

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 17, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Science and Justice  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Science and Justice  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Hutchison,

We are writing to express our strong support for robust and comprehensive funding of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and its grant programs. EDA programs create jobs and stimulate the economy in areas of the country that need the most help. As our nation continues to recover economically, funds spent on EDA programs are dollars well spent.

EDA assistance is targeted to rural and urban areas experiencing high unemployment, low income, a natural disaster, or other severe economic distress. With national unemployment still at nine percent and recent severe flooding around the country, these highly distressed areas need support more than ever. Whether a town is recovering from a plant closure or a tornado, it is critical that the community invest in planning for their new economic future. However, without help from the EDA, planning may not be prioritized, which can result in haphazard development that can negatively impact a community's ability to realize its economic potential.

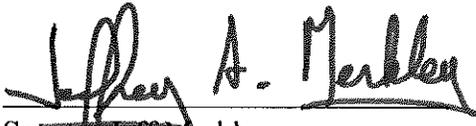
The kind of assistance provided by EDA is critical to promoting economic growth and job creation, particularly in small communities. For example, the Public Works program provides assistance to towns that need essential infrastructure improvements in order to entice new businesses to the area. For many small and rural communities, this is one of the few programs they can turn to as they struggle to replace aging infrastructure. Additionally, EDA projects can help communities transition to a clean energy future, creating sustainable jobs in the United States instead of supporting energy jobs overseas. EDA investments are key to retaining or creating new private sector job opportunities and helping businesses diversify or expand.

EDA has a proven track record and is widely regarded as an agency that consistently earns a high return on its investment. EDA funding spurs large amounts of private sector capital. From 2005 to 2010, each dollar expended by EDA attracted over seven dollars in private sector investment.

During the same five year period, the funding of EDA projects led directly to the creation of more than 314,000 jobs.

The demand for EDA services far exceeds its current capacity. The recession has left communities gravely in need of financial assistance, as they strive to attract new businesses and help existing ones adapt to changing market circumstances. Without question, the EDA represents an efficient and cost effective way to help distressed communities overcome the challenges they are facing. We therefore urge you to include robust funding for the EDA in the Senate FY2012 Commerce, Science and Justice appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



Senator Jeff Merkley



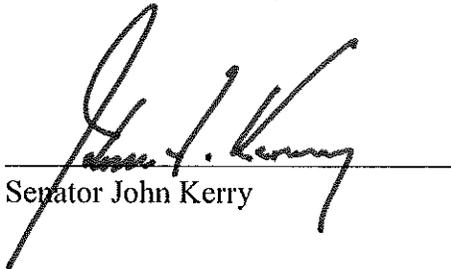
Senator Barbara Boxer



Senator Patrick Leahy



Senator Carl Levin



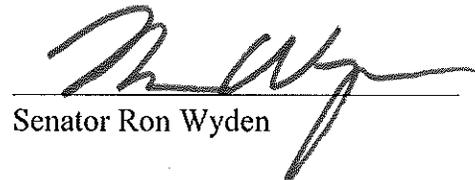
Senator John Kerry



Senator Mary Landrieu



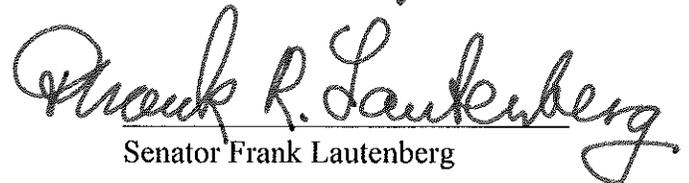
Senator Daniel Akaka



Senator Ron Wyden



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand



Senator Frank Lautenberg



Senator Michael Bennet