

in Seattle, Washington, with \$100 borrowed from a friend. Since then, they have grown from a 2-person message delivery firm into a 427,000-plus employee global transportation and logistics corporation that moves nearly 15,000,000 packages through its network each business day.

The 4th Congressional District is home to the Oak Street Processing facility. This facility employs hundreds of hard-working individuals and is critical to UPS' Long Island operations. I am proud to have such an instrumental facility in my district. I want to thank the UPS employees from the Oak Street Facility and throughout the nation, for their continued service and dedication to our country".

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 375, Honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States.

I have a UPS facility in my district on Sweetwater Lane in Houston and I have visited the facility many times to speak with management and the employees who are represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. I even delivered packages with the UPS employees a few years ago on the Beltway 8 and Intercontinental Airport Route. Many of my constituents work at this UPS location and I am pleased that UPS continues to be a responsible employer and corporate citizen.

Many businesses have difficulties surviving over time, but UPS has stayed strong for 100 years. We appreciate their strong relationship with the local communities and the services they provide worldwide. I am pleased to honor UPS for their 100 years of service and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 375—Honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States—and the more than 1000 UPS drivers, managers and other employees in the Third District of Nebraska.

Founded in 1907, UPS has become an everyday sight for many of us. In Washington, DC it is not remarkable to see one of the big, brown trucks every day.

But for people in rural Nebraska, UPS is an invaluable resource. Rural delivery service—for many—is a life-line for homes far away from the local post office. UPS prides itself on delivery service to every address in North America and Europe, including areas where neighbors can be separated by miles of ranch and farmland.

I have had the honor of meeting with some UPS drivers, and I look forward to doing so again in the near future. Until then, I say "thank you" to all UPS employees and to "keep up the great work."

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 375, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 799) to reauthorize and improve the program authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 799

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007".

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS, MAXIMUM COMMISSION CONTRIBUTION.

(a) GRANTS AND OTHER ASSISTANCE.—Section 14321(a) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(A)(i) and inserting the following:

"(i) the amount of the grant shall not exceed—

"(I) 50 percent of administrative expenses;

"(II) at the discretion of the Commission, if the grant is to a local development district that has a charter or authority that includes the economic development of a county or a part of a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 75 percent of administrative expenses; or

"(III) at the discretion of the Commission, if the grant is to a local development district that has a charter or authority that includes the economic development of a county or a part of a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of administrative expenses; and

(2) by striking paragraph (2)(A) and inserting the following:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), of the cost of any activity eligible for financial assistance under this section, not more than—

"(i) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle;

"(ii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle; or

"(iii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle.".

(b) DEMONSTRATION HEALTH PROJECTS.—Section 14502 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d)(2) and inserting the following:

"(2) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—

Grants under this section for the operation (including initial operating amounts and operating deficits, which include the cost of attracting, training, and retaining qualified personnel) of a demonstration health project, whether or not constructed with amounts authorized by this section, may be made for up to—

"(A) 50 percent of the cost of that operation;

"(B) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of the cost of that operation; or

"(C) in the case of a project to be carried out for a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of the cost of that operation.";

and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking "paragraph (2)" and inserting "paragraphs (2) and (3)"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) AT-RISK COUNTIES.—The maximum Commission contribution for a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526 may be increased to the lesser of—

"(A) 70 percent; or

"(B) the maximum Federal contribution percentage authorized by this section".

(c) ASSISTANCE FOR PROPOSED LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS.—Section 14503 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d)(1) and inserting the following:

"(1) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—A loan under subsection (b) for the cost of planning and obtaining financing (including the cost of preliminary surveys and analyses of market needs, preliminary site engineering and architectural fees, site options, application and mortgage commitment fees, legal fees, and construction loan fees and discounts) of a project described in that subsection may be made for up to—

"(A) 50 percent of that cost;

"(B) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of that cost; or

"(C) in the case of a project to be carried out for a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of that cost.";

(2) by striking subsection (e)(1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this section for expenses incidental to planning and obtaining financing for a project under this section that the Secretary considers to be unrecoverable from the proceeds of a permanent loan made to finance the project shall—

"(A) not be made to an organization established for profit; and

"(B) except as provided in paragraph (2), not exceed—

"(i) 50 percent of those expenses;

"(ii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of those expenses; or

"(iii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of those expenses.".

