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House Committee Approves USDA Spending Bill



On May 9, the House Appropriations Committee approved a \$94.4 billion fiscal 2007 spending bill (unnumbered) for the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The bill provides \$18.4 billion in discretionary funding, \$96 million below the fiscal 2006 level and \$564 million over the President's request.

For Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), the bill provides \$50.7 million, level with current spending and \$24.8 million more than the budget request. While the President's budget request recommended cutting the number of RC&D coordinators by half, the bill includes language directing USDA to maintain coordinators for each of the 375 RC&D Councils. Appropriators also included language expressing concern that the President's proposal does not contain cost-analyses or tests to determine the effect the proposal would have on RC&D district performance.

The bill provides \$699.8 million for the Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP), \$4.9 million over current funding and \$99.1 million more than the President's plan. RCAP funding includes \$49.47 million for community facilities, \$561.25 million for water and waste disposal assistance, \$89.1 million for rural business loans and grants and \$3 million for the Delta Regional

Authority.

The measure provides \$335.4 million for the Rural Housing Service (RHS) Rental Assistance Program, \$311.1 million less than current funding and \$150.9 million less than the President's budget request; \$37.62 million for Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants, level with the budget request and \$3.96 million above the current funding level; and \$40.6 million for Rural Housing Assistance Grants, level with the administration's request and \$2.9 million below current funding. The bill restores funding for three Rural Business Service (RBS) programs slated for elimination under the President's proposed Strengthening America's Communities Initiative (SACI). The measure provides \$11 million for Rural Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities, \$40 million for Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) and \$3 million for Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG).

Additional RBS spending includes \$33.9 million for the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP), an increase of \$55,000 over current spending and level with the President's request; \$34.65 million for Rural Economic Development loans, \$9 million above current funding and level with the President's request; and \$23 million for loans and grants under the Renewable Energy Program.

The bill includes \$44.4 million for the Distance Learning, Telemedicine and Broadband program, \$5.1 million below current spending and \$8.9 million below

the budget request. This amount includes \$24.7 million for distance learning and telemedicine grants, \$10.8 million for broadband loans (to support a loan level of \$503.5 million) and \$8.9 million for broadband grants. The bill does not provide funding for distance learning and telemedicine loans or the Rural Telephone Bank, as requested in the budget proposal. The bill also includes a provision that would prohibit USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) from drafting or implanting any regulations what would require borrowers to recertify their rural status.



USDA State Director Marlene Elliot gets a lesson in digital fingerprinting from Lt Dan Lasher at the Allegany County Detention Center. A USDA Community Facilities Grant was awarded to the Allegany County Sheriff's Office to fund this equipment. The project is featured on USDA's website at :

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/stories/md-20060501-finger.htm>

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Your questions and comments are welcome! Please contact Leah Lowe at TCCWMD.

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Phone: 301-777-2158

The Development District Digest is a bimonthly publication. To be featured in the next issue, articles should be submitted to Leah Lowe ten days prior to publication, which occurs the last day of the month.

Regional Education

Washington County Teacher of the Year

Teacher Nancy Souders was named the WCPS 2006 Teacher of the Year at the annual Educators of the Year Awards Banquet honoring public and private schools and local colleges, on Wednesday, April 26, 2006 at Fountain Head Country Club. The awards banquet is sponsored by the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Mrs. Souders is a sixth grade social studies teacher at Smithsburg Middle School who has been teaching for 12 years. Mrs. Souders notes that "a good teacher finds ways to reach all students and inspire in them a belief that they are able to learn-to grasp concepts, to memorize important content, to reach beyond their fears and 'supposed' inadequacies to produce great products of learning." Mrs. Souders is a graduate of Shippensburg University with an M.Ed. in elementary education. She began her career as a kindergarten instructional assistant; to enhance her household earnings, Nancy left her IA position to work as an insurance specialist. But, seven years into this career, Nancy continued to feel a calling to be an educator - so she returned to college to complete her degree in education.

In addition to teaching, Mrs. Souders serves in a variety of other capacities in her school, including Student Council Advisor, team leader, School Improvement Team member, department chair, professional development facilitator, and coach for the Stock Market Game. Her Stock Market teams have won numerous state and county honors. Mrs. Souders has a passion for supporting new and aspiring educators - she is a workshop presenter and keynote speaker for Shepherd University's Student Education Association, and has mentored many beginning teachers and student teachers.

