

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2427

To require that an independent review of the efficiency and effectiveness of all headquarters offices of USDA Rural Development and the Natural Resource Conservation Service be carried out before any county Rural Development office may be merged with a county office of the Natural Resource Conservation Service or any county office of the Natural Resource Conservation Service may be merged with a county Rural Development office.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2007

Mr. BARROW introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To require that an independent review of the efficiency and effectiveness of all headquarters offices of USDA Rural Development and the Natural Resource Conservation Service be carried out before any county Rural Development office may be merged with a county office of the Natural Resource Conservation Service or any county office of the Natural Resource Conservation Service may be merged with a county Rural Development office.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF HEADQUARTERS**
2 **OFFICES OF USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT**
3 **AND THE NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVA-**
4 **TION SERVICE PENDING ANY COUNTY OF-**
5 **FICE MERGERS.**

6 (a) **REVIEW REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Agri-
7 culture shall enter into a contract with an independent re-
8 viewing authority selected by the Secretary to carry out
9 an independent review of the efficiency and effectiveness
10 of operations at all headquarters offices of USDA Rural
11 Development and the Natural Resource Conservation
12 Service, including—

13 (1) the headquarters offices in Washington,
14 DC; and
15 (2) all State offices.

16 (b) **REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.**—The review described
17 in subsection (a) shall include a review for each office of—
18 (1) management practices;
19 (2) information technology purchases and
20 deliverables;

21 (3) software development;
22 (4) contractor hiring practices and related cost-
23 savings; and

24 (5) such other factors as the independent re-
25 viewing authority considers to be relevant to the effi-
26 ciency and effectiveness of operations at each office.

1 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date
2 of completion of the independent review, the independent
3 reviewing authority shall submit to the Secretary, the
4 Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representa-
5 tives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
6 Forestry of the Senate a report that contains—

7 (1) a description of the results of the study;
8 and

9 (2) recommendations for improving the effi-
10 ciency and effectiveness of operations at each office.

11 (d) PROHIBITION ON COUNTY OFFICE MERGERS IM-
12 PLEMENTATION OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS.—The
13 Secretary may not merge any county Rural Development
14 office with a county office of the Natural Resource Con-
15 servation Service or any county office of the Natural Re-
16 source Conservation Service with a county Rural Develop-
17 ment office before the later of the following dates:

18 (1) The date on which the Secretary determines
19 that each headquarters office referred to in sub-
20 section (a) has implemented the recommendations
21 for that office contained in the report submitted
22 under subsection (c).

23 (2) October 1, 2008.

