

RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2002

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, our rural communities are at the very heart of our Nation and are an essential aspect of our economy. It is our small towns that define the values and identity of America. We, however, are at risk of losing our small towns. A struggling economy has caused many of our youth to flee from our rural communities. After all, one must go where the jobs are. We must reach out to rural communities to help once again stimulate the economy and ensure that our rural towns have first class schools and access to quality medical care. It is in this spirit that I have introduced the Rural Development Act of 2002. This legislation offers help to rural America and ensures that our Nation's heartland continues to experience vitality and growth.

The Rural Development Act has three key components. First, this legislation offers tax incentives to businesses who move into rural areas in an effort to stimulate the economy and provide much needed jobs. Second, the bill focuses on improving the education of students in rural America by directing funds to schools to upgrade technology and provide students with the tools they need to succeed in the 21st century. Finally, we work to improve rural healthcare by offering education incentives to doctors and nurses who agree to serve in those areas.

Our businesses and industries carry huge tax burdens and are bogged down by endless bureaucratic red tape, all of which stifles job growth. This bill works to offer some relief to companies by offering a tax credit of 50 percent, over a ten year period, to companies who move into rural areas and either occupy an existing facility or construct a new facility. This incentive will again draw businesses into rural America and bring much needed-jobs along with them. This not only benefits business by giving them a tax break, but also will provide them with a more cost efficient area in which to expand and grow.

My legislation also recognizes the need for a well-trained and well-educated workforce. To this end the bill authorizes funds to provide rural schools with the tools necessary to ensure that all of our students receive a high quality education. My legislation calls on the Department of Education to offer grants to rural schools to enhance technology and teacher preparation programs as well as creating innovative enrichment programs for children at risk of failure with a particular emphasis on math, science, history and English. Rural schools face many unique challenges and often are forced to forgo federal funds because they do not have the financial resources or poverty data needed to qualify. This legislation recognizes those challenges and sets funds aside specifically for rural areas and help them continue to offer quality education to our Nation's youth.

Finally, my bill focuses on enhancing rural healthcare. Rural residents have been especially hard hit by the nursing shortage that is plaguing America. Nearly one quarter of our nation's population lives in rural areas, yet almost all of the hospitals and healthcare facilities located in these communities are, to no

fault of their own, chronically understaffed. To help combat this problem my bill offers education incentives to nurses and doctors to serve in rural areas. The legislation directs the Secretary of Education to create a scholarship program to pay 50 percent of the tuition of students who agree to serve in rural areas for a period of no less than four years. This is a win-win initiative for both students interested in the medical field and rural communities. It allows students who could not otherwise afford the tuition to attend nursing or medical schools and provides much needed doctors and nurses to rural America! Since these students will not be burdened with huge student loans at graduation they will not be forced to leave for better paying urban hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, our rural communities define who we are. They are our Nation's heartland and throughout most of history these communities have been blessed with vitality and growth. In recent years, however, these communities have seen the flight of many of their youth due to a lack of jobs. If this flight continues, Mr. Speaker, we run the risk of finding our small towns vacant. My legislation works to change this trend.

Good paying jobs are the cornerstone of any economy and by providing rural America with these jobs we will help ensure that our rural economies continue to thrive. With jobs, however, comes the need for a well-trained and well-educated workforce. My legislation answers this challenge by giving rural schools the funds they need to provide all of our students with the tools needed to succeed. Completing the circle, this legislation ensures that citizens of rural communities have access to first rate medical care they deserve as they move into their golden years. With good jobs, an education system that is second to none and access to high quality health care we can ensure our rural communities continue to flourish for years to come.

AVIATION FUEL TAX RELIEF ACT

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Aviation Fuel Tax Relief Act.

As we know, the airline industry is struggling to make ends meet. As industry representatives have indicated in recent testimony before Congress, the challenges of the current economy in addition to significant increases in security-related expenditures are having a tremendous impact on the viability of the airline industry.

The dramatic increases in security requirements have been implemented to provide a necessary level of security for the flying public. However, the precarious state of the airline industry has required them to absorb many of the new security-based costs, rather than pass them on through ticket sales. The true scope of those additional costs were not anticipated by Congress nor the airline industry and they are now having a tremendous economic impact. While Congress has previously taken action to provide assistance to the airlines, layoffs and reductions in service within the industry continue.

The bill I introduce today is one step that Congress can take to reduce the government-

imposed costs on an industry that is facing serious challenges. Currently airlines pay 4.3 cents on every gallon of jet fuel purchased. The Aviation Fuel Tax Relief Act will repeal that tax and provide needed relief for an industry that is vital to our national economy.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH BRACEY

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, Joseph Bracey will retire from the United States Probation System in November after 25 years of distinguished service. The ideals and values his role model father, a North Carolina State Trooper, instilled, led Joe to choose a career in law enforcement.

After graduating from UNCC in Charlotte, Joe began his career as a North Carolina Probation/Parole Officer and then became a Special Agent for the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation.

In 1977, Joe was appointed as a United States Probation Officer in the Western District of North Carolina. Joe has held positions of Drug Specialist, Supervising United States Probation and Deputy Chief United States Probation Officer.

As one of the first Firearms Instructors in the Federal Probation System, Joe has dedicated his career to officer safety programs and is widely known for his expertise in this area.

Joe's career has been highlighted by his genuine love of his country and his profession. He has served both exceptionally and is to be commended for his dedicated service. I wish him well in his retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
INFORMATION SECURITY ACT**HON. CHRISTOPHER JOHN**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. JOHN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today a bill that will promote the secure sharing of information and communications within the proposed Department of Homeland Security—the Information Security Act. This Act authorizes funding to implement and maintain the enhanced security infrastructure necessary for sensitive information to be securely stored, transmitted, and disseminated within a new Department of Homeland Security.

Although we have had a lot of debate about policies, procedures and the organization of a Department of Homeland Security, I believe we have not given enough attention to the need to put into place information technology systems that will allow different parts of the U.S. government to communicate and collaborate securely with each other. We will not win the war on terror if we simply put various federal agencies under the umbrella of a Department of Homeland Security without the secure infrastructure to make it into a cohesive organization.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to ignore the threats posed by cyber attacks and the urgent