As WCPS Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Souders will be driving a new car provided by Hagerstown Honda-Kia throughout the year.

In addition to Mrs. Souders, this year's finalists were also honored at the annual event: Krista Burgan, Third grade teacher, Magnet Program, Emma K. Doub Elementary. With more than 18 years of teaching experience, Krista "believes the good teaching recipe is made up of many key ingredients; some of those being large amounts of respect, heaps of humility, tons of humor, and a dash of adventure or risk taking."

Sue Lowery, Agricultural teacher, Clear Spring High School. Having taught in Washington County for more than 23 years, Ms. Lowery affirms "that teaching is about getting the best out of people and getting them to realize their strengths. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to create a positive learning atmosphere for my stu-

dents." David Warrenfeltz, AP Calculus/IB math teacher, North Hagerstown High School. As a 22-year teaching veteran in the Washington County Public Schools, Dave says that having "a positive impact on a student's life is what teaching is all about. It is more important than any equation or proof that I will ever present to any class."

Alan Zube, Pre-Engineering teacher, Washington County Technical High School. Mr. Zube has taught in Washington County for over 24 years. Alan is a master teacher who believes that "to be a successful teacher, you have to have passion for your subject and a passion to find the keys that unlock the door to each individual's learning strength."



Five finalists pictured with the Honda prior to the event, from L-R, are Krista Burgan, Nancy Souders, Alan Zube, Sue Lowery, and Dave Warrenfeltz.



Nancy Souders is pictured with Suzanne Reed, a former student who nominated her for Teacher of the Year

Guy Takes 4th Place at Intel International Science & Engineering Fair



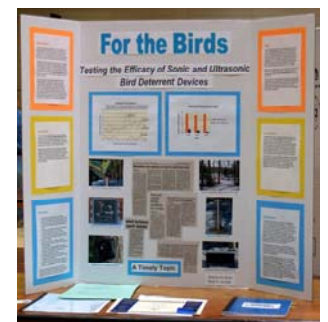
Joanna Guy at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Grand Prize winner of the Western Maryland Science Expo, Joanna Guy, recently attended the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Indianapolis, Indiana. 1,451 student finalists from 47 countries presented their projects to judges. Joanna's project, "For the Birds: Testing the Efficacy of Sonic and Ultrasonic Bird Deterrent Devices", took fourth place in the Zoology category and Joanna received a \$500 scholarship. Joanna is a freshman at Southern Garrett High School.

Joanna traveled to Indianapolis on Sunday, May 7 with SHS biol-

ogy teacher, Diana Marks. Joanna spent the first couple of days setting up her project and attending seminars and special events. She participated in a pin exchange (collecting over 100 pins from around the world), visited the Indianapolis 500 Speedway where race time trials were underway, attended a soiree at the Indiana State Museum, and joined all the other finalists for a party at historic Union Station in downtown Indianapolis. The judging was held at the Convention Center, and the finalists had to sit in their booths for 9 hours straight, presenting their projects and answering questions. Open exhibitions

were held on Thursday and Friday, attended by school groups of all ages and members of the public. There were three awards sessions on Friday afternoon, which were attended by over 3,000 people.



Garrett County Teacher of the Year

Teachers single-handedly impact hundreds, even thousands of students during their teaching careers. They inspire, motivate, and encourage each student to tackle every opportunity that comes their way with great passion. Educators like these can be found throughout Garrett County, but Lisa Bender has been chosen to shine as the 2006 Garrett County Teacher of the Year.

Lisa has nineteen years experience as a business education/marketing teacher at Southern Garrett High School, where her record for producing state winners in Maryland's stock market game makes Garrett County proud. Lisa's impact upon her students goes far beyond the classroom. Through her personal crusade to change the culture of prom night celebrations, and her commitment to her community by organizing service-oriented activities, Lisa serves as a role-model that should inspire us all to give back to our community in some way. She doesn't just discuss initiatives that impact youth today she puts her ideas into action.

