



BOB CASEY

FIGHTING for PENNSYLVANIA FAMILIES

The Rural Partnership and Prosperity Act of 2023

U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Deb Fischer (R-NE)

Rural America has powered and fed the United States since the country's inception. However, rural communities have long lacked investment and faced higher barriers in accessing existing federal funding streams, both of which have contributed to widening disparities in economic and community development outcomes between rural places and more urban and suburban areas. Unlike higher population areas with larger tax bases, rural leaders often lack funding and staffing resources, and are left juggling numerous responsibilities while navigating the overlapping challenges of economic change and population shifts.

Given these headwinds and resource constraints, many rural leaders feel they lack the funding and staff capacity to successfully compete in the national economy as well as navigate the complex system of federal grants. *The Rural Partnership and Prosperity Act of 2023* would address these needs by creating a set of programs aimed at providing direct support to rural communities through funding and technical assistance:

- **Rural Partnership Program Grants** would help fill the persistent need felt across rural communities for direct federal support for economic and community development activities. The grant program would provide multiyear, flexible awards to communities to be used to address urgent needs, including but not limited to affordable child care, housing, and job training.
- **Rural Prosperity Technical Assistance Grants** would address the need in many rural areas for assistance with economic and community development activities, including navigating existing federal funding opportunities. Rural stakeholders would be able to access technical assistance via awarded providers who would help them pursue funding and carry out community development and planning activities. Providing rural communities with this assistance helps ensure that rural communities are getting their fair share of private and federal investment.
- The bill would also double down on previous efforts to formalize a **whole-of-government approach to rural development**. These provisions would improve supportive services offered by the federal government to rural communities, including by activating federal agencies in new ways and facilitating better cross-agency coordination.

These flexible programs are intended to meet communities where they are and respond to specific local needs, all while increasing government efficiency and ensuring rural taxpayers see their tax dollars come back to their communities for meaningful projects.

Rural communities deserve a fair shot at growth and a fair shot at federal resources. By empowering rural places with targeted, direct support, the *Rural Partnership and Prosperity Act of 2023* gives communities the resources they need to thrive.