



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS 2012 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The members of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) support federal policies and programs that encourage regional strategies, partnerships and solutions to improve the economic prosperity and quality of life in America's local communities. This includes building upon the proven track record of the nation's 520 regional development organizations to foster regional collaboration among local government officials, address the public infrastructure and economic development assets needed to support entrepreneurs and private industry, and implement a broad portfolio of federal and state programs in a cost-effective and accountable manner.

As multi-jurisdictional public entities governed by local elected officials, along with private sector and community representatives, the nation's regional development organizations serve as key catalysts for strategic planning, public-private partnerships and regional initiatives that are designed to meet locally identified community and economic development priorities. Historically, these efforts have focused on public infrastructure improvements, business development finance lending, comprehensive economic development strategies, transportation planning and services, and other initiatives aimed at promoting local job creation and economic prosperity.

In recent years, public sector leaders at all levels of government have turned to our regional entities to deliver and coordinate an increasingly diverse portfolio, including: aging services, brownfields redevelopment, business lending, homeland security and emergency preparedness, Geographic Information System (GIS) services, housing, public transportation and workforce development programs. This trend reflects the fact that regional development organizations are publicly accountable, achieve measurable results and provide efficient and high-quality services.

For the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, the members of NADO place a high priority on increasing intergovernmental cooperation among all levels of government, strengthening and retaining the existing set of federal community, economic and workforce development programs, and enhancing the delivery and accountability of federal programs on a sub-state regional basis. Specifically, these priorities include:

- **Community and Economic Development** — Fully fund the existing portfolio of federal community and economic development programs, most notably the U.S. Economic Development Administration, HUD's Community Development Block Grant program, SBA's business lending programs, federal-state regional commissions, EPA's brownfields redevelopment accounts and USDA Rural Development's portfolio of grant and loan programs.

Support enhanced federal guidelines, resources and incentives that build upon the experience and skills of regional development organizations to coordinate, plan and foster homeland security and emergency preparedness activities on a statewide and regional basis.

- **Rural Development** — Expand program investments and flexibility within USDA Rural Development to support regional asset-based community and economic development strategies, including regionally-based initiatives to promote economic development innovation strategies, entrepreneurship development, deployment and increased use of broadband and advanced technologies, infrastructure upgrades and enhanced access to capital in rural areas.

- **Transportation** — Provide enhanced and sustainable funding for the nation's aviation, highway, intermodal and transit systems and services, including through a multi-year reauthorization bill for surface transportation programs. In addition, strengthen the federal-state-local intergovernmental partnership process by ensuring all local elected officials (including rural officials) are full participants in the statewide transportation planning and programming processes authorized by the SAFETEA-LU surface transportation law.

**AMERICA'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS: REGIONAL STRATEGIES. PARTNERSHIPS. SOLUTIONS.**  
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## ECONOMIC, COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Reauthorize and fully fund the Economic Development Administration (EDA), with a minimum of \$34 million for planning.
- Support locally driven, flexible sustainable development strategies for America's regions.
- Fully fund USDA rural development grant programs for infrastructure improvements, business development, community facilities, housing and broadband services.
- Urge members of the House to actively participate in the Congressional Rural Caucus, a bipartisan group dedicated to supporting federal policies that improve the economic competitiveness of small town America.
- Urge the U.S. Census Bureau to work with regions to ensure the participation of local governments and the collection of accurate data under the decennial census and the American Community Survey programs.
- Fully fund EPA's brownfields programs and support the limited use of brownfields project funds for OMB allowable administrative costs.
- Support full funding for federal initiatives that assist state and local governments (including regional development organizations) in improving water and wastewater infrastructure systems. In addition, urge Congress to fund the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) at the authorized level.
- Expand the eligibility criteria for Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) program to include public entities such as regional development organizations.
- Maintain SBA's 504 Certified Development Company and Microloan lending and technical assistance programs.
- Oppose any federal tax measures on electronic commerce that reduce state and local government authority and revenue. Support policies to promote affordable, advanced and accessible telecommunications and broadband services in underserved and rural areas.

## FEDERAL-STATE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

- Fully fund the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Delta Regional Authority (DRA) and Denali Commission at the authorized levels, including support for the ARC and DRA local development districts.
- Support full funding for the Northern Border Regional Commission, Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, Southwest Border Regional Commission and the Northern Great Plains Regional Authority as authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. In addition, support the use of existing regional planning and development organizations as the local development districts for these new federal-state regional commissions.

## HOMELAND & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Ensure small metropolitan and rural regions receive adequate resources and equitable access to the broad portfolio of homeland security and emergency preparedness programs, including first responder, pre-disaster mitigation and all-hazards mitigation resources. In addition, fully fund FEMA's flood map modernization and pre-disaster mitigation programs.

## AGING SERVICES & WORKFORCE

- Maintain full funding and program flexibility for HHS Area Agencies on Aging.
- Reauthorize and fully fund the Labor Department's Workforce Investment Act, including maintaining a central leadership role for regional Workforce Investment Boards.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Fully fund federal aviation programs that help maintain and enhance regular air service to underserved and rural regions, including FAA's Airport Improvement Program, Essential Air Service program and the Small Communities Air Service program.
- Support programs and policies aimed at strengthening intermodal and multimodal transportation options, including aviation, inland ports, transit and short line railroads.

# NADO

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