Take one look at Lisa's professional portfolio which includes an extensive repertoire of professional experiences, and one can

see why she was chosen as Garrett County's Teacher of the Year. She traveled to New York City as a select group to complete the New York Stock Exchange "Teach the Teacher" program, then went on to Miami as part of a national team of educators evaluating Braddock High School, the second largest school in the country at that time. Lisa is a member of many professional associations including Global Association for Teachers of Economics, National Business Education Association, GC Federation of Teachers, and Southern Garrett Athletic Association. She has had leadership roles as a keynote speaker, conference presenter and facilitator. Her numerous awards include Outstanding American Teachers National Honor Roll, Garrett County Commissioners Award for Volunteerism, and Advisor to award winning Maryland Stock Market Teams. She is an inspiration and role-model to her colleagues, peers, as well as her students, inspiring them to become life-long learners.

Lisa's message to her profession and to the general public is genuinely embedded within her educational philosophy which is to seek

what is missing within her students' learning experiences, and then bring unique and creative learning activities into the classroom. Her latest endeavor puts her ideas into action. The Entrepreneurial Heritage Project gives her students the opportunity to produce and present digital documentaries of oral histories they collect from local business pioneers. The heart of her message is, "As teachers, we are given unique opportunities to inspire, influence and ignite the imagination of a young person." She continues, "When we look at our students to seek what is missing, we are given the chance to do what Henry Adams observed: 'A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.'"

Lisa summarizes her teaching career by stating, "During the past 19 years, I have put my energy and ideas into action to become not just an effective business teacher but someone who could make a difference in the lives of my students. I have worked hard to combine my knowledge of business and innovative teaching practices to inspire students to gain a better understanding of their future roles as workers, managers, and perhaps

entrepreneurs."

She adds, "While all the plaques and Senate Proclamations are professionally rewarding, my greatest accomplishments in education stem from the connections I make with my students. It is personally gratifying to see them realize success in their pursuits." LuAnn Watson, an English teacher at Southern High School, describes the impact that Lisa has had on her school community by describing Lisa as, "Diplomatic, always positive and looks for the silver lining, has an approach that makes students feel comfortable, personifies school spirit, is gracious when on the winning side but never a sore loser, puts students first, is always first to volunteer for anything that promotes the school and/or its students, empathetic, encouraging, always the voice of reason, humble."

As students reflect upon their lives and ponder the person that was most influential, perhaps many would think of Lisa. She is a dedicated educator and that is why she has been named 2006 Garrett County Teacher of the Year.

Allegany County Teacher of the Year

Mr. Alan Hammond has been named the Allegany County Teacher of the Year. Mr. Hammond is a teacher of Environmental Education at Allegany High School. In 2002, Mr. Hammond became one of the first teachers at Allegany High School to receive National Teaching Certifications through the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

The environmental science program began in 1993 with the purpose of developing unique learning experiences both in and out of the classroom to develop a sense of stewardship for the environment within the students. The following is a brief description of some of the programs Mr. Hammond initiated and carried

out to meet that goal.

The environmental science course is offered on the Advanced Placement (AP), Merit and Non-merit levels. In 1993, 35 students participated in the course. The numbers have steadily grown—this year 82 students participated in the AP classes, 29 in Merit, and 35 in Non-merit.

Since 1993, over 600 students have participated in the Rocky Gap Canoe trips to study water quality and link the Cumberland area to the Chesapeake Bay. Over 300 students have participated in 3-day trips to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation sites at Port Isabel and Smith Islands on the Chesapeake Bay. Mr. Hammond writes a number of

grants each year to fund these educational excursions.

Since 1989, Mr. Hammond has coached AHS's Envirothon teams. The Envirothon is a natural resources competition which tests a five-member team's knowledge of aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a current issue with the environment. AHS teams have won the competition for the last eight years. This year, 6 teams participated in the even on May 12, 2006. From 1994 to 2000, Mr. Hammond's students planted over 3000 trees on a farm in Flintstone. His students assisted in Riparian Buffer Zone tree plantings in Green Ridge State Forest along Town Creek. He is also involved with recycling initiative through

the AHS Ecology Club and recycles over seven truck-loads of paper annually. The Ecology Club has also been awarded prize money for their achievements.

