



2014 Farm Bill Legislative Highlights

BACKGROUND: On February 7, 2014, President Obama signed the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 (P.L. 113-79) into law, which reauthorizes U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs through 2018. The bill was approved by Congress after a three year legislative and political process that sparked numerous debates over the direction of agriculture policy and funding for the next five years.

Additionally, the final agreement cuts the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) by \$8 billion over 10 years. The Senate farm bill (S. 954) proposed \$4.5 billion in cuts over 10 years; the House farm bill (H.R. 2642) proposed \$40 billion in cuts over 10 years. The final farm bill contains several provisions in the Rural Development title championed by NADO.

LATEST ACTION: On April 19, the House Appropriations Committee passed a fiscal year (FY) 2017 Agriculture spending bill which would fund Rural Development programs at \$2.9 billion. The funding level is \$116 million above the 2016 enacted level. On May 19, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed a FY2017 Agriculture spending bill funding Rural Development programs at \$2.8 billion. The funding level is \$68 million above the 2016 enacted level.

Key NADO Provisions in Farm Bill (Title VI Rural Development):

The Rural Development title will receive \$228 million in mandatory funding over five-years including:

- \$150 million for Water and Waste Water Program
- \$63 million for the Value-Added Producer Grant Program
- \$15 million for the Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program (RMAP)
- \$150 million for pending rural development loan and grant applications/projects

The Rural Development title reauthorizes the following federal-state regional commissions:

- Delta Regional Authority
- Northern Border Regional Commission
- Northern Great Plains Regional Authority
- Southeast Crescent Regional Commission

The Rural Development title includes regional and economic development language championed by NADO that allows USDA to prioritize 10 percent of funds towards regional, multi-jurisdictional projects that incorporate existing economic and regional development plans.

The Rural Development title includes a provision allowing USDA to streamline and broaden Rural Development applications to reflect the scale of rural investments, emerging needs and opportunities of rural regions, and capacity of local organizations.

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