



Advocacy Toolkit:

How to Effectively Engage Members of Congress to Support RCAP Funding in FY20 & Educating New Members of Congress



“Improving the quality of life in rural communities”

Overview



- I. Advocacy Outreach for the RCAP National Fly-In
- II. Support Letter Templates
- III. Tips for a Successful Meeting
- IV. Tips on How to Engage with your Member of Congress via Social Media
- V. Current Funding for RCAP Programs
- VI. Supplemental Materials
- VII. Contact Information

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I. Advocacy Outreach for the RCAP National Fly-In



FY2020 Congressional Asks: Appropriations

- **\$9 million** in Agriculture-Rural Development appropriations to improve the operation and management of small water and wastewater systems with populations of 3,300 or less
- **\$8 million** in Agriculture-Rural Development appropriations of the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)

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I. Advocacy Outreach for the RCAP National Fly-In



FY2020 Congressional Asks: Appropriations Continued

- **\$11 million** in HHS appropriations to provide technical assistance to low-income rural communities who are developing water and wastewater systems
- **\$17 million** in EPA appropriations for technical and regulatory assistance to small communities
- **\$25 million** in EPA appropriations for small treatment works technical assistance

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II. Support Letter Templates



Sample Letter/Email to MoC to Support RCAP EPA Funding

Dear *[insert name of MoC]*:

I am writing in support of the Small Systems Technical Assistance Grants from the Offices of Water and Wastewater at EPA authorized in Section 1442 (e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act. This program provides assistance to small rural communities and reservations to develop and manage water and wastewater systems. The need for assistance to help small systems maintain compliance with federal clean and safe water standards is substantial. Therefore, we request you provide \$17 million of funding available under current budget constraints for this important program in the Fiscal Year 2020 Interior-Environment Appropriations Bill.

According to the American Community Survey's numbers, 662,411 U.S. households lack adequate access to water and wastewater systems. For over 20 years, EPA's Offices of Water and Wastewater has provided funding for technical assistance training to help address this problem. This program allows the six regional Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) service providers, including *[Insert Organization Name]* to work with federal and state agencies in all fifty states and Puerto Rico to help small communities address their drinking water and wastewater treatment concerns. RCAP partners work with all levels of state government to develop appropriate affordable financing options and they also work on compliance issues, and help communities prepare preliminary budgets for their projects.

[Insert 2-3 personal sentences about your organization's impact on communities within the state/district using this funding]

The financial burden of maintaining safe water systems is quite high for small rural communities so this program is critical. Each year, RCAP assists over 2,200 rural communities, including hundreds of drinking water and wastewater projects serving over 3 million Americans.

I appreciate your consideration of this program to help small rural communities remain in compliance with safe standards and build management capacity at the local level to facilitate rural water and wastewater system improvements.

Sincerely,

*[Name
Organization
City/State]*

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II. Support Letter Templates



Sample Letter/Email to MoC to Support RCAP USDA Funding

Dear **[insert name of MoC]:**

I am writing in support of the Technical Assistance and Training Grants from the Rural Utilities Service at USDA authorized in Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act for multi-state regional assistance to communities with populations of 3,300 or less. This program provides assistance to small rural communities and reservations to develop and manage water and wastewater systems. The need for assistance to help small systems maintain compliance with federal clean and safe water standards is substantial. Therefore, we request you provide \$9 million of funding available under current budget constraints for this important program in the Fiscal Year 2020 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

According to the American Community Survey's numbers, 662,411 U.S. households lack adequate access to water and wastewater systems. For over 30 years, USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has provided funding for technical assistance and training to help address this problem. The TAT Program allows the six regional Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) service providers, including **[Insert Organization Name]** to work with federal and state agencies in all fifty states and Puerto Rico to help small communities address their drinking water and wastewater treatment concerns. RCAP partners work with all levels of state government to develop appropriate affordable financing options and they also work on compliance issues, and help communities prepare preliminary budgets for their projects.

[Insert 2-3 personal sentences about your organization's impact on communities within the state/district using this funding]

The financial burden of maintaining safe water systems is quite high for small rural communities so this program is critical. Each year, RCAP assists over 2,200 rural communities, including hundreds of drinking water and wastewater projects serving over 3 million rural Americans.

I appreciate your consideration of this program to help small rural communities remain in compliance with safe standards and build management capacity at the local level to facilitate rural water and wastewater system improvements.