(d) TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE.—Section 14504 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

"(b) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

"(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

"(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

"(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.".

(e) ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE.—Section 14505 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

“(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

“(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

“(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.”.

(f) REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIPS.—Section 14506 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

“(d) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

“(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

“(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

“(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.”.

(g) SUPPLEMENTS TO FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS.—Section 14507(g) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) AT-RISK COUNTIES.—The maximum Commission contribution for a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526 may be increased to 70 percent.”.

SEC. 3. ECONOMIC AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 145 of subtitle IV of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

§14508. Economic and energy development initiative

(a) PROJECTS TO BE ASSISTED.—The Appalachian Regional Commission may provide technical assistance, make grants, enter into contracts, or otherwise provide amounts to persons or entities in the Appalachian region for projects—

“(1) to promote energy efficiency in the region to enhance its economic competitiveness;

“(2) to increase the use of renewable energy resources in the region to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity, and heat; and

“(3) to support the development of conventional energy resources in the region to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity, and heat.

(b) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any project eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

“(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

“(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

“(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.

(c) SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under this section may be provided from amounts made available to carry out this section in combination with amounts made available under other Federal programs or from any other source.

(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—Notwithstanding any provision of law limiting the Federal share under any other Federal program, amounts made available to carry out this section may be used to increase that Federal share, as the Commission decides is appropriate.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 145 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 14507 the following:

“14508. Economic and energy development initiative.”.

SEC. 4. DISTRESSED, AT-RISK, AND ECONOMICALLY STRONG COUNTIES.

(a) DESIGNATION OF AT-RISK COUNTIES.—Section 14526 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading by inserting “, at-risk,” after “Distressed”; and

(2) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(B) in subparagraph (A) by striking “and” at the end; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) designate as ‘at-risk counties’ those counties in the Appalachian region that are most at risk of becoming economically distressed; and”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 145 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 14526 and inserting the following:

“14526. Distressed, at-risk, and economically strong counties.”.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 14703(a) of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts made available under section 14501, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Appalachian Regional Commission to carry out this subtitle (other than section 14508)—

“(1) \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2007;

“(2) \$80,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

“(3) \$85,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;

“(4) \$90,000,000 for fiscal year 2010; and

“(5) \$95,000,000 for fiscal year 2011.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

Section 14703(b) of such title is amended to read as follows:

“(b) ECONOMIC AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.—In addition to amounts made available under section 14501, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Commission to carry out section 14508 \$12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011.”.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Section 14703(c) of such title is amended by striking “subsection (a)” and by inserting “subsections (a) and (b)”.

(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Section 14703 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Funds approved by the Commission for a project in a State in the Appalachian region pursuant to congressional direction shall be derived from such State’s portion of the Commission’s allocation of appropriated amounts among the States.”.

SEC. 6. TERMINATION.

Section 14704 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking “2006” and inserting “2011”.

SEC. 7. ADDITIONS TO APPALACHIAN REGION.

(a) KENTUCKY.—Section 14102(a)(1)(C) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “Metcalfe,” after “Menifee,”;

(2) by inserting “Nicholas,” after “Morgan,”; and

(3) by inserting “Robertson,” after “Pulaski.”.

(b) OHIO.—Section 14102(a)(1)(H) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting “Ashtabula,” after “Adams,”;

(2) by inserting “Fayette,” after “Coshocton,”;

(3) by inserting “Mahoning,” after “Lawrence,”; and

(4) by inserting “Trumbull,” after “Scioto.”.

(c) TENNESSEE.—Section 14102(a)(1)(K) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting “Giles,” after “Franklin,”; and

(2) by inserting “Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln,” after “Knox.”.

(d) VIRGINIA.—Section 14102(a)(1)(L) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting “Henry,” after “Grayson,”; and

(2) by inserting “Patrick,” after “Montgomery.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 799.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 799, as amended, the Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007, and thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for their hard work and leadership in helping to bring this bill to the floor.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC, strives to ensure the people and businesses of the Appalachian region have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and access to services necessary to compete in basic economic activities of the United States.

