



NATIONAL
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June 28, 2018

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hyde-Smith:

On behalf of the 1.3 million members of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), thank you for introducing Amendment 3324 to S.2976, the “Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2019”. NAR strongly supports this amendment, which will help the 20 percent of the U.S. population that live in rural areas and small towns.

As a result of the anticipated findings of the 2020 Census, it is estimated that more than 900 communities may become ineligible for the housing programs of the Rural Housing Service (RHS) due to changes in their population totals or designation as part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). RHS programs such as the Section 502, 515, and 538 loan programs provide direct and guaranteed loans for both single and multifamily housing creating both rental and homeownership housing opportunities for rural families across America. As our economic and housing recovery continues, access to these programs is crucial. In FY19, RHS expects to provide 164,000 low- to moderate-income households the opportunity to own their homes through the single-family housing guaranteed loan program and provide rental assistance through more than 274,000 affordable rental properties throughout rural America.

Obtaining safe affordable housing remains a challenge in these areas where rental housing is often limited and access to mortgage financing is challenging. Your amendment will ensure that communities remain eligible for the important services of the RHS. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Mendenhall
2018 President, National Association of REALTORS®



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