

Stand Up for Rural America - Rural Community Developers Network Reporter

Volume 7, Number 11 June 15, 2005

STAND UP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The House USDA FY 2006 appropriations bill includes \$6.2 million for the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI). This appropriation would bring RCDI funding, one of the campaign's key goals, to better than \$42 million. Stay tuned.

Bank of America and Fannie Mae rural community development investment now tops \$138.7 billion in total new private investment stimulated by *Stand Up*.

POLICY UPDATE

The House Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development (TTHUD) has rejected the Administration's proposal to eliminate the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and 17 other programs, replacing them with a new program in the Department of Commerce funded at 35 percent less. In its markup for FY 2006, the Subcommittee: funded CDBG at \$3.86 billion, or six percent below current levels; provided level funding for HOME at \$1.9 billion; increased Section 8 vouchers by \$765 million to \$15.5 billion; and level funded CDFI at \$55 million. It also provided zero funds for HOPE VI, Empowerment Zones, brownfields, YouthBuild and Section 108 loan guarantees. Overall, HUD funding would be \$37.5 billion, an increase of \$1.55 billion over last year and \$4.37 billion above the Administration's request.

The House version of the USDA appropriations bill, HR 2744, contains amounts for housing and related programs which are very similar to the subcommittee's mark-up version. It should be noted that the Administration request for \$214 million in vouchers to help with affordability preservation for Section 515 developments was zero funded. The Senate agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee and full Committee are scheduled to mark up its version of the bill the week of June 20th. For more information on the House bill go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app06.html>.

The League of Rural Voters has announced "Rural Americans for a Secure Future," a campaign opposed to privatizing social security being pursued with "Americans United to Protect Social Security." The campaign's letter to Congress cites these statistics: 90 percent of the counties with high senior populations are rural; 20 percent of rural residents are 60 or older; 13 percent of rural seniors live in poverty; 15 percent of rural women over 60 are poor; and poverty increases with age - 20 percent of rural seniors over 85 are poor. Initial campaign sponsors include the American Cornrowers Association, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, National Family Farm Coalition and National Farmers Union. For more information, contact Neil Ritchie at 612 270-0276 or www.leagueofruralvoters.org.

FUNDING AND FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

HUD invites preliminary applications for cooperative agreements to support research under the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH) Program.

The PATH program seeks to improve the quality and affordability of new and existing homes, while strengthening the nation's technology infrastructure. Approximately \$3 million in FY 2005 funding is expected to be available. **The deadline is July 23.** For more information, visit <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/E5-2564.htm>.

Claremont Graduate University is accepting applications for the Peter F. Drucker Award for Nonprofit Innovation. This award is given to three nonprofit organizations for innovative, existing programs that have made a difference in the lives of the people they serve. One award of \$20,000 is given to the first place winner and two awards of \$2,500 are given to two runners-up. Applications are due **Aug. 12, 2005**. Visit: www.cgu.edu/pages/2417.asp.

Do Something is accepting applications for its Brick Awards. The annual award honors young people who have taken action to strengthen their communities in the areas of community building, health, or the environment. Each of the 18 and under winners is awarded a \$5,000 scholarship and a \$5,000 community grant. Winners in the 19 to 25 category each receive a \$10,000 community grant. For more information, visit www.dosomething.org. **The deadline is Nov. 1.**

A pilot program by USDA Rural Development and Chase Home Finance will make it possible to secure construction loans linked to USDA Section 502 guaranteed 30-year mortgages. This partnership will begin with pilot programs in California, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas, and is expected to be operational in the next 60 days. Details are available on USDA Rural Development's website at: www.rurdev.usda.gov.

TRAINING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati will hold a series of workshops on preparing the 2005 Affordable Housing Application (AHP) beginning June 21 in Lexington, KY. Subsequent workshops will be held in Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky through July 8. For more information, visit www.fhlbcin.com.

"Incubating Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Supporting Business Incubation and Knowledge-Based Enterprise in Appalachia," will be in Charleston, WV, July 17-19. Presented by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the conference will provide an in-depth look at business incubation, best-practice technology commercialization efforts, and entrepreneurial support initiatives that have been proven effective in rural communities. For more information, visit www.wvincubation.org/Welcome.aspx.

"Building Organizations, Building Homes: A Practitioner's Workshop on Rural Housing, Economic Development and Infrastructure Development in the Delta," will be held in Forrest City, Ark., July 20-22. Registration is free and meals are available for \$35. Visit <http://www.ruralhome.org> or call 877-RURAL-26.

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INFORMATION AND OTHER RESOURCES

A new issue of the USDA's Economic Research Service "Amber Waves" is available at

www.ers.usda.gov/amberWaves/June05. The magazine covers the economics of agriculture, food and nutrition, the food industry, trade, rural America, and farm-related environmental topics.

USDA grant programs earned low scores in a new Center for Rural Affairs study examining effective expenditure in four federal agricultural research, marketing, and business development programs serving small and mid-size farmers and ranchers. Combined funding covered during two-year study period totaled \$500 million. To download the report, go to http://www.cfra.org/pdf/GrantPrograms_Final.pdf

EPA's color-coded map of roughly 3,100 counties in the United States is hooked up to a database that lets you map

air and water quality, crime rates, population, employment, weather, race, unemployment, etc. The Dynamic Choropleth Mapping tool has been developed by William P. Smith and Steve Young of the Environmental Protection Agency. One of the most powerful and interesting features of the mapping function is its ability to filter the data you see by using other variables. For example, you could look just at the highest one-third of counties by income and map variations in their average travel time. This tool lets you quickly and easily see the geographic pattern of the data. Visit <http://www.turboperl.com/dcmeps.html>.

Minnesota Public Radio has created an online collaboration to generate enthusiasm and good ideas for overcoming the many challenges facing small towns. You can contribute your ideas at <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/smalltowns>. Ideas will be incorporated into the third annual Symposium for Small Towns, sponsored by the University of Minnesota-Morris and Minnesota Public Radio. For more information go to www.morris.umn.edu/services/cst/symposium/2005/index.htm.

Send information on funding opportunities, events, publications, resources or rural related policy issues to: reporter@ruralamerica.org. Announcements will be published at our discretion based on space and applicability. To receive the Network Reporter by email contact us at: info@ruralamerica.org.