Since its inception in 1965, the commission has been highly effective in meeting the goals of its mission. There is no doubt that it has compiled an impressive record of accomplishment in creating economic opportunity in Appalachia. Just as it has done since its inception, the ARC has proven it provides a fair return, both socially and economically, for the Federal Government’s investment in the people of Appalachia.

Consistent with the congressional leadership and interest in energy programs, H.R. 799 authorizes the ARC to

provide technical assistance, make grants, enter into contracts, or otherwise provide amounts in the Appalachian region for energy-efficient projects or projects to increase the use of renewable energy resources.

□ 1630

This bill also authorizes the creation of at-risk counties, and further outlines the percentage of funds for which these counties are eligible. The authorized amounts build on the funds authorized in Public Law 107-149 and adjust the annual amounts for inflation. The bill authorizes appropriation for the commission's programs and expenses through the fiscal year 2011.

H.R. 799, as amended, has strong bipartisan support, which acknowledges the ARC as a well-run and highly effective Federal/State partnership commission.

I urge the passage of H.R. 799, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 799, as amended, reauthorizes and improves the Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC. The ARC has been a successful program for the last 40 years. It has helped reduce the Appalachian region's poverty rate. It has cut the infant mortality rate. It has increased the percentage of adults with a high school diploma. It has provided water and sewer services to a significant number of households and businesses and created new jobs.

H.R. 799, as amended, reauthorizes the ARC for 5 years. The bill includes a couple of very important reforms. It helps focus funding on distressed and at-risk counties, and it includes language that will deter earmarking of the program.

Currently, the ARC has four statutory designations which are determined by the unemployment rate, per capita income and the poverty rate of each ARC county. This bill creates an additional designation to assist counties that are at risk and don't fully qualify as distressed.

At-risk counties are fragile economies making it difficult to meet the 50 percent match rate to participate in the program. In many cases, at-risk counties are recently distressed and eligible for an 80 percent Federal match. The addition of the "at-risk" designation will fund projects in these counties up to 70 percent of the project cost as they continue the transition from the "distressed" to the "transitional" designation.

The ARC is viewed by most as a successful model for economic development. The ability to leverage a large amount of public and private funding makes the ARC a very valuable tool for economic development in Appalachia. We must ensure continuation of this successful program and further express

our support for the hardworking people in the Appalachian region.

I would encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 799, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I would reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to our chairman of the committee, Mr. OBERSTAR of Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentlewoman, the Chair of our Water Resources Subcommittee, for standing in and carrying on while I was actually returning from Appalachia. And I thank the gentleman from Missouri, our ranking member on the subcommittee, for his strong support of all of the issues before our committee, and particularly these matters today.

I was in Sunbury and Shamokin Dam in Pennsylvania with our colleague, Congressman CARNEY, in his portion of the Appalachian Regional Commission looking at the Economic Development Highway Program of ARC.

Well, it's a long stretch from Minnesota to Appalachia, but the Appalachian region is an area that I have been associated with legislatively since I started here in the Congress 44 years ago as clerk of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors, to the Committee on Public Works, predecessor to our Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I was engaged then in the earliest stages of forming what we know today as the Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission. It was close on the heels of the designation by President John F. Kennedy of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. to travel throughout the Appalachian region to assess the conditions of distress, to listen to the concerns of the communities throughout the 13-State region, and to provide him with a report and a road map on dealing with the needs of Appalachia.

When John F. Kennedy went into the region, he found a region of poverty, a region of desolation. It struck him as worse than anything he had seen; a region he described as exploited by the coal barons, neglected by government and laid bare by ravages of the boom-and-bust cycles of coal mining.

In President Kennedy's words: "This is an area rich in potential. Its people are hardworking, intelligent, resourceful, capable of responding successfully to education and training. They are loyal to their homes, to their families, to their States and to their country."

"The Appalachian region," he said, "is well-endowed with potential water, mineral, forest and scenic resources. This region, properly developed and assisted by the Federal Government, can make a contribution to the Nation's well-being."

That was in 1960. Following the report of Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., President Kennedy shaped what we know today as the legislation that created the Appalachian Regional Commission,

engineered into law by then-President Lyndon Johnson, authored in the Senate by Senator Jennings Randolph, and many cosponsors in the House, including my predecessor John Blotnick. At the time that John F. Kennedy made those observations, the way up for most people in Appalachia was a bus ticket north to Detroit or Chicago.