Mr. Hammond has received many certifications and citations, awards and recognitions. Some of these include the 2005 Chesapeake Bay Trust Teacher of the Year, 2005 Richard Johnson Environmental Educator of the Year, Governor's Green School 1999 & 2002, 2005 Maryland House of Delegates and Senate Resolutions, 2005, Allegany County Commissioners Certificate of Recognition, and 2004 Governor's Citation.

TCC Celebrates 25 Years of Lending

Tri-County Council began its gap financing program over twenty-five years ago in order to stimulate economic growth and create permanent employment in the region. Recognizing the importance of small businesses in the area, the Council was successful in obtaining a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1980 to begin a Revolving Loan Fund. The Tri-County Council Revolving Loan Fund Committee held its first meeting on January 8, 1981 and disbursed its first loan later that year. Since then, the Council has expanded its Revolving Loan Fund Program to four separate loan funds—three from EDA and one from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) as well as the Business Enterprise Loan Fund, funded by a grant through the State of Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), and the Rural Enterprise Loan Fund that is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Office and the State of Maryland DBED.

Because of these programs, the Council has been able to disburse 194 loans totaling over \$11.6 million to businesses in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties in the last 25 years. As a result, these funds have leverage over \$64 million in private investment and the area has created over 2100 new jobs and retained over 1600 existing jobs during this time. The Council currently has

forty-four active loans in Western Maryland totaling over \$4.3 million. TCC is pleased to announce that in addition to the above-mentioned programs, TCC has been awarded another grant from the State of Maryland DBED to create two new loan programs to assist small businesses in Western Maryland. The first program is the Western Maryland Micro-Loan Fund. Applicants are eligible to apply for loans in the amount of \$500 to \$5000 for start-up costs or ongoing business needs. Loan terms will typically be three years and the interest will be Wall Street Journal Prime Rate plus two percent. The second new loan fund is the Western MD Business Development Fund and the loan terms will be very similar to the existing revolving loan fund programs.

For more information about any of TCC's financing programs, please contact Krisinda Heavener at (301) 777-2158 or by email at kheavener@tccwmd.org.



TCC's entire history can be found in our recently published Impact Summary. It is available for viewing online, or call the office for a copy.

Revolving Loan Fund

The RLF Committee has approved three loans totaling \$325,000 since January 2006. This money leverages over \$1.1 million in private funds invested and helps create or retain over 40 full-time jobs.

Currently the RLF has over \$1.4 million available to lend in six different loan funds. This includes over \$560,000 in the Rural Enterprise Loan Fund,

formerly known as the Mountain Maryland Entrepreneurial Development Center's Rural West Fund as well as \$50,000 that is available for micro-loans.

Anyone interested in learning more about Tri-County Council's financing programs should contact Krisinda Heavener at 301-777-2158 or by email at kheavener@tccwmd.org.

Featured Business: October Enterprises dba Rita's

For more information about Rita's, visit their web-site at www.ritasice.com or call 301-739-6313.

With summer just around the bend, it's time to cool off with a frosty treat from Rita's in Hagerstown, MD. Rita's specializes in frozen desserts that include 31 flavors of Italian Ices, Gelati, Misto shakes, and old fashioned frozen custard.

Dennis and Cynthia Myers have operated the business located at 1313 Pennsylvania Avenue in Hagerstown for four years. In addition, the Myers will be opening a second location at 17220 Virginia Avenue in Hagerstown later this summer.

Business hours are 11 am – 10 pm seven days a week from mid-March to mid-October.



Rita's owner Dennis Myers stands outside his popular establishment.

Business Technical Assistance

On behalf of The Trident Initiative* at Frostburg State University, the Western Maryland Business Resource Center, as well as the Western Maryland SCORE Chapter 682, we are pleased to announce the joint hosting of a two-day Conference to be held on Friday July 14th (in Cumberland) and Saturday, July 15th (in Frostburg). The event is called "A Tale of Two Cities.... Realizing Your Entrepreneurial Dreams" featuring business and entrepreneurial opportunities in

Cumberland and Frostburg. The conference will address the needs of the professional business advisors and economic practitioners, with a two part workshop on "Writing Small Business Cases" on Saturday. The event will consist of many educational and practical discussions with the participation of regional business resource providers, many area governmental, academic, and other presenters. A broad range of information will be provided to the prospective

business owner. Another objective of this conference is to recognize Cumberland and Frostburg area entrepreneurs for their contributions to this region. In addition, presentations of academic papers on business subjects will take place on the campus of Frostburg State University. We hope you will see value in this exciting event. You can play a vital role in making this Conference a success through various means such as your own participation or

encouraging your colleagues to register.

