



Economic Development And Revitalization Task Force Sends FY24 Appropriations Letter To Congress

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On behalf of the nation's Governors, we welcome the opportunity to provide Congress with our priorities as your respective committees continue to craft and consider the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) appropriations bills.

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol Building S-146A
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol Building S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Chair Granger, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As Co-Chairs of the National Governor Association's Economic Development and

Revitalization Task Force, we welcome the opportunity to provide you with our priorities as your respective committees continue to craft and consider the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) appropriations bills.

In 2021, NGA adopted task forces as a more streamlined, Governor-driven approach to formulate and execute on federal policy matters that are priorities to Governors. The three task forces — Community Renewal; Public Health and Disaster Response; and Economic Development and Revitalization — work in a bipartisan fashion to coordinate NGA's work on federal policy issues.

The Economic Development and Revitalization Task Force has jurisdiction over issues in the areas of infrastructure, broadband, state stabilization, energy, environment, land management, and taxes. Congress has been an instrumental partner for states and territories in funding efforts to help support infrastructure, economic development, and environmental programs. Therefore, as you look toward Fiscal Year 2024's appropriations process, NGA requests that you prioritize the following funding efforts in support of:

- **Fully Funding Surface Transportation:** Governors request a continued strong commitment to our nation's transportation infrastructure, by providing full funding for core highway and transit programs included in the surface transportation program with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The historic funding certainty provided by the IIJA will be critical as states and territories develop long-term transportation plans and Governors applaud Congress for fully funding authorized levels of the surface transportation program over the past several years.
- **Transportation Grant Programs:** Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grants, and Capital Investment Grants for transit are both critical tools for building our nation's infrastructure. Governors urge Congress to continue to prioritize and fund these vital infrastructure programs.
- **Broadband Deployment and Access:** As Governors, we understand the critical role that reliable and accessible internet connectivity plays in bridging the digital divide in our communities. Internet access is essential for telehealth, accessing education and workforce development programs, and connecting the 21st century economy. We strongly support the wide range of federal programs through the National Telecommunications Information Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Communications Commission, which support broadband deployment in unserved and underserved areas. Similarly, Congress should continue to prioritize the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) that helps low-income households access

affordable internet service. Continued funding for the ACP is crucial in our efforts to ensure the adoption of services now available through the significant broadband infrastructure investments in our states and territories.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program:** Governors continue to support the critically important annual formula grants to states and local governments for a wide range of community and economic development purposes. CDBG grants expand affordable housing opportunities, create jobs, and stabilize neighborhoods across the country. The non-entitlement portion of CDBG, which is distributed through the States and Small Cities program, ensures that housing, public facilities, and economic development projects benefit persons of low and moderate income. Therefore, NGA requests Congress continue to provide consistent appropriations for the Community Development Block Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2024.
- **Economic Development Administration (EDA) Programs:** EDA is the only federal agency with a mission solely focused on private sector job creation in distressed areas. EDA is important to Governors because it serves as a catalyst in helping states and territories achieve long-term economic growth. EDA is designed to create jobs and stimulate the economy in areas of the country that need the most help — both rural and urban — and now plays a critical role in deploying funding for regional technology hubs as part of the CHIPS and Science Act. Governors urge Congress to include robust funding for EDA in Fiscal Year 2024.
- **Energy Grant Programs:** Governors support full funding for the State Energy Program (SEP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). These programs are critical tools for the development and implementation of our state and territorial energy strategies and goals and examples of successful state-federal programs. SEP is the primary state-federal cooperative program addressing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in all sectors of the economy. States and territories have a history of successfully matching federal dollars with state, local, and private funds to help homeowners, small businesses, schools, municipalities, and hospitals save energy. Similarly, WAP helps low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled by improving the energy efficiency of low-income housing.
- **Water Infrastructure:** Governors share Congress's ongoing concerns about aging water, inland waterways, port, and wastewater infrastructure. We commend your leadership in passing the IJA and the historic resources for flooding mitigation and coastal resilience as well as drinking water and wastewater projects. Governors support full funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to provide long-term, long-cost loans for state and territorial projects.

NGA also supports continued efforts to ensure the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and Inland Waterways Trust Fund receipts are equitably allocated and dedicated for their intended purpose to ensure our ports and inland waterways are maintained at the highest level. Additionally, Governors support robust funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civil works program for flood control and ecosystem restoration.

- **Environmental Management:** Governors express our continued support of predictable federal funding for states that are home to Defense Environmental Cleanup sites managed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and we request substantially increasing funding for the Office of Environmental Management. According to DOE's own estimates, each year that the federal government underfunds the cleanups at the sites in our states, the completion timeline – and the expected cost of the aging facilities and infrastructure – increases by years and billions of dollars, respectively, while the potential for radioactive contamination increases. The best way the federal government can meet its obligations and protect taxpayers is to invest in the resources needed now to accelerate these cleanups.
- **Sufficient Wildfire Response and Management Funding:** Governors appreciate federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, non-governmental and public partners who help manage our national cohesive wildfire management strategy and effectively respond to wildfires when they occur. Governors urge strong funding for this work at the Department of Interior and the U.S. Forest Service and request increased funding for Wildland Fire Management activities. Congress should also ensure relevant agencies are effectively implementing long-term wildfire mitigation strategies.

On behalf of all Governors, we thank you for your continued support of these top NGA priorities for Fiscal Year 2024, and for focusing on funding our nation's critical needs.

Sincerely,

Governor Andy Beshear
State of Kentucky
Co-Chair, NGA Task Force on Economic
Development and Revitalization
National Governors Association

Governor Henry McMaster
State of South Carolina
Co-Chair, NGA Task Force on Economic
Development and Revitalization
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