

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner:

As Congress approaches February 15th and the expiration of the Continuing Resolution (CR) we implore you to include, as part of a CR extension, language to reauthorize and fully fund the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-393). Its reauthorization is noncontroversial and must be accomplished to avoid the economic and social damage this law's expiration will cause in over 700 counties nationwide located in more than 40 states.

Reauthorization of P.L. 106-393 will continue a very successful program providing stable funding for rural schools and communities as well as popular forest management projects. The problem has been finding budgetary offsets for this mandatory spending law. We have worked with the Administration, Republican and Democrat leaders on this problem for the past two years and yet reached no agreeable conclusions. We respectfully submit that you apply collections similar to the government contractor loophole closure in the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 or a very small budget cut across the board of all the agencies to pay for this highly important, highly successful program. The estimated cost of extending this program is approximately \$380 million per year.

We have attached a copy of a letter sent by the National Governors Association to the House and Senate leadership in September of 2006 urging support for reauthorization of this program. Clearly, a law important enough to be supported by the association representing all 50 governors deserves the full attention of the Congress and favorable action in the first hours of the 110th Congress.

Please do not allow this law to expire with in the 110th Congress. Please keep faith with the 100 year-old promise made to our forest dependent rural schools and communities.

Best regards,


Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress


Greg Walden
Member of Congress