Sincerely,

**[Name
Organization
City/State]**

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II. Support Letter Templates



Sample Letter/Email to MoC to Support RCAP HHS Funding

Dear *[insert name of MoC]*:

I am writing in support of the Rural Community Facilities technical assistance program authorized in Section 680(a)(3)(B) of the Community Services Block Grant Act. This program provides assistance to small rural communities and reservations to develop and manage water and wastewater systems. The need for assistance to help small systems maintain compliance with federal clean and safe water standards is substantial. Therefore, we request you provide \$11 million of funding available under current budget constraints for this important program in the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill.

RCAP and other organizations can more effectively help small communities plan for critical infrastructure rehabilitation projects. With the current administration's push for infrastructure projects, this will help ensure that water and wastewater projects in rural America are not left out.

According to the American Community Survey's numbers, 662,411 U.S. households lack adequate access to water and wastewater systems. For over 30 years, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has provided funding for rural community facilities technical assistance to help address this problem. Rural Community Facilities funding allows the six regional Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) service providers, including *[organization]* to work with federal and state agencies in all fifty states and Puerto Rico to help small communities address their drinking water and wastewater treatment concerns. RCAP partners work with all levels of state government to develop appropriate affordable financing options and they also work on compliance issues, and help communities prepare preliminary budgets for their projects.

[Insert 2-3 personal sentences about your organization's impact on communities within the state/district using this funding]

The financial burden of maintaining safe water systems is quite high for small rural communities so this program is critical. Each year, RCAP assists over 2,200 rural communities, including hundreds of drinking water and wastewater projects serving over 3 million rural Americans.

I appreciate your consideration of this program to help small rural communities remain in compliance with safe standards and build management capacity at the local level to facilitate rural water and wastewater system improvements.

Sincerely,

*[Name
Organization
City/State]*

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III. Tips for a Successful Meeting



- Be prepared
 - MOC's and their staff members are incredibly busy, make sure you go into the meeting prepared with talking points
- Be concise
- Be personal
 - MOC's are elected by their constituents to represent their individual districts; make sure they understand the importance of RCAP's asks through their specific district's needs
- Remain bipartisan

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IV. Tips on How to Engage with your MoCs via Social Media



- Use #RCAPontheHill on Twitter to share your organization's impact with your MoC and/or the community's MoC
- Include a photo of your work and/or community or an infographic that demonstrates your impact
 - NOTE: Photos do not affect the 280 character count
 - Share a highlight of how your organization played a role in the communities success or highlight impact data
- Link out to the longform version of your story if you have it on your website
- Follow #RCAPontheHill throughout the week and retweet your fellow colleagues and RCAP: @RCAPInc

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Social Media Challenge



- Whoever posts the most pictures:
 - With MOC's
 - With MOC staff
 - With RCAP Network members
 - Engaging in fly-in activities
- Will win a **secret** prize

- Make sure to:
 - Tag @RCAPinc
 - Hashtag #RCAPOnTheHill, and your region

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IV. Current Funding for RCAP Related Programs



Federal Funding Programs-RCAP Related	FY 17 Final	FY 18 Final	FY 19 Final
USDA-Rural Development			
RUS-Water-Wastewater Disposal Program Accounts			
RUS-Water-Wastewater Direct Loans	1,200	1,200	1,400
RUS-Water-Wastewater Grants	391.98	400	475
RUS-Technical Assistance and Training Grants	20	40	23.7
RUS-Small System TAT Set-Aside	6.5	8	8
RUS-Water-Wastewater Guarantee	50	50	50
RUS-Solid Waste Grants	4	4	4
RUS-Water Well Program	0.993	0.993	1.5
RUS-Small Systems Revolver	1	1	1
RHS-Community Facility Direct Loans	2,600	2,600	2,800
RHS-Community Facility Grants	30	30	45.77
RHS-CF-RCDI Set-Aside	4	4	6
RHS-Community Facility Guarantee	148.305	148.305	148.28
RHS-CF-TAT Program Set-Aside	1.5	1.5	2.2
EPA			
Clean Water SRF	1393.8	1393.8	1694
Safe Drinking Water SRF	863.2	863.2	1164
EPA-National Priority Areas TA Program	12.6	12.6	15
HHS			
HHS – CSBG Discretionary: Rural Facilities	7.5	8	9

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V. Supplemental Materials



- Appropriations Committees
 - Link to [House Appropriations Committee](#)
 - Link to [Senate Appropriations Committee](#)
 - Go to your MoC's "Contact Me" tab on their website and click on the "Email or Message Me" tab
 - Type your message, record your contact information, and click "send"
 - Note: You may need to insert your zip code to verify you are a constituent of that Congressional district before you can send an email

