

Farm Bill Priorities

The Farm Bill is an opportunity to improve health care, build rural community and economic development, and enhance the overall quality of life in rural communities.

SUPPORT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The RD title supports the backbone of rural communities, from hospitals to child care facilities. Congress must leverage key programs such as the **Community Facilities Loan & Grant Programs** to provide rural hospitals necessary capital and the strengthen economic health of rural areas.

END RURAL FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity impacts more than 1 in 10 rural households, contributing to worse health outcomes for rural residents. Congress must reauthorize and bolster food security programs to help end rural health disparities.




BUILD RURAL BROADBAND CAPACITY

Broadband access is critical for utilizing telehealth services. Increase support for **Community Connect, ReConnect, Rural Broadband, and Distance Learning & Telemedicine programs** to ensure rural America is connected.

ELEVATE RURAL HEALTH

Reauthorize the **Rural EMS & Equipment Assistance Program** and continue support for USDA's **Rural Health Liaison**. Congress must also address farmer behavioral health by supporting the **Farm & Ranch Stress Assistance Network** and authorizing a designated agricultural worker mental health crisis hotline.

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Pass the following legislation as part of the 2024 Farm Bill package

H.R. 4713: Rural Hospital Technical Assistance Program Act

Reps. Kilmer (D-WA) & Jackson (R-TX)

Authorizes the USDA Hospital Technical Assistance Program to identify and address hospital needs to improve financial performance and quality outcomes.

S. 1736/H.R. 6379: Farmers First Act

*Sens. Ernst (R-IA) & Baldwin (D-WI),
Reps. Feenstra (R-IA) & Costa (D-CA)*

Reauthorizes the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network at \$15 million to provide agricultural communities with mental health resources.

S. 1077: Home-Based Telemental Health Care Act

*Sens. Rounds (R-SD) & Smith (D-MN),
Reps. Salinas (D-OR) & Harshbarger (R-TN)*

Improves access to mental health and substance use services by establishing a grant program for health providers to expand their telemental health capacity in rural areas and for individuals working in farming, fishing, and forestry.

H.R. 5989: Rural Health Care Facilities Revitalization Act

*Reps. Caraveo (D-CO), Moolenaar (R-MI),
Del. Moylan (R-GU), & Salinas (D-OR)*

Allows hospitals, behavioral health facilities, clinics, and long-term care facilities to use Rural Development assistance to upgrade health IT, refinance debt obligations, and support ancillary needs.

H.R. 4603: Rural Wellness Act

Reps. Caraveo (D-CO) & Finstad (R-MN)

Prioritizes behavioral health projects in certain Rural Development grant programs and extends current substance use set-asides and prioritized selection.

S. 2447: Strengthening Telehealth and Education for Rural Communities Act

Sens. Lummis (R-WY) & Rosen (D-NV)

Reauthorizes the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program and removes administrative barriers to make it accessible for more rural communities.

H.R. 5246: National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act of 2023

Reps. Caraveo (D-CO) & Gonzales (R-TX)

Creates a 24/7 national crisis hotline tailored to support the mental health needs of farmers, ranchers, farm workers, and families by providing suicide crisis intervention, emotional support, information, and mental health and substance use disorder support services.