For more information or to register, please contact Keramat Pooroltan or Sudhir Singh with FSU's Trident Initiative at 301-687-4405 or email trident@frostburg.edu. You may also contact Pam Rose at the Western Maryland Business Resource Center at 301-722-2773 or email wmbrc@allconet.org.

*The Trident Initiative is a Coleman Foundation-Funded Program



Grant Writers Workgroup to Meet June 7, 2006

As a result of the positive response to the two-day grant writing workshop sponsored by the Local Management Board in April, the LMB and the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland have partnered to create a grant writers workgroup. Participants who evaluated the workshop noted the knowledge they gained from others during the workshop and expressed an interest in improving communications and devel-

oping peer support within the local grant writing community.

Workgroup meetings will be open to anyone who is interested in learning from each other, developing collaboration in grant seeking activities, or simply becoming more involved with other grant writers. Monthly meetings of the workgroup will be conducted in a roundtable format with no specific agenda. Participants are encouraged to bring current

grant announcements, proposals, or ideas for discussion.

The first meeting of the workgroup is scheduled for June 7th at 8:30 am at the Queen City Creamery.

For more information about the workgroup or to RSVP to attend, contact Sara-Beth James at the LMB office at 301-777-2008, or Leah Lowe at TCCWMD at 301-777-2158 or llowe@tccwmd.org.

OMB Issues Revised A-133 Compliance Supplement

On April 27, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) announced the availability of the 2006 Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement.

The new supplement adds additional programs and makes technical corrections. The 2006 supplement will apply to audits of fiscal years beginning after June 30, 2005 and supersedes the 2004 Supplement and 2005 Supplement update.

To access the revised circular, visit:

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance/06/06toc.html.

Digital Scanning Services/ Archiving Offered by TCCWMD

Tri-County Council is considering the possibility of offering a new service to government agencies and non profits. For some time now, the Council has digitally archived older documents to back up our files in the event of fire or other unforeseen events. In addition to backing-up these documents, each document is readily accessible on DVD in an organized file folder format. While it is true that the original files of some types are required to be kept, often times they can be discarded leaving file drawers and back rooms open for other uses.

Most often, files are scanned as

pdf (Adobe Document) at a resolution of 300 dpi (dots per inch). While this is the standard for our organization we can also scan to TIFF, JPG and other file formats. We are able to scan documents of any size up to and including 11" x 17" ledger paper. Currently we have no pricing structure for this service but would love to hear your feedback if this is something your organization is interested in. For a demonstration or to provide feedback on this program, please call Guy Winterberg at 301 777-2158 or email gwinterberg@tccwmd.org.

Grants and Regional Projects

ON THE WEB

Federal Register
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>

Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance
<http://www.cfda.gov>

Federal Grants Portal
<http://www.grants.gov>

Appalachian Regional Commission
<http://www.arc.gov>

Economic Development Administration
<http://www.eda.gov>

Department of Agriculture—Rural Development
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd>

MD Department of Planning
<http://www.mdp.state.md.us>

MD Department of Business & Economic Development
<http://www.choosemaryland.org>

MD Department of Housing & Community Development
<http://www.dhcd.state.md.us>

Garrett County Government
<http://www.co.garrett.md.us>

Allegany County Government
<http://gov.allconet.org>

Washington County Government
<http://www.washco-md.net>

Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
<http://www.tccwmd.org>

National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
<http://www.nado.org>

Featured Website—Homeland Security Assistance to Firefighters www.firegrantsupport.com

The US Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Preparedness Directorate's Office of Grants and Training's website, www.firegrantsupport.com is a good resource for first responders looking for federal funding.

DHS offers three grant opportunities for first responders. The first, Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), provides funding for equipment, minor facility modifications, and vehicles. This grant opportunity is available in late February with an early April deadline.

The second grant is the Staffing

for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER). The SAFER grant provides funds for first responders to hire new paid personnel or for recruiting and retention of volunteers. The 2006 SAFER grant was released May 27th and has a deadline of June 30, 2006.

