

October 7, 2021

The Honorable David Scott
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott:

On behalf of Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), a community development financial institutions (CDFI) membership organization, I am writing to thank you for including provisions to support CDFIs and the communities we serve in the House Agriculture Committee's reconciliation bill.

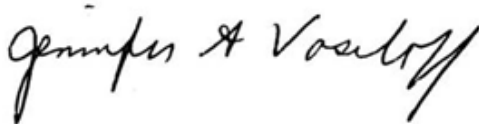
For nearly 40 years, CDFIs have provided access to capital where it is needed most: CDFI customers are 84 percent low-income, 60 percent people of color, 50 percent women and 26 percent rural.

I am pleased to see the Committee advance legislation that will help build strong, resilient rural communities. In particular, the bill provides \$4 billion for the Rural Partnership Program to ensure flexible grant funding for rural communities to support job growth, build economic resilience, and aid economic recovery in communities impacted by economic transitions and climate change. OFN appreciates the Committee ensuring that CDFIs are eligible applicants for the program.

We are also supportive of the additional \$2.6 billion for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) program, which CDFIs can access to provide grants and loans to farmers and small business owners for energy efficient improvements.

Thank you again for prioritizing underserved rural communities in your legislation. We strongly encourage you to maintain these provisions throughout the negotiation process to a final reconciliation bill. Please reach out with any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Jennifer A. Vasiloff
Chief External Affairs Officer