



September 9, 2019

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than 3 million members of the National Education Association, we urge you to cosponsor and support a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (H.R. 3048).

Before the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act's passage, many forest-impacted communities experienced dramatic reductions in federal forestland revenues due to significant decreases in federal timber sales. As a result, payments to many rural forest schools dropped to less than 10 percent of historic levels. Devastating losses of education funding led to reductions in teaching staff and other education personnel, elimination of extracurricular programs, cancellation of school meals programs, and postponement of desperately needed building repairs. The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act offered a solution by:

- Ensuring a predictable payment to federally impacted forest counties;
- Providing vital funding for educational services for students in over 775 rural counties and 4,400 schools;
- Preventing the closure of isolated rural schools and the layoffs of school staff and other public-service workers; and
- Protecting funding for libraries, sheriff patrols, local corrections facilities, search and rescue operations, and mental health care services.

H.R. 3048 will extend the Secure Rural Schools program for FY 2019 and 2020. This bipartisan legislation will provide the near-term stability to enable rural schools to meet the educational needs of their students. We ask that you contact either Bo Morris, bo.morris@mail.house.gov, staff contact for Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO), or Jared Powell, jared.powell@mail.house.gov, staff contact for Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), to cosponsor H.R. 3048.

Extending the program is critical, but rural communities and schools continue to struggle. Congress must work on a long-term, sustainable solution that will foster development and economic recovery and help ensure rural communities' future security and vitality.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association