The economy of Appalachia could well be described in those days as 80 acres and a mule. When I traveled as a staff member into the region and saw that people were living in the hard pan areas, where there was no ground filtration for the sewage they were discharging into the creeks and streams, and in many places, generations of dysentery, where people were drinking their own sewage.

The area needed highways, airports; it needed vocational training centers; it needed education systems; it needed health care centers; it needed the structure of what 150 years of neglect had denied that area. And through the establishment of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Federal/State partnership that resulted from it, an area that in 1960, whose income amounted to 45 percent of the national average, today is up to 75 percent of the national average. Where homeownership was a luxury, it is now a reality. Where job creation was nonexistent, it has now returned to this area, fulfilling President Kennedy's promise that the region can make a contribution to the Nation's well-being. And so it did exceedingly well.

Over many years, there were efforts to kill Appalachia. I remember so vividly during a hearing that I conducted as Chair of the Economic Development Subcommittee many years ago that we held in eastern Kentucky and brought witnesses from throughout the region, including from Tennessee, and I remember Ms. Tilda Kemplan, director of a child resource center, testifying at our field hearing and saying, "Gentlemen, when you go back to Washington, try not to look at that dollar and see George Washington, but look over the top of the dollar and see a child and see our future." And that is what Appalachia has done. The Appalachian Regional Commission has caused us to look over the top of the dollar and to see a child and to see the future of the region.

In another community we talked to members of the city council and the chamber of commerce. One of them said, very touchingly, "Before the ARC, we were so far down we had to look up to see bottom, but now we see a future." And in another community in West Virginia, the mayor of the town took us to his small business. Congressman NICK RAHALL was along, this was his district. And as the mayor and businessman explaining his operation and the need for road, for airport, for rail transportation, describing the needs and the good things that had been accomplished so far with the ARC, I looked at the wall behind the cash

register, and there was a sign that read: "God never put nobody in a place too small to grow."

Appalachia has been growing, the counties throughout this region, growing and overcoming 150 years of neglect and decline; making investments, creating opportunities, building for the future. One of the reports about a decade ago by the commission, their annual report on progress, said: "Halfway home and a long way to go." Well, there's still a long way to go, but the march forward has been much improved, vastly improved by the investments we have made in partnership with the States throughout this region.

Continuing the investments, as we have done in the SAFETEA-LU Appalachia Backbone Highway Program at \$470 million a year, continuing with the more than \$400 million over the 4 years of the authorization in this bill, we will continue that partnership with the States, the communities, the neighborhood, the people of the Appalachian region. It is an investment of which all America can be proud, and of which all America has benefited.

I thank the gentleman from Missouri, and, heck, my colleagues on the Republican side of the committee. Throughout this whole initiative from the 1960s, this has been a totally bipartisan effort. And I recall, especially during the Reagan years when the Reagan administration was proposing to abolish the ARC and Congressman HAL ROGERS, the former chairman of the Commerce Subcommittee of appropriations, said, "We're not going to let them wear us down. We're going to proceed. We're going to prevail. We have prevailed. Appalachia prevails. And America prevails with it."

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 799, a bipartisan bill to improve the programs authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-4) and reauthorize the Appalachian Regional Commission ("ARC") for 5 years through FY 2011.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was created to address economic issues and social problems of the Appalachian region as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society program. Historically, the Appalachian region has faced high levels of poverty and economic distress resulting from geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure.

As a regional economic development agency, ARC supports the development of Appalachia's economy and critical infrastructure to provide a climate for industry growth and job creation. ARC programs affect 406 counties located in 13 states, including all of West Virginia, and parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The Appalachian region covers nearly 200,000 square miles and contains approximately 22 million people. Currently, of the 406 counties included in the ARC, 114 are considered to be distressed counties.

Since its creation in 1965, ARC has administered a variety of programs to aid in the advancement of the region, including the creation of a highway system, enhancements in

education and job training, and the development of water and sewer systems. ARC's funding and projects have contributed significantly to employment, health, and general economic development improvements in the region.

Because of its efficiencies in decision-making and service delivery, ARC served as a model for the Delta Regional Authority. ARC is successful because it responds to identified and agreed upon needs, and is extremely flexible in its approach. According to research conducted by Brandow Co. and the Economic Development Research Group, three fourths of ARC infrastructure projects with specific business or job-related goals met or exceeded formal projections. This is a very robust figure.