- House Appropriations Committee Members Twitter Handles

- Senate Appropriations Committee Members Twitter Handles

- Map of Capitol Hill

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V. Supplemental Materials



House Appropriations Committee Members

Democrats

Committee Chair: Lowey (NY-17)

- Kaptur (OH-9)
- Visclosky (IN-1)
- Serrano (NY-15)
- DeLauro (CT-3)
- Price (NC-4)
- Roybal-Allard (CA-40)
- Bishop (GA-2)
- Lee (CA-13)
- McCollum (MN-4)
- Ryan (OH-13)
- Ruppertsberger (MD-2)
- Wasserman-Schultz (FL-23)
- Cuellar (TX-28)
- Pingree (ME-1)
- Quigley (IL-5)
- Kilmer (WA-6)
- Cartwright (PA-8)
- Meng (NY-6)
- Pocan (WI-2)
- Clark (MA-5)
- Aguilar (CA-31)
- Frankel (FL-21)
- Bustos (IL-17)
- Watson Coleman (NJ-12)
- Lawrence (MI-14)
- Torres (CA-35)
- Crist (FL-13)
- Kirkpatrick (AZ-2)
- Case (HI-1)

Republican

Ranking Member Granger (TX-12)

- (Hal) Rogers (KY-5)
- Calvert (CA-42)
- Harris (MD-1)
- Aderholdt (AL-4)
- Martha (AL-2)
- Cole (OK-4)
- Amodei (NV-2)
- Fleischmann (TN-3)
- Carter (TX-31)
- Diaz-Balart (FL-25)
- Stewart (UT-2)
- Valadao (CA-21)
- Joyce (OH-14)
- Palazzo (MS-4)
- Herrera-Beutler (WA-3)
- Granger (TX-12)
- Graves (GA-14)
- Simpson (ID-2)
- Womack (AR-3)
- Newhouse (WA-4)
- Rutherford (FL-4)
- Fortenberry (NE-1)
- Moolenaar (MI-4)

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V. Supplemental Materials



Senate Appropriations Committee Members

Republican

Committee Chair: Shelby (AL)

- McConnell (KY)
- Alexander (TN)
- Collins (ME)
- Murkowski (AK)
- Graham (SC)
- Blunt (MO)
- Moran (KS)
- Hoeven (ND)
- Boozman (AR)
- Capito (WV)
- Lankford (OK)
- Daines (MT)
- Kennedy (LA)
- Rubio (FL)
- Hyde-Smith (MS)

Democrats

Vice Chairman: Leahy (VT)

- Murray (WA)
- Feinstein (CA)
- Durbin (IL)
- Reed (RI)
- Tester (MT)
- Udall (NM)
- Shaheen (NH)
- Merkley (OR)
- Coons (DE)
- Schatz (HI)
- Baldwin (WI)
- Murphy (CT)
- Manchin (WV)
- Van Hollen (MD)

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V. Supplemental Materials



- Please share with the RCAP National Office how your congressional visits went and what additional follow-up with offices might needed. Please e-mail this information to tstiger@rcap.org



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House Twitter Handles - Democrats

- Kaptur (OH-9) @RepMarcyKaptur
- Visclosky (IN-1) @RepVisclosky
- Serrano (NY-15) @RepJoseSerrano
- DeLauro (CT-3) @rosadelauro
- Price (NC-4) @RepDavidEPrice
- Roybal-Allard (CA-40) @RepRoyballAllard
- Bishop (GA-2) @SandfordBishop
- Lee (CA-13) @RepBarbaraLee
- McCollum (MN-4) @BettyMcCollum04
- Ryan (OH-13) @RepTimRyan
- Ruppertsberger (MD-2) @Call_Me_Dutch
- Wasserman Schultz (FL-23) @RepDWStweets
- Cuellar (TX-28) @RepCuellar
- Pingree (ME-1) @chelliepingree
- Quigley (IL-5) @RepMikeQuigley
- Kilmer (WA-6) @RepDerekKilmer
- Cartwright (PA-8) @RepCartwright
- Meng (NY-6) @RepGraceMeng
- Pocan (WI-2) @repmarkpocan
- Clark (MA-5) @RepKClark
- Aguilar (CA-31) @RepPeteAguilar
- Frankel (FL-21) @RepLoisFrankel
- Bustos (IL-17) @RepCheri
- Watson Coleman (NJ-12) @RepBonnie
- Lawrence (MI-14) @RepLawrence
- Torres (CA-35) @NormaJTorres
- Crist (FL-13) @RepCharlieCrist
- Kirkpatrick (AZ-2) @RepKirkpatrick
- Case (HI-1) @RepEdCase

