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USDA announces \$20 million for Rural LISC to spur development of essential community facilities in poverty-stricken rural areas

Washington D.C. (October 6, 2016) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded \$20 million in financing to Rural LISC through its Community Facilities loan program to help bring critical services such as health care, child care and education to low-income rural communities around the country.

The funds are part of \$401 million being directed to 26 rural community development organizations, including Rural LISC, that are working closely with the USDA to help it more efficiently deploy capital for community facilities. Rural LISC will use the funds to make low-interest loans so nonprofits, services providers and municipal agencies can develop facilities that improve the quality of life in their communities. The program will hone in on areas with fewer than 20,000 residents facing high rates of persistent poverty.

“Too many rural communities struggle to attract the basic services that urban residents are long-acustomed to having in their cities and towns,” said Suzanne Anarde, Rural LISC program vice president. “These new USDA resources will help build the rural infrastructure that is critical to the well-being of millions of people across the country.”

Eligible facilities include health care centers and clinics, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, child care centers, community centers, schools, museums, libraries, colleges, and public buildings. The funds may be used for construction costs, equipment purchases and related project expenses.

“Part of the reason the USDA is partnering with Rural LISC is that we have a great deal of experience doing this kind of work and have close connections to local partners ready to quickly put this capital to use,” Anarde noted. “We have invested in these types of facilities for decades, and we know how to help get promising projects off the ground, even in our country’s most troubled communities.”

Among many examples of this work, Anarde noted how Rural LISC supported the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina, helping finance projects like the \$1.4 million Coastal Family Health Center in D’Iberville, Miss., an area decimated by the storm. Rural LISC provided an acquisition loan for the purchase of the property for the health center and predevelopment grants for much of the planning. The USDA Community Facilities program provided a permanent mortgage to help build the center. Today’s announcement of additional USDA funding will help Rural LISC streamline financing for similar projects.

To learn more, visit www.lisc.org/rural. Get updates and follow key developments on Twitter #UpliftAmerica and @LISCRural.

About Rural LISC

Rural LISC provides capital and community development services that help local leaders address social and economic challenges and opportunities. Since 1995, Rural LISC has helped rural nonprofits build nearly 30,000 homes and 3.3 million square feet of commercial and community facilities. Rural LISC has helped launch and expand more than 580 small businesses; fueled 6,500 rural jobs; supported child care facilities and after-school programs for 1,000 children; and leveraged more than \$125 million in matching funds to drive rural programs and development projects. Rural LISC is a national program of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), which has invested more than \$16 billion to revitalize urban and rural communities across the country. To learn more, visit www.lisc.org.

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