H.R. 799 builds on more than four decades of economic development successes by providing additional, much-needed Federal investment in the region. The bill allows ARC to continue its economic development activities using such tools as the telecommunication and technology initiative, and the entrepreneurship initiative to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Appalachia. Further, the bill provides authority for the Commission to make technical assistance grants for energy efficient projects or projects to increase the use of renewable energy resources. This bill also authorizes the designation of "at risk" counties, which are counties in the Appalachian region that are most at risk of becoming economically distressed, and identifies the percentage of funds for which these counties are eligible.

ARC's authorization expired at the end of FY 2006. During the 109th Congress, the Committee's bipartisan leadership introduced H.R. 5812, a bill reauthorizing ARC through FY 2011. Although the Senate passed S. 2832 to reauthorize the ARC, the Senate-passed bill did not include the anti-earmarking provision of H.R. 5812. The House did not pass S. 2832 and no further action was taken on H.R. 5812. This bill includes the anti-earmarking provision.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, for his remarks. They are very well put.

I would now like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. To the distinguished chairman of our full committee, I just want you to know how well your staff is taking care of you today. As we were calling up the bill, knowing you were traveling back, I didn't know you were coming from Appalachia, but Mr. McCarragher came over and said, "Could you talk as long as possible so we can get the chairman back here?" And now I don't have to do that, so I don't think I will need the full 5 minutes.

I do want to remark on the ARC, Madam Speaker. No one can stand up and say that the vision of John F. Kennedy implemented by legislation in 1965 by Lyndon Johnson has not been a wonderful success in dealing with the abject poverty of the Appalachian region.

The chairman rightly talked about the infrastructure part of our commit-

tee's assignments. But one of my favorite hearings, when I had the pleasure of being the chairman of the subcommittee, is when the ARC stakeholders would come in and talk to the Republicans and Democrats on the subcommittee. And aside from industrial parks, aside from roads, aside from bridges, aside from safe drinking water, they beamed with pride about how their graduation rates had improved and how the young people in their region were now taking pride in the education they were receiving, and they were graduating from high school at record numbers, something that would not have happened had it not been for the ARC.

I came to the floor this afternoon to specifically thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, and also the chairman of the subcommittee, Ms. HOLMES NORTON, together with Mr. GRAVES and Mr. MICA. One of John F. Kennedy's most oft quoted quotes is: "A rising tide lifts all boats." And so Congressman TIM RYAN and I looked around and we saw, boy, everybody around us, to the east, to the south, to the west, seems to have participated wonderfully well in the Appalachian Regional Commission. And if you put a map of the Midwestern United States up, there's only a few little white squares, and they are regions that Congressman RYAN and I represent, Ashland, Trumbull and Mahoning County. We had a discussion with Chairman OBERSTAR during the course of the markup of this legislation, and it seems that Congressman RYAN and I weren't the only ones interested in this. And as a result of those discussions, Chairman OBERSTAR has added 13 additional counties to the purview of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

So I came down today, Madam Speaker, to thank the chairman for working with us. And I firmly believe that the addition of these three counties in Ohio, together with the 10 counties located throughout the region, are going to permit our people in transitional counties to benefit the same way as other counties have benefited since 1965.

□ 1645

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for closing remarks.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciate the remarks of the gentleman from Ohio. He did great service, Madam Speaker, during his chairmanship of the Economic Development Subcommittee in service to the needs of the Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC, and the Federal Economic Development Administration programs throughout the country. Adding these counties is an appropriate and necessary step to help lift the region further toward the future of continued economic growth. I was very touched by the gentleman's remarks

about education and the increase in education rights. He spoke well and rightly.

I do want to emphasize for the record, though, that included among all the many beneficial provisions of this bill is an important limitation on earmarking of funds within the ARC. In the past, and it has usually happened in conference, but also occasionally in the House appropriations bill, funds have been earmarked for one or another project which has undercut the effectiveness of the Federal-State partnership and the authenticity of the grass-roots up process of project designation, development and implementation. Using the appropriations process to direct funds has disadvantaged the other regions, of the other States within the region, and has devalued the funding that Congress has appropriated. More importantly, it devalues the Federal, State, and local partnership, the very effective grass-roots up process of project selection within Appalachia. It says your judgment doesn't count. We know better. The authenticity and effectiveness of the ARC program derives exactly from its grass-roots initiative.

