



NATIONAL LEADERS CALL FOR RENEWED FEDERAL COMMITMENT TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF 2012 FARM BILL

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WASHINGTON, DC — The [Campaign for a Renewed Rural Development](#) today called on Congress to include a strong and comprehensive Rural Development Title in the 2012 Farm Bill to create jobs and promote economic growth in rural America. The campaign, a diverse coalition of 32 national organizations touching nearly every building block of the U.S. economy, released its legislative priorities to guide lawmakers as they begin work on writing the new Farm Bill. [[Senate letter](#) / [House letter](#)]

“Federal rural development programs must be significantly enhanced and made a centerpiece of the 2012 Farm Bill if our nation is to strengthen economic competitiveness and improve quality of life in rural America,” said Lenny Eliason, president of the [National Association of Counties](#) (NACo), which chairs the campaign.

The campaign sent its just-released [Rural Development Priorities for the 2012 Farm Bill](#) to leaders of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. The six key priorities outlined in the document fall under the following broad themes:

- Clarify the Mission of USDA Rural Development
- Provide Flexibility and Incentives for Regional Collaboration
- Maintain Rural Development Investments
- Maintain and Improve Technical Assistance
- Improve Metrics and Accountability
- Streamline Application and Reporting Processes

“Our farmers, businesses and entrepreneurs are facing immense global competition,” said Eliason, who serves on the Athens County, Ohio Board of Commissioners. “The 2012 Farm Bill offers a timely and appropriate legislative vehicle for Congress and the administration to create jobs and promote economic growth in rural America.”

The 32 organizations in the coalition are working individually and collectively to support rural development programs and strategies that promote rural prosperity. The upcoming Farm Bill reauthorization is a key opportunity for Congress and the Administration to work in partnership with communities and local leaders to ensure that federal investments in rural America through USDA Rural Development programs are as effective as possible.

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