The third grant opportunity is the Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grant. This grant is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. These grants are announced in the beginning of September with

an early October deadline.

Guidance for each of these three grants can be found at the website. A user can also go through the very useful Applicant Tutorial to learn how to apply for the grants. Each of these opportunities must be applied for online, at www.firegrantsupport.com.

For more information or assistance with a DHS grant, please contact Leah Lowe at Tri-County Council at 301-777-2158 or llowe@tccwmd.org.

Maryland Rural Summit

The Ninth Annual Maryland Rural Summit will be held in Cecil County, Maryland, on October 25-27, 2006.

The Rural Summit is an annual gathering of rural leaders in the public, private and non-profit sectors who come together to discuss the major issues confronting rural and non-metropolitan communities.

“Rural Maryland Communities In Transition” is the theme of this year’s summit. It focuses on the 19 counties outside the Baltimore-Washington corridor,

some of which remain isolated and economically challenged while others confront growth and enormous development pressures. All, however, are striving to retain the best aspects of their pastoral heritage while progressing forward in other areas.

The Summit will feature a Rural Legislative Forum, giving rural leaders a chance to share their community’s concerns and ideas with Maryland state representatives.

The agenda also includes mobile

workshops being held in Kent County and Cecil County. These workshops focus on health partnerships, organic farming, healthcare innovations, transitional agriculture, and a North East Adventure.

Last year’s summit was held at the Wisp Resort in Garrett County. Featured in the October Issue of the DDD, its theme was “Rural Workforce and Entrepreneurship Development: Investment in our Future.”

Mountainridge High School

Construction continues at the site of the new Mountainridge High School in Frostburg.



View the progress being made on the new high school on the webcam! The image is updated every 30 seconds. It can be found at

<http://www.allconet.org/bhcam>.

Broadband Deployment Enhancing Economic Growth

Broadband access does enhance economic growth and performance of local communities and the assumed economic impacts of broadband are real and measurable, according to a preliminary report by MIT's Communications Futures Program. *Measuring Broadband's Economic Impact* was funded by the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The research consortium conducted a comprehensive review of the economic performance data of more than 22,000 zip codes across

the nation between 1998 and 2002. The preliminary report found that "communities in which mass-market broadband was available by December 1999 experienced more rapid growth in employment, the number of businesses overall and businesses in IT-intensive sectors, relative to comparable communities without broadband at that time."

The report notes that "broadband is clearly related to economic well-being and is thus a critical component of our national com-

munication infrastructure." In addition, researchers point out that "the implication for economic development professionals is that a portfolio of broadband-related policy interventions that is reasonably balanced (i.e. also pays attention to demand-side issues such as training) is more likely to lead to positive economic outcomes than a single-minded focus on availability."

GAO Report Indicates Implementation of EDA Performance Award System on Hold

According to a report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released last December, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) does not plan on implementing its new performance award system anytime in the "near future."

An agency priority in the 2004 reauthorization measure (PL 108-373), the performance award system, which replaced the 10 percent district bonus program, provides a 10 percent cash bonus to grant recipients that complete projects on time, on budget and meet performance criteria related to job creation and private funds attracted.

According to the report, "EDA officials told us [GAO] that the agency has not yet issued any performance awards but was developing policies and procedures

that would allow the agency to offer such incentives. But the officials added that they did not foresee the agency issuing any awards in the near future."

In testimony to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management in June 2003, then Assistant Secretary for Economic Development David Sampson stated, "EDA proposes a performance-based incentive recognizing the importance we place on achieving results and the critical role that our partners play in transforming distressed communities into successful, economically stable communities." EDA reiterated its commitment to the new performance award program in testimony given to the Senate Environment and Public Works

Committee in April 2004. During NADO's Mountain State and Midwest Economic Development Conference in Kansas City May 3-5, EDA Chief Counsel Barry Bird clarified that EDA's delay in implementing the program has been brought about as a result of a need to focus staff time on other priority issues and that EDA does intend to implement the program at a later date.

The GAO report also points out that, between 2000 and 2005 EDA returned about \$12.4 million to the US Treasury, including \$1.9 million in 2005 and \$3.8 million in 2004. The 2005 reauthorization law included new and broader allowances for the agency to retain underspent grant funds.

