



# HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT: BROADBAND, INFRASTRUCTURE & OPIOID ADDICTION

All Americans need modern, rural infrastructure. From broadband, to utilities, to essential facilities, to research institutions, rural infrastructure also serves urban Americans who depend on this network for the production and delivery of food, fiber and energy. The Agriculture & Nutrition Act of 2018 provides the framework to leverage private capital to facilitate needed investments, ensuring that rural areas are able to keep pace with modern infrastructure needs.

### THE FARM BILL:

- **Authorizes substantial appropriations for broadband infrastructure loans and grants** to connect the hardest to reach rural communities to the global economy;
- Gives rural communities **increased access to credit to finance critical infrastructure**, such as essential community facilities and public water systems by expanding the guaranteed lending programs that bring private capital into rural America;
- **Incentivizes regional infrastructure and economic development projects** by giving the secretary new tools to prioritize projects for those communities which commit to working together on shared development goals;
- **Provides \$100 million per year to rebuild rural dams and flood protection infrastructure.** These structures have had a significant impact by conserving resources and preserving the viability of rural communities;
- Makes significant improvements to **rebuild our agricultural research and scientific facilities infrastructure.** The legislation creates a new framework for the repair and maintenance of facilities and scientific equipment at our nation's colleges of food and agricultural sciences. It also reauthorizes critical funding for repair and maintenance of Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facilities and grants to upgrade food and agricultural sciences facilities at 1890 Land-grant institutions;
- Supports the **critical animal health infrastructure which protects against emerging and foreign animal diseases** and spearheads the research and response to economically devastating diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease, influenza in avian and swine species, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), and most recently, swine enteric coronavirus diseases; and
- Provides the secretary the authority to **prioritize projects that help communities meet the challenges of the opioid crisis**, including projects that provide access to telehealth services and build medical facilities in rural communities. It also provides a 33 percent (\$25,000,000) increase in authorized funding for critical telehealth grants under the distance Learning and Telehealth Program;
- Supports resilient working forests by incentivizing research and development of innovative wood products and **commercial infrastructure to market forest byproducts** from management projects.