



Building Rural Communities Act Community Facilities Technical Assistance

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What is the BRCA?

H.R. 1632, The Building Rural Communities Act (BRCA) was adopted as part of the Rural Development Title of the recent Farm Bill (Sec. 6006). What it does is allocate a small (3-5%) portion of USDA's Rural Development Essential Community Facilities (CF) program to fund technical assistance and training to help small communities with:

- Securing necessary capital to construct needed facilities
- Developing, maintaining, and operating essential community facilities
 - Police stations, fire stations, health centers, transportation facilities, educational facilities, jails, courthouses, and more
- Maintaining financial capacity to repay RD loans and guaranteed loans
- Maintaining compliance with federal and state regulations

The BRCA is modeled after the successful technical assistance program RD has operated within its water and wastewater program for decades. With the help of technical assistance providers, RD's water/wastewater loan portfolio has a default rate of well under 1%. Technical assistance protects taxpayer dollars by ensuring that loans are repaid and that communities are able to secure capital from non-federal sources. It also empowers local communities to address pressing infrastructure, public safety, and other community needs.

Why support funding for the BRCA?

- Since the funding comes out of the amount already appropriated for the CF program, the BRCA comes at no additional cost to taxpayers. No additional funding is required
- State Rural Development offices have requested a program like this for years
- The BRCA takes a model that works for rural water projects and applies it to other community needs as well
- The BRCA encourages a holistic approach to community and economic development

Funding request:

“For the Rural Community Facilities Program Account, the Committee provides an appropriation of \$30,000,000 *of which, 5 per cent, or \$1,500,000 shall be made available for a grant to a qualified non-profit multi-state regional technical assistance organization with experience in working with small communities...*”