Heritage Preservation Summit Scheduled for Fall

On May 1, the *Preserve America Initiative* announced its 2006 Summit meeting. *The Preserve America Initiative*, unveiled by the White House in March 2003, encourages and supports community efforts to preserve the nation's cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge of the nation's past, strengthened regional identities

and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets and support for the economic vitality of communities. Summit participants will review the major components of the national historic preservation program and make recommendations to advance historic preservation programs and policy. The *Preserve America* Summit is ex-

pected to occur this fall in New Orleans. Attendance will be limited to 250 participants. More information is available at www.preserveamerica.gov.

Useful Economic Development Acronyms

FBCI

Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

FBI

Federal Bureau of Investigation

FEMA

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHA

Federal Highway Administration

FOA

Funding Opportunity Announcement

FSU

Frostburg State University

FTE

Full Time Employment

GC

Garrett College

GCCAC

Garrett County Community Action Committee

GIEC

Garrett Information Enterprise Center

GIS

Geographic Information System

GOC

Garrett Outreach Center

GPS

Global Positioning System

HCC

Hagerstown Community College

HHS

US Department of Health and Human Services

HPI

Historic Preservation Institute

HUD

US Department of Housing and Urban Development



Board Members

Officers:

Jim Stakem, Chairman
 Allegany County Commissioner

Ernie Gregg, Vice Chairman
 Garrett County Commissioner

Greg Snook, Secretary/Treasurer
 Washington County Commissioner

John Kirby, Asst. Secretary/Treasurer
 City of Frostburg Administrator

Members:

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Jim Stakem Robert Smith
 Bob Hutcheson
 Lee Fiedler

Garrett County

Ernie Gregg Leo Martin
 Jim Hinebaugh
 Dr. Stephen Herman

Washington County

Greg Snook Robert Bruchey, II
 James Kercheval William Pennington
 Tim Troxell

Western Maryland Delegation

Senator John Hafer
 Senator Donald Munson
 Delegate George C. Edwards
 Delegate Kevin Kelly
 Delegate Christopher B. Shank
 Delegate John P. Donoghue
 Delegate LeRoy Myers
 Delegate Robert A. McKee

The mission of Tri-County Council is to serve our constituent counties and to promote inter-jurisdictional coordination, cooperation and communication on issues affecting the region and to provide local technical assistance. Our goal is to work with local governments, businesses and educational institutions throughout the region in providing the programs and services most needed by the region and our member governments.

Calendar of Events

Tri-County Council Board Meeting
 Allegany College of Maryland
 Executive Committee—9:00 a.m.
 Full Council—10:00 a.m.
 July 21, 2006

Grants Writers Workgroup
 Queen City Creamery
 8:30 a.m.
 June 7, 2006

Maryland Economic Development Association Annual Conference
 Rocky Gap Lodge and Golf Resort
 June 3-6, 2006

National Main Streets Conference
 New Orleans, Louisiana
 June 4-7, 2006

A Tale of Two Cities... Realizing Your Entrepreneurial Dreams
 July 14, 2006—Cumberland
 July 15, 2006—Frostburg

On the Hill: ARC Funding

On May 3, 16 Senators urged leaders of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations subcommittee to provide the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) with nearly \$65 million in funding, equal to the President's request and current funding. The letter, sponsored by Sen. George Voinovich (R-OH), was endorsed by Sens. George Allen (R-VA), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Richard Burr (R-

NC), Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), Mike De Wine (R-OH), Elizabeth Dole (R-NC), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Trent Lott (R-MS), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), John Rockefeller (D-WV), Rick Santorum (R-PA), Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Charles Schumer (D-NY), Arlen Specter (R-PA) and John Warner (R-VA). On May 11, the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations subcommittee approved a

\$30 billion spending bill (currently unnumbered) for the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Energy as well as the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Delta Regional Authority (DRA). The bill is \$172 million below last year's level and \$546 million above the President's request. Under the bill, ARC funding is cut \$30 million to \$35.5 million and

DRA would receive nearly \$6 million, \$6 million under current funding. The bill also includes \$7.5 million for the Denali Commission, a \$42 million reduction over current funding and \$4.9 million more than the President's request. The full House Appropriations Committee is expected to mark up the bill the week of May 15. The Senate is yet to act on its version.