

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2013

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

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby,

We respectfully request that you prioritize funding for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and, specifically, fund the Public Works program at the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 level of \$129 million in the FY 2014 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, and support expanded funding for local energy efficiency financing programs.

EDA programs spur investment and generate economic opportunities in struggling regions across the country. The programs target our most vulnerable communities to combat high unemployment rates, low incomes, and other economic challenges, including those caused by natural disasters. Given the sluggish recovery in many regions – and the extensive damage caused by extreme weather – EDA assistance is critical to promoting growth and job creation in distressed areas.

For many small and rural communities, the EDA's Public Works program is one of the few programs that will help them replace aging infrastructure in order to entice new businesses. Infrastructure improvement projects supported by the Public Works program also pave the way for existing businesses to expand and diversify, which leads to new private-sector jobs.

Additionally, the EDA's focus on environmentally sustainable development within the Economic Adjustment Assistance program encourages communities to invest in energy efficiency projects. Expanded focus on local energy efficiency financing programs not only creates jobs to conduct energy efficiency retrofits, but also saves consumers money on their energy bills, and reduces pollution associated with electricity use.

Many communities are in need of training, technical assistance, and infrastructure development to attract new businesses and help existing ones adapt to changing market circumstances. EDA programs have a track record of preparing communities for a new economic future.

Furthermore, the EDA represents an efficient and cost effective way to support job creation and innovation. In fact, the EDA's programs consistently earn a high return on its investments. From 2005 to 2010, each dollar expended by the EDA attracted almost seven dollars in private-sector

investment. In addition, the EDA has one of the lowest cost-per-job rates in the U.S. Government.

We appreciate the attention you have given to economically distressed communities, and we urge you to include \$129 million for the EDA's Public Works program in the FY 2014 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, and expanded funding for energy efficiency financing programs.

Jeffrey A. Mackley

Richard Blumenthal

Patrick Leahy

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Ron Wyder

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