

Testimony for FSGG Subcommittee Hearing 4/25/18 in Support of
CDFI Funding

- I'd like to thank Chairman Graves for having me in today to testify on behalf of a few programs that are important to the Third District of Colorado.
- Mr. Chairman, I'd like to start by saying that I support a return to regular order in the appropriations process, and I'm encouraged by the work that this Committee is doing to get Congress back on the right track. Our current system of dysfunction on spending measures will leave a wealth of uncertainty for our future generations, and I firmly believe that the way to mitigate that uncertainty is through an open appropriations process where all twelve appropriations bills are debated and passed.
- We must also make sure that we provide certainty to our future generations that their way of life will be preserved. Two federally funded initiatives that will help our communities now and in the future are the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program.
- The CDFI Fund plays a unique role in generating economic growth across the United States, and especially in my district in Colorado. By fostering, creating and expanding capacities of community-based financial institutions that specialize in providing affordable credit, capital and financial services, the CDFI Fund builds businesses, creates jobs, and revitalizes neighborhoods.
- One CDFI-backed institution in Fort Garland, Colorado, for example, was able to help finance a small grocery store in town. While this may not seem like much to many of us, the presence of a grocery store can make a huge difference in a rural town.

- Because the CDFI was able to use the Fund's Healthy Food Financing Initiative, the small rural community of Fort Garland now has significantly improved access to fresh, healthy foods.
- The impact that CDFIs have on rural communities cannot be overstated, and I encourage this Committee to continue to support the program, especially as it serves to benefit homebuyers, small businesses, and families in communities across our country.
- I'd also like to talk about the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program. HIDTA (*high-da*) is a critical tool utilized throughout the United States by local law enforcement officers to combat drug traffickers and dealers.
- In my district, HIDTA has enabled local law enforcement officials to yield big results in pursuing drug cartels and help control the inflow and movement of illicit substances, particularly in Pueblo County. In addition to Pueblo County, there are four other HIDTA designated counties in my district: La Plata, Mesa, Garfield, and Eagle. By expanding resources to these communities, our smaller law enforcement agencies receive crucial assistance in combating illicit actors.
- In addition, my office is also working to extend the HIDTA designation to two other counties in the Four Corners region of Colorado to further improve law enforcement's ability to combat the cartels that are active and well-established in the area.
- The HITDA program makes our communities safer and helps reduce the amount of violent crime that is often associated with narcotics activity.
- I understand that federal resources are limited, and I appreciate your consideration of my request for continued funding for both of these programs. These programs function to the active benefit of

our communities in my part of Colorado, and I urge your continued support.