project
12 predevelopment activities.

13 (vi) Grant writing and grant manage-
14 ment activities.

15 (D) INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible
16 applicant described in subparagraph (B) that
17 receives a grant under subparagraph (A) may
18 not use the grant funds—

19 (i) to fund staffing at a for-profit en-
20 tity;

21 (ii) to purchase or lease real property,
22 buildings, or equipment;

23 (iii) to support a non-rural area; or

24 (iv) for research and development.

1 (E) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under
2 subparagraph (A), the Secretary may give pri-
3 ority to an eligible applicant described in sub-
4 paragraph (B) that serves—

5 (i) a nonmetropolitan area with a high
6 poverty level; or

7 (ii) an Indian Tribe with dem-
8 onstrated support from the Tribal council
9 or duly elected Tribal executive of the ap-
10 propriate Tribal government.

11 (F) MATCHING FUNDS.—

12 (i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
13 graph (B), an eligible applicant described
14 in subparagraph (B) that receives a grant
15 under subparagraph (A) shall provide non-
16 Federal matching funds in an amount that
17 is not less than 30 percent of the amount
18 of the grant.

19 (ii) WAIVER.—

20 (I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
21 may waive the requirement under
22 clause (i) based on the demonstrated
23 need of the area in which activities
24 using the grant are to be carried out,
25 as determined by the Secretary.

1 (II) JUSTIFICATION.—The Sec-
2 retary shall provide to the Committee
3 on Agriculture of the House of Rep-
4 resentatives and the Committee on
5 Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
6 of the Senate a justification for each
7 waiver provided under subclause (I).

8 (G) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
9 TIONS.—

10 (i) IN GENERAL.—There are author-
11 ized to be appropriated to the Secretary
12 such sums as are necessary to carry out
13 this paragraph.

14 (ii) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
15 may retain not more than 2 percent of the
16 amounts made available to carry out this
17 paragraph for administration of the pro-
18 gram established under this paragraph.

19 (4) RURAL PARTNERS NETWORK.—Section
20 6306 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018
21 (7 U.S.C. 2204b–3) is amended—

22 (A) in the section heading, by striking
23 “**COUNCIL ON RURAL COMMUNITY INNO-**
24 **VATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**”

1 and inserting **“RURAL PARTNERS NET-**
2 **WORK”**;

3 (B) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “coun-
4 cil” and inserting “network”;

5 (C) by striking subsection (b) and insert-
6 ing the following:

7 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established a
9 Rural Partners Network (referred to in this section
10 as the ‘Network’).

11 “(2) SUCCESSOR.—The Network shall be the
12 successor to the Council on Rural Community Inno-
13 vation and Economic Development established by
14 this section (as in effect on the day before the date
15 of enactment of the Rural Partnership and Pros-
16 perity Act).”;

17 (D) in subsection (c)—

18 (i) in paragraph (1)—

19 (I) by striking subparagraphs
20 (C), (D), (N), (Q), (R), (S), (T), (V),
21 (X), (Y), and (Z);

22 (II) by redesignating subpara-
23 graphs (E) through (M), (O), (P),
24 (U), (W), and (AA) as subparagraphs

1 (C) through (K), (L), (M), (N), (O),
2 and (X), respectively; and

3 (III) by inserting after subpara-
4 graph (O) (as so redesignated) the
5 following:

6 “(P) The Federal Deposit Insurance Cor-
7 poration.

8 “(Q) The Appalachian Regional Commis-
9 sion.

10 “(R) The Consumer Financial Protection
11 Bureau.

12 “(S) The Social Security Administration.

13 “(T) The Delta Regional Authority.

14 “(U) The Denali Commission.

15 “(V) The Northern Border Regional Com-
16 mission.

17 “(W) The Southeast Crescent Regional
18 Commission.”; and

19 (ii) in paragraphs (2) through (4), by
20 striking “Council” each place it appears
21 and inserting “Network”;

22 (E) in subsection (d), by striking “Coun-
23 cil” and inserting “Network”;

24 (F) in subsection (e)—

1 (i) in the subsection heading, by strik-
2 ing “COUNCIL” and inserting “NET-
3 WORK”;

4 (ii) in the matter preceding paragraph
5 (1), by striking “Council” and inserting
6 “Network”;

7 (iii) in paragraph (2), by striking
8 “and” at the end;

9 (iv) in paragraph (3), by striking the
10 period at the end and inserting “; and”;
11 and

12 (v) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(4) to improve the efficiency of Federal assist-
14 ance to rural communities by—

15 “(A) reducing administrative burdens on
16 rural communities to pursue Federal funding;

17 “(B) improving the administrative effi-
18 ciency of Federal economic development pro-
19 grams serving rural communities; and

20 “(C) streamlining and simplifying the ap-
21 plication process for Federal funding opportuni-
22 ties for rural communities.”;

23 (G) in subsection (f), in the matter pre-
24 ceding paragraph (1), by striking “Council”
25 and inserting “Network”;

1 (H) in subsection (g), by striking “Coun-
2 cil” each place it appears and inserting “Net-
3 work”; and

4 (I) by striking subsection (h) and inserting
5 the following:

6 “(h) INNOVATIVE CROSS-AGENCY COORDINATION.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting as
8 Chair of the Network, may carry out innovative
9 strategies for coordinating with other Federal de-
10 partments and agencies with respect to programs
11 that serve rural areas.

12 “(2) PRIORITIES.—In carrying out paragraph
13 (1), the Secretary shall prioritize—

14 “(A) improving ease of access to Federal
15 programs for resource-constrained rural com-
16 munities;

17 “(B) utilizing early technical assistance to
18 reduce duplicative applications and administra-
19 tive costs at the Federal level;

20 “(C) leveraging partnerships with local,
21 State, philanthropic, and private entities to
22 maximize returns on Federal investments;

23 “(D) integrating stakeholder and program
24 user experience into program design; and

1 “(E) targeting areas experiencing economic
2 distress, as determined by the Secretary.”.