So I was very insistent in the last Congress on finding a means by which we could thwart the earmarking. We have it in this bill. Our Senate counterparts have concurred that they want to follow this procedure. It will inure to the benefit of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I am today in support of H.R. 799, the Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007. This long overdue legislation continues to promote every one of the southern West Virginia counties I represent, and indeed the entire State of West Virginia, as it is the only State which lies entirely within ARC jurisdiction.

"A rising tide," President Kennedy told us, "lifts all boats." And so one of President Kennedy's legacies was created in 1965 with a unique mission to serve a unique part of the Nation, the Appalachian region.

Historically, the counties of Appalachia have "faced high levels of poverty and economic distress resulting from geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure."

It was with these concerns in mind that ARC was created and it is these concerns ARC has been addressing vigorously for the past 40 years.

Take for example the area of transportation, a major focus for ARC. ARC was developed, in part, because of the severe isolation experienced in Appalachia and that in order to develop Appalachia and give its people an opportunity to compete, a system of highways was needed. Enter the Appalachian Development Highway System, which was created to serve the transportation needs of Appalachian residents by assisting in the construction of highways so critically needed by Appalachian communities for economic growth and development.

The ADHS now encompasses over 3,000 miles of Appalachian highways and nearly 85 percent of those roads are complete or under construction. The ADHS is truly a success story for ARC and all of Appalachia. Despite

the President's recent budget, which requests eliminating funding for the Appalachian Development Highway System, it is my strong conviction that this program be continued at the agreed upon level set forth in SAFETEA-LU.

Before I leave this subject of transportation and the critical value of rural America's transportation network to our urban brothers and sisters, it is my sincere hope that rural America's voice will be loud and clear when it comes to funding schemes that would punish rural commuters and citizens who are forced by geography to drive long distances each day to and from their employment. It is an issue critical to the completion and maintenance of ARC development highways network.

And while a major focus of ARC remains on highways and Appalachian transportation infrastructure, as the times have changed so has ARC.

As much of the United States has been able to take advantage of the technological boom of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Appalachia once again is in danger of being left behind and unable to compete in the global marketplace.

In the most recent FCC data on high-speed connections for Internet access, released on January 31, 2007, you can track the Appalachian mountain range by just how spotty the provider coverage is on the FCC's provider map. In fact, in West Virginia it is significantly below the average in broadband use nationwide.

Again, ARC is there to offer significant support, bringing broadband access to our communities, which is essential to leveling the playing field and giving our communities an opportunity to compete. Schools, businesses, local governments and individual homes all have benefited from ARC involvement in the expansion of broadband access in Appalachia, and continue to do so.

I have been working with ARC, private telecommunications companies and local economic development leaders to bring broadband technology into southern West Virginia. For example, through the E-commerce training initiatives being offered by ARC and others we are working to connect local small businesses to broadband, opening doors to Internet sales and services that just weren't there a couple of years ago.

It is ARC's ability to serve its mission by adapting its actions to fit the times that makes ARC such an invaluable resource to Appalachia and the Nation. From the Appalachian Development Highway System to the E-commerce and broadband initiatives, ARC continues to serve its mission by advocating for and partnering with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

I am also glad to see the integrity of ARC programs kept in tact by disallowing the use of earmarks in this legislation. I believe adoption of this provision is critical and will benefit all ARC member-states and the long-term viability of ARC itself. Additionally, I am pleased to see the bi-partisan support for this program which was displayed by the rejection of attempts to cut funding for it in the recent House passed FY08 Energy and Water Appropriations legislation.

I applaud the efforts of Federal Co-Chair Anne Pope who, as a native daughter of Appalachia, executes so well the mission of ARC

in each of Appalachia's communities. I have said this before and am happy to do so again on the record, Anne is one of the finest Federal Co-Chairs to ever serve the people of Appalachia and I look forward to our continued strong relationship serving the needs of southern West Virginians, together.

I strongly support ARC, its mission and the incredibly successful initiatives it has undertaken to better the lives of the people of Appalachia and West Virginia.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 799, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HILL) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-235) on the resolution (H. Res. 547) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.