

Rural Development Center Newsletter-August 2000

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

HOUSE BILL WOULD CREATE NEW OFFICE WITHIN EDA:

Three years after it was originally proposed as way to gain support for the passage trade legislation, a Member of the House of Representatives has introduced a bill to create an office to assist communities that have been impacted by sudden and severe economic dislocation. The bill, H.R. 4711, was introduced by Congressman Larson, Conn. on June 21. H.R. 4711 would establish an Office of Community Economic adjustment in EDA to: Coordinate the Federal response in regions and communities experiencing severe and sudden economic distress; to help these regions and communities in restructuring their economies; and to expand the authorization of appropriations for these programs. If enacted, it would help solidify EDA's Economic Adjustment program and increase the role of the Federal government in economic adjustment activities at the local level.

According to the sponsors of the legislation, to date, no Federal department or agency has the unique authority to coordinate community economic adjustment assistance efforts across the Federal spectrum. The authority contained in H.R. 4711 would coordinate this assistance in the same manner as the Federal Emergency Management Agency is charged to coordinate the Federal response to a disaster, or like the Department of Defense's Office

of Economic Adjustment is charged with coordinating the Federal response for communities experiencing base closures. Congressman Larson, along with 164 cosponsors of the measure believe there is a

recognized need for the Federal Government to be able to coordinate its response to communities experiencing sudden economic distress both at the national level and in the community itself.

Specifically, the new Office of Community Economic Adjustment that would be established by the bill would coordinate the Federal government's response to communities experiencing sudden economic distress caused by a loss of jobs to other communities for any reason. This would include shifting patterns in international trade, natural disasters or other factors causing the distress. The Office would then identify relevant programs and resources to ensure that communities are aware of all available Federal resources that complement or support state and local resources and programs.

To carry out the bill's mandate, EDA would work with the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, Education, the Small Business Administration, and other agencies to ensure that communities receive Federal assistance in a targeted, integrated manner.

The Office of Community Economic Adjustment would then assign a project manager to work with an affected community to carry out the coordination of Federal Assistance. EDA could also provide technical assistance, planning grants, and other assistance to help communities organize themselves, in order to help them develop and carry out economic adjustment strategies for replacing industry and jobs that have been lost, or are threatened by the economic downturn.

Rural Development Center Newsletter-August 2000

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The bill would authorize \$35 million for Fiscal Years 2001 through 2005. \$10 million of this assistance would be appropriated for the conduct of the duties and operations of the Office of Community and Economic Adjustment. No more than \$1.5 million could be expended for salaries and expenses of that function. Meanwhile, the remaining \$25 million would be for economic development assistance programs of EDA. The bill has been referred to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee which, in turn referred the legislation to the Subcommittee on the Economic Development, Public Buildings, Hazardous Materials and Pipeline Transportation. It was also referred to the Banking and Financial Services Committee.

Three years ago the Administration proposed a similar Office of Community and Economic Adjustment Assistance to help communities that were impacted by trade agreements. However, that proposal died when the Appropriations committee failed to fund a separate Office within EDA, but chose, instead, to support funding for EDA's current Economic Adjustment program. In addition, in 1998, when the Congress passed the five-year reauthorization of EDA, it failed to address the separate office, saying EDA could perform these activities under its existing and traditional legislative authorities.

However, the Administration has continued to insist on creating a separate Office within EDA to provide some form of adjustment assistance. H.R. 4711 expands on the original proposal in that it does not focus specifically on assisting communities that have been impacted by trade agreements. Instead, congressman, Larson's legislation would provide assistance to communities that have lost jobs to a wide array of

economic dislocations.

The bill is now awaiting committee action. With 164 cosponsors it is possible that some action may be taken on the measure, but it is not possible to predict its outcome at this time. If you would like further information on this bill, please contact our office and we will be happy to assist.

CALIFORNIA, TEXAS AND FLORIDA BIG GAINS IN VOTING-AGE POPULATION:

Between November 1996 and November 2000, California will have gained 2 million people of voting age, followed by Texas (1 million) and Florida (700,000), according to projections by the Census Bureau.

Nevada's voting-age population is projected to grow the fastest (16 percent), followed by Arizona (12 percent) and Texas (9 percent), the Census Bureau report said.

About 93 percent of U.S. residents of voting age are citizens, but the voting-age population also includes people age 18 years and over who are not eligible to vote, such as noncitizens, and these projections do not cover Americans living overseas who also may vote.

