

The ADHS now encompasses over 3,000 miles of Appalachian highways and nearly 85 percent of those roads are complete or under construction. The ADHS is truly a success story for ARC and all of Appalachia. Despite the Presidents recent budget, which requests eliminating funding for the Appalachian Development Highway System, it is my strong conviction that this program be continued at the agreed upon level set forth in SAFETEA-LU.

If Members review a recent report, entitled, *The Potential for an Uncontrolled Mass Evacuation of the DC Metro Area Following a Terrorist Attack: A report of Survey Findings*, by West Virginia University, it becomes readily clear that the ARC's development highways will critically serve another national purpose in times of "mass spontaneous evacuations," particularly from here, Madam Speaker, our Nation's Capital. This may surprise many, but about 83 percent of the people here plan on probably leaving, and 88 percent of those plan on leaving by car.

Without doubt Appalachia, West Virginia, in particular, must be ready to handle such future fateful events. The ARC can be a catalyst in preparing for such an eventuality, but they do not have the resources, nor the mandate to fulfill this function. I hope this lone call, will signal, first the need, and secondly the will, of this Member of Congress, that we need full partners in the federal government to work with ARC and other appropriate agencies to plan for evacuations now rather than some distant day.

ARC has also been a responsible steward of the federal funds it has received over the years. For example, in FY 2006, across all investment areas, each dollar of ARC funding was matched by \$3.14 in non-ARC public project funding, and each ARC dollar invested leveraged \$11.55 in private investment in ARC projects over time.

And while a major focus of ARC remains on highways and Appalachian transportation infrastructure, as the times have changed so has ARC.

As much of the United States has been able to take advantage of the technological boom of the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, Appalachia once again is in danger of being left behind and unable to compete in the global marketplace.

In the most recent FCC data on high-speed connections for Internet access, released on January 31, 2007, you can track the Appalachian mountain range by just how spotty the provider coverage is on the FCC's provider map. In fact, West Virginia is significantly below the average in broadband use nationwide.

Again, ARC is there to offer significant support, bringing broadband access to our communities, which is essential to leveling the playing field and giving our communities an opportunity to compete. Schools, businesses, local governments and individual homes all have benefited from ARC involvement in the expansion of broadband access in Appalachia, and continue to do so.

I have been working with ARC, private telecommunications companies, and local economic development leaders to bring broadband technology into southern West Virginia. For example, through the E-commerce training initiatives being offered by ARC and others we are working to connect local small businesses to broadband, opening doors to

Internet sales and services that just weren't there a couple of years ago.

It is ARC's ability to serve its mission by adapting its actions to fit the times that makes ARC such an invaluable resource to Appalachia and the Nation. From the Appalachian Development Highway System to the E-commerce and broadband initiatives, ARC continues to serve its mission by advocating for and partnering with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

I applaud the efforts of Federal Co-Chair Anne Pope who, as a native daughter of Appalachia, executes so well the mission of ARC in each of Appalachia's communities. I have said this before and am happy to do so again on the record, Anne is one of the finest Federal Co-Chairs to ever serve the people of Appalachia and I look forward to our continued strong relationship serving the needs of southern West Virginians, together.

I strongly support ARC, its mission and the incredibly successful initiatives it has undertaken to better the lives of the people of Appalachia and West Virginia. It is why I signed a bipartisan letter of support for increasing the funding which the ARC receives, which I request be included in the RECORD, and I continue to support strong and robust funding to maintain the vision which President Kennedy laid before us, some 40 years ago.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, April 24, 2007.

HON. PETER VISLOSKEY,

Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, House Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

HON. DAVID HOBSON,

Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, House Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN VISLOSKEY AND RANKING MEMBER HOBSON: We respectfully request that you include funding in the amount of \$75 million for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in the Fiscal Year 2008 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill.

Since 1965, the ARC has contributed significantly to improving the quality of life for the 23 million Americans in the Region by working closely with its federal, state, and private sector partners and local communities.

As Representatives from Appalachia, we see first hand the successes that have resulted from the ARC's economic development initiatives. For example, the Region's poverty rate has been cut in half, the infant mortality rate has been reduced by two-thirds, the high school graduation rate has increased by over 70 percent—comparing favorably with the national average, and the Commission's initiatives have helped create approximately 1.6 million jobs.

We are requesting this modest increase to help the ARC address more aggressively the Region's infrastructure deficiencies and the continuing human capital and leadership deficits which result in concentrated areas of poverty and unemployment. Over the last ten years, funding for the ARC has remained level at around \$65 million and the Region continues to receive less federal assistance per capita than the rest of the country.

The ARC has been a responsible steward of the federal funds it has received over the years. For example, in FY 2006, across all investment areas, each dollar of ARC funding was matched by \$3.14 in non-ARC public project funding, and each ARC dollar in-

vested leveraged \$11.55 in private investment in ARC projects over time.

With the advent of the global economy, the ARC faces more complex and profound challenges while third world conditions still exist in the Region and require the Commission's continued focus. For example, according to a recent analysis completed by the University of North Carolina Environmental Financing Center, the counties in the Region require estimated investments of \$11.4 billion to meet current drinking water needs and \$14.3 billion for wastewater needs. This is substantially more than the funding that is currently available from combined state and federal programs. Without basic infrastructure, economic development, and improvements in the overall quality of life, the Appalachian Region will continue to lag well behind the rest of the nation.

Currently, the rural areas in the Region lag behind the nation in access to cable modem and DSL services and other forms of high speed internet access. We know the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure throughout the Region has become an absolute necessity if Appalachians are going to compete in the national and global economies. Today's globalization comes with a higher threshold for success: high technology jobs rather than manual labor, college education rather than basic literacy and the need for modern telecommunications infrastructure to facilitate economic development.

Despite the impressive accomplishments of the ARC, the 410-county Region still faces a complex set of economic and social challenges and will need continued support from Congress if the Commission's goal for the Region—socio-economic parity with the rest of the nation—is to be reached.

Looking to the future, the ARC expects to capitalize on the Region's abundant energy assets to promote job creation in the energy sector with energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives as well as with conventional fuels.

Appalachia's future remains at risk. Therefore, on behalf of the citizens in the Region we urge you to support a funding level of \$75 million for FY 2008. We believe this level will allow the agency to continue its important work to improve the quality of life in Appalachia, particularly in the poorest and most underdeveloped counties.

Thank you for consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Zack Space, David Scott, David Davis, Heath Shuler, Michael A. Arcuri, Lincoln Davis, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Spencer Bachus, Rick Boucher, Charles A. Wilson, Phil English, Shelley Moore Capito, Tim Holden, Christopher P. Carney, Ed Whitfield, Hank Johnson, Jr., Jason Altmire, Paul E. Kanjorski, John J. Duncan, Jr., Nick J. Rahall, II, Brian Higgins, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Geoff Davis, Chip Pickering, and Phil Gingrey.

Members of Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, on Monday, June 18, 2007, I was unable to vote on rollcall Nos. 499 through 501. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on all of these amendments.