



# LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

## **DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY: PROVIDE \$20 MILLION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006 WITH \$2 MILLION TO SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS**

### **ISSUE:**

Support funding the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) at \$20 million as part of the FY2006 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, including \$2 million for the activities of the multi-county local development districts.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Covering 240 counties in an eight-state region, the DRA is a federal-state partnership designed to stimulate economic development throughout the Mississippi River Delta area. By working with the region's eight governors and the network of multi-county local development districts, the DRA helps economically depressed communities leverage public, philanthropic and private sector programs that are focused on business development, basic infrastructure development and transportation improvements. Under federal law, 75 percent of funds are targeted to distressed counties, and 50 percent of dollars are reserved for transportation and basic infrastructure improvements.

The Delta authority utilizes an existing network of multi-county development districts to coordinate efforts within a sub-state area. Known as Delta local development districts (LDDs), these regional entities have a proven track record in helping small municipalities and counties improve basic infrastructure and stimulate economic growth. These organizations provide vital services and expertise for underserved and impoverished communities. By pooling limited local resources, these LDDs lead regions and local efforts to craft and, more importantly, implement strategic action plans. They provide a neutral forum to bring key public, community and private sector leaders together to promote regional partnerships to build essential organizational and community capacity and to pursue community and economic development activities.

Many rural counties throughout the Delta footprint exhibit unemployment rates that are two to three times as high as the national average. By working closely with the local development districts, the DRA has used its limited funding to combat this trend by helping to create 10,345 new jobs and provide job training services to over 3,425 individuals. Continued federal investment in the Delta region, with an increased focus on the activities of the local development districts, is essential to implementing the Authority's mission.

### **ACTION NEEDED:**

Urge your House and Senate members to support \$20 million for the Delta Regional Authority, as part of the FY2006 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill. In addition, encourage your members of Congress to support reserving \$2 million for the activities and initiatives of multi-county local development districts.

**For more information, contact Amy Linehan at 202.624.8177 or [alinehan@nado.org](mailto:alinehan@nado.org).**

**LETTER URGING YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO CONTACT THE ENERGY AND WATER  
DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS  
TO SUPPORT \$20 MILLION FOR THE DRA**

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Date

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
US House of Representatives/Senate  
Washington, DC 20515/20510

**VIA FACSIMILE**

Dear Representative/ Senator [Last Name]:

As the (**House/Senate**) works on the FY 2006 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill, we urge you to actively support a \$20 million budget for the work of the Delta Regional Authority, including \$2 million for the activities of the multi-county local development districts.

As a region with an economy that has long been dependant on the rise and fall of the mighty Mississippi River, the Delta faces long-standing issues of unemployment and job loss. Many rural counties throughout the DRA footprint exhibit unemployment rates that are two to three times as high as the national average. The DRA helps to combat this trend by providing focus, coordination, leadership and seed capital to the highly distressed region and providing incentives for private sector job growth. Since the Authority's creation three short years ago, investments from the DRA have helped to create 10,345 new jobs and provide job training programs to over 3,425 individuals across the region.

Working closely with governors and multi-county local development districts, the DRA is tasked with developing regional strategies, providing assistance for business development and job skills training and investing in transportation and basic infrastructure projects that facilitate economic growth. Most importantly, federal law mandates that 75 percent of DRA funds must be targeted to distressed counties and pockets of poverty. Increased federal investments will enhance the Authority's abilities to bring federal, state, and local assets together to serve the best interests of the region and its residents and to help remedy the severe and chronic economic distress across the eight state region.

**[INSERT EXAMPLES OF LOCAL DRA INVESTMENTS AND PROJECTS]**

Please help us continue the success of the DRA by including \$20 million for Delta Regional Authority in the FY 2006 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, including \$2 million for the activities of the multi-county local development districts.

Sincerely,

Name, Title  
Organization Contact Information

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*Note: Members list alphabetically, rather than by seniority*

*\*Delta Region*