

Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2020 Highlights

(Note: Numbers are nationwide program funding levels.)

Transportation

- **Essential Air Service:** Includes \$162 million for Essential Air Service to help increase access for rural communities that are otherwise isolated from the National Air Transportation System. Essential Air Service is a lifeline securing consistent passenger, mail and bypass mail service delivering medicine, foodstuffs and other necessities to these otherwise isolated communities.
- **Ferry System:** The legislation includes funding to support the FAST Act, including \$30 million for a competitive grant program which could help support maintenance and improvements of Alaska's ferry system through the construction of ferry boats, acquiring right-of-way, and constructing ferry terminal facilities.
- **Tribal Transportation:** The bill appropriates \$505 million for the Tribal Transportation Program, including additional funding for the Tribal Bridge Program and the Tribal Transportation Safety Program to provide for deferred maintenance on tribal bridges and roads.
- **Small Shipyard Grant Program:** Small shipyards are an important component of Alaska's maritime operations. \$20 million is provided for the Small Shipyard Grant Program to help small shipyards with shipbuilding, ship repair, and other modernization projects.
- **Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grants:** Funds the BUILD grant program at \$1 billion, an increase of \$100 million from last year's levels, to provide investments in road, rail, transit, and port projects to repair and maintain crucial transportation networks. Report language is included to ensure the distribution of funds is geographically equitable and appropriately balanced between urban and rural communities.
- **Improving Cross Border Rail and Road Infrastructure:** In an effort to promote increased trade and tourism and to improve developing transportation infrastructure, the bill includes language that requires the Innovative Finance Bureau to consult with noncontiguous states to review regulatory, financing and other obstacles to new investment in cross border rail and road infrastructure.

Housing and Urban Development

- **Tribal Housing:** This legislation makes significant steps towards addressing the immense housing and urban development needs in rural Alaska by allocating \$755 million for Native American Housing Block Grants, vital funding to designated housing entities to address the housing needs of tribal communities, which includes \$65 million for the Indian Community Development Block Grant fund to support tribal economies and community development efforts. In addition, the bill includes \$2.5 million for the Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Fund, which provides lenders with a 100-percent guarantee for mortgages to American Indian and Alaska Native borrowers to address the unique nature of tribal trust land used as collateral.
- **HUD-VASH Demonstration Program for Homeless and At-Risk Native Vets:** To help address housing needs for at-risk and homeless Native Veterans residing on tribal lands, \$1 million is included to continue the Tribal HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program.
- **Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program:** The HOME Program provides grants to States and localities to fund building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. The program, which is vital to help address the needs of the estimated 31 percent (78,959) of households in Alaska that are cost-burdened, is funded at \$1.25 billion.
- **NeighborWorks America:** The bill includes \$152 million for the NeighborWorks America Program, which helps provide affordable, rental housing for individuals and families, seniors, and provides special needs housing for those who are at-risk of homelessness and/or who experience a disability.
- **Cold Climate Housing Research:** The bill includes language secured by Senator Murkowski which encourages the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development to enter into cooperative agreements with philanthropic entities, other Federal agencies, State or local governments, Indian tribes, colleges, and other entities for research into sustainable housing design, development, and construction for cold climates. Incorporating traditional knowledge and modern building technology will allow for better building techniques to be utilized in the Arctic, reducing the cost of building and strengthening communities.

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