Nationwide, the number of residents old enough to vote in November is projected to increase to 206 million -- 9 million more than in the last presidential election in 1996 (a 5 percent increase).

Women could represent 52 percent of the voting-age population in November, outnumbering men by 8 million. They are projected to surpass men in all voting-age groups except for ages 18 to 24, where there

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University of Maryland Eastern Shore

will be 552,000 more men than women. Women could also outnumber voting-age men in every state except Alaska (53 percent men) and Nevada (51 percent men).

States:

☐ States with small changes in voting-age population since the last presidential election, according to the projections, are North Dakota, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania all with less than 1 percent growth. Washington, D.C., is projected to have a 4 percent loss in voting-age population between 1996 and 2000.

☐ States projected to have 1 million or more African Americans of voting-age by November 2000 are New York (2.3 million), California (1.9 million), Texas (1.8 million), Florida (1.6 million), Georgia (1.6 million), Illinois (1.2 million), North Carolina (1.2 million), **Maryland (1.0 million)** and Virginia (1.0 million).

☐ The projections indicate the largest number of voting-age Hispanics will reside in California (7.0 million), Texas (4.0 million), New York (1.8 million) and Florida (1.8 million).

☐ States with the largest number of Asians and Pacific Islanders, according to the projections, will be California (3.1 million), New York (789,000), Hawaii (559,000), Texas (447,000) and New Jersey (375,000).

Regions:

☐ The South is projected to have the largest voting-age population (73 million), followed by the Midwest (47 million), West (46 million) and Northeast (40 million).

☐ Between November 1996 and November

2000, the South is projected to have the greatest gain in voting-age population (4 million), followed by the West (3 million), Midwest (1 million) and the Northeast (less than 1 million).

Age:

☐ By November 2000, about 40 percent of the voting-age population will be ages 25 to 44.

☐ People 65 and over who historically have high rates of voter participation are expected to number 35 million (17 percent of the total voting-age population).

☐ Since the 1996 presidential election, the 45- to 64-year-old population will have increased about 14 percent and 18- to 24-year-olds will have increased by about 8 percent. Little change is expected in the 25- to 44-year-old and 65 and over age groups.

Race and Hispanic origin:

☐ Nationally, the voting-age population is projected to include 74 percent White non-Hispanics, 12 percent African Americans, 4 percent Asians and Pacific Islanders and about 1 percent American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts. The Hispanic origin population may comprise about 10 percent of the total.

☐ The voting-age populations of Hispanics and of Asians and Pacific Islanders are expected to be 16 percent greater in November 2000 than in November 1996; however, about 2 out of 5 voting-age Hispanics and Asians and Pacific Islanders are not U.S. citizens.

☐ In the last presidential election, 66 percent of the voting-age population reported they

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were registered, and 54 percent said they voted, according to data collected by the Census Bureau in the November 1996 Current Population Survey. The actual voting-age turnout for the 1996 presidential election, as reported by the Clerk of the U.S. Congress, was 49 percent.

43 MILLION PEOPLE MOVED BETWEEN 1998 AND 1999:

Between March 1998 and March 1999, about 43 million U.S. residents, or 16 percent of the population, moved to a new residence, the majority (59 percent) within the same county, the Census Bureau reported.

The information on movers is contained in a report titled **Geographical Mobility: March 1998 to March 1999 (Update), P20-531**, which includes 30 detailed tables and four historical tables.

Other highlights include:

❑ Besides moves within the same county, 20 percent moved to another county in the same state, 18 percent moved to a new state and 3 percent moved to the United States from abroad.

❑ About 1 in 3 renters, compared with fewer than 1 in 10 homeowners, moved during the one-year period.

❑ The South was the only region with a significant population increase as a result of internal migration between 1998 and 1999; it showed a net gain of 270,000 people.

❑ Moving rates declined with age: 32 percent of people in their 20s moved while only 5 percent of those 65 and over did so.

❑ About 1.4 million people (3 percent of movers) moved to the United States from abroad: 40 percent were White, 32 percent were Hispanic, 22 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander and 7 percent were African American. (Data by race exclude individuals of Hispanic origin, most of whom are White.)

❑ The Northeast had the lowest moving rate among the nation's regions (12 percent), followed by the Midwest (15 percent), the South (17 percent) and the West (19 percent).

The report and tables provide statistics on movers for such characteristics as age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, educational level, occupation and income. Also included are data on the characteristics of those making particular moves (such as from the Northeast to the South or from suburbs to central cities).

