

Washington, DC – The House today approved a one-year extension of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (county payments). Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Congressman Peter DeFazio, Congressman Greg Walden and Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, who all voted in favor of the amendment, praised the extension of funding for county payments and pledged to continue working with the Senate to ensure Oregon's needs are met and a long-term solution is reached.

“We in the House have long recognized the vital importance of the Secure Rural Schools program to Oregon's counties,” said Congressman Blumenauer. “Our commitment to reauthorizing this program has never wavered. Whether Republicans or Democrats control the House, we will continue to work as a bipartisan team to get this done. It appears that we will be successful in obtaining a one-year extension and we will continue to work with our friends in the Senate and people back home on a longer-term solution.”

“Given the defeat of local tax measures around the state last week, it's clear that rural counties need this assistance more than ever,” DeFazio said. “I'm pleased the House leadership has, once again, included emergency funding for the Secure Rural Schools Act in the emergency supplemental. This funding will help stave-off some of the layoffs and cuts in critical services like law-enforcement and health care, and prevent the state from having to take over those essential services, while we continue to work together on a longer-term solution.”

“Two months ago a one-year extension for county payments seemed completely out of the question,” Congressman Walden said. “Would I have rather had a multi-year extension? Of course. But now the bipartisan work to secure a long-term extension and reauthorization of these funds must continue. We will not relent. The Congress will be forced to address this issue over and over and over again until we reach agreement on a long-term solution.”

“This is an immediate win for our counties,” said Congresswoman Hooley. “This emergency funding bill will address the current crisis and give immediate relief of hundreds of millions of dollars to our rural counties. Oregon counties need to have some certainty and be able to plan for the future. I'm urging my colleagues and the president to approve this one-year extension in the Emergency Supplemental Budget, and then immediately begin working through the difficult issues in mapping out a long-term solution.”