House Twitter Handles – Appropriations Republicans



- (Hal) Rogers (KY-5) @RepHalRogers
- Calvert (CA-42) @KenCalvert
- Harris (MD-1) @RepAndyHarrisMD
- Aderholdt (AL-4) @Robert_Aderholt
- Roby (AL-2) @RepMarthaRoby
- Cole (OK-4) @TomColeOK04
- Amodei (NV-2) @MarkAmodeiNV2
- Fleischmann (TN-3) @RepChuck
- Carter (TX-31) @JudgeCarter
- Diaz-Balart (FL-25) @MarioDB
- Stewart (UT-2) @RepChrisStewart
- Valadao (CA-21) @RepDavidValadao
- Joyce (OH-14) @RepDaveJoyce
- Palazzo (MS-4) @CongPalazzo
- Herrera-Beutler (WA-3) @HerreraBeutler
- Granger (TX-12) @RepKayGranger
- Graves (GA-14) @RepTomGraves
- Simpson (ID-2) @CongMikeSimpson
- Womack (AR-3) @rep_stevewomack
- Newhouse (WA-4) @RepNewhouse
- Rutherford (FL-4) @RepRutherfordFL
- Fortenberry (NE-1) @JeffFortenberry
- Moolenaar (MI-4) @RepMoolenaar

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Senate Twitter Handles – Appropriations Republicans

- Shelby (AL) @SenShelby
- McConnell (KY) @senatemajldr
- Alexander (TN) @SenAlexander
- Collins (ME) @SenatorCollins
- Murkowski (AK) @lisamurkowski
- Graham (SC) @LindseyGrahamSC
- Blunt (MO) @RoyBlunt
- Moran (KS) @JerryMoran
- Hoeven (ND) @SenJohnHoeven
- Boozman (AR) @JohnBoozman
- Capito (WV) @SenCapito
- Lankford (OK) @SenatorLankford
- Daines (MT) @SteveDaines
- Kennedy (LA) @SenJohnKennedy
- Rubio (FL) @marcorubio
- Hyde-Smith (MS) @SenHydeSmith

Senate Twitter Handles – Appropriations Democrats

- Leahy (VT) @senatorLeahy
- Murray (WA) @PattyMurray
- Feinstein (CA) @SenFeinstein
- Durbin (IL) @SenatorDurbin
- Reed (RI) @SenJackReed
- Tester (MT) @SenatorTester
- Udall (NM) @SenatorTomUdall
- Shaheen (NH) @SenatorShaheen
- Merkley (OR) @SenJeffMerkley
- Coons (DE) @ChrisCoons
- Schatz (HI) @SenBrianSchatz
- Baldwin (WI) @SenatorBaldwin
- Murphy (CT) @ChrisMurphyCT
- Manchin (WV) @Sen_JoeManchin
- Van Hollen (MD) @ChrisVanHollen

Map of Capitol Hill



U.S. Capitol Map

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 U.S. Capitol Building | 8 Madison Building: Library of Congress |
| 2 Russell Senate Office Building | 9 Cannon House Office Building |
| 3 Dirksen Senate Office Building | 10 Longworth House Office Building |
| 4 Hart Senate Office Building | 11 Rayburn House Office Building |
| 5 U.S. Supreme Court | 12 Ford House Office Building |
| 6 Jefferson Building: Library of Congress | 13 U.S. Botanic Garden |
| 7 Adams Building: Library of Congress | 14 Capitol Visitor Center |



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Hotel Location

- **2019 RCAP Fly-In Hotel:
The Liaison Capitol Hill**
415 New Jersey Ave NW
Washington, DC 20001
- Union Station Metro Stop (Red Line)
- See Capitol Hill Complex Map for location of Union Station



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VI. RCAP Public Policy Team Contact Information



- **Nathan Ohle, Executive Director**
 - nohle@rcap.org
 - Washington, DC

- **Ted Stiger, Senior Director, Government Relations & Policy**
 - tstiger@rcap.org
 - Washington, DC

- **Ashley Zuelke, Senior Director, Research & Programs**
 - azuelke@rcap.org
 - Denver, CO

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