AFRICAN AMERICANS DEFY TREND OF PLUNGING VOTER TURNOUT:

African Americans were the only race or ethnic group to defy the trend of declining voter participation *in congressional elections*, increasing their presence at the polls from 37 percent in 1994 to 40 percent in 1998, according to a report released by the Census Bureau.

Nationwide, overall turnout by the voting-age population was down from 45 percent in 1994 to 42 percent in 1998 -- about 3 million fewer voters in 1998 than in 1994.

The increase in voter participation by African Americans was most notable in the South,

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where the rate grew by 4 percentage points to 39 percent, as reported in: **Voting and Registration in the Election of November 1998, P20-523**. About 40 percent of the 9 million African American voters lived in the South.

Turnout by Whites declined from 50 percent to 47 percent from 1994 to 1998, while Asian and Pacific Islander turnout fell from 22 percent to 19 percent and Hispanic turnout remained at 20 percent. (The turnout rates for each of the latter two groups would increase by nearly 13 percentage points if estimated noncitizens were subtracted from the voting-age universe. Data by race in this release exclude people of Hispanic origin, who may be of any race.)

Turnout also declined across all age groups and for men and women. For example, 35 percent of 25- to 44-year-olds cast ballots in 1998, down from 39 percent in 1994.

Other highlights of the report:

Reasons for Not Voting

❑ Of the 40 million people who said they registered but did not vote in the 1998 election, about one-third reported they were "too busy" or had conflicting work or school schedules. Another 13 percent were not interested or felt their vote would not make a difference.

Voter Turnout

❑ The West and Midwest states recorded the highest voting rates in 1998, led by Minnesota (66 percent), while the South had the lowest (Virginia was at 31 percent).

❑ Among voting-age citizens, the lowest

voting rates by age were for 18- to 24-year-olds, where a ratio of slightly less than 1 in 5 voted. The age group with the highest voting participation was 55- to 74-year-olds; more than 3 in 5 in this age group cast ballots.

❑ Women (46 percent) were slightly more likely than men (45 percent) to vote in 1998, continuing a trend that started in 1986.

❑ About 5 in 10 homeowners said they voted, compared with 3 out of 10 renters. About one-half of those living in families who voted had family incomes of more than \$50,000.

❑ In 1998, voting-age citizens who had bachelor's degrees were nearly twice as likely (6 in 10) to have voted as those who had not completed high school (3 in 10).

Voter Registration

❑ Voter registration between 1994 and 1998 increased for African Americans (from 59 percent to 61 percent) and Hispanics (from 31 percent to 34 percent). The rates for whites (68 percent) and Asians and Pacific Islanders (29 percent) were the same in both elections.

❑ Of the 198 million people of voting age in 1998, 62 percent said they were registered to vote. This is not significantly different from the percentage registered in the 1994 and 1990 congressional elections.

❑ More than two-thirds of citizens in the Midwest were registered to vote. North Dakota (91 percent) and Minnesota (83 percent) had the highest registration rates, while many of the states with lower rates were in the West (Nevada had 52 percent).

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□ The percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds who were registered to vote declined from 42 percent in 1994 to 39 percent in 1998. There was no significant change for people ages 25 to 44 years.

Note: The data were collected in the November 1998 Current Population Survey (CPS) two weeks after the election. As in all surveys, data are subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. The CPS routinely overestimates voter turnout. Possible reasons include understatement of the votes cast; over reporting by survey respondents who want to demonstrate their civic responsibility; misreporting of voting because of refusals or lack of knowledge on the part of proxy respondents; and survey under coverage.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIF., AND HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS, BIGGEST JOB GAINERS:

Los Angeles County, Calif., and Harris County, Texas, had the highest employment growth in the nation between 1997 and 1998, according to the annual County Business Patterns reports issued by the Census Bureau.

The number of employees in Los Angeles County increased by 104,706 between 1997 and 1998, and the number in Harris County, Texas, by 80,374.

During the same period, the number of people living in Los Angeles County grew by more than 97,000, and Harris County, Texas, by more than 52,000.

Orange County, Calif., was third, adding 61,385 more workers, followed by Maricopa

County, Ariz. (54,275), and San Diego County, Calif. (54,067).

Nationally, the number of employees in private businesses continued to increase, from 105 million in 1997 to 108 million in 1998.

During 1998, the payrolls for all private business employees grew by 9 percent over 1997 levels.

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