



FROM THE NEWSROOM OF:

## HOUSE COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

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### Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

[Bill Text](#) | [Committee Report](#)

The 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies funding bill provides funding of \$15.1 billion – a level so low that it was last seen before 2001 – which is nearly \$11 billion below what was provided in 2023. The legislation:

- **Limits women’s access to abortion** – Reverses the FDA decision to allow mifepristone to be dispensed in certified pharmacies to patients with a prescription from a certified prescriber, instead of only in hospitals, clinics, and medical offices.
- **Increases costs for Rural America** – Slashes investments in rural America such as loans to financially distressed farmers and funds for rural electric co-ops used to help support long-term resiliency, reliability, and affordability of rural electric systems. The bill also cuts the rural broadband ReConnect program and underfunds critical direct loans for the purchase of homes in rural areas and water and waste grants, which help the poorest communities get safer water services.
- **Cuts Nutrition Assistance** – Cuts the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) by \$800 million and slashes the cash value voucher in WIC which provides funding for fruit and vegetable purchases for the 5 million women and children enrolled, taking the food out of the mouths of women and children.

This proposal is built on an \$8 billion shell game of clawing back funding from rural America and a 14 percent indiscriminate cut to programs funded in the bill. In these cuts, House Republicans are:

- **Rural Electric Cooperatives:** Gutting rural electric investments in clean energy and energy efficiency from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) by \$1 billion, slashing funding for rural electric co-ops. Co-ops serve 42 million people and cover 56 percent of the nation’s land mass. This includes serving 92 percent of persistent poverty counties and powering over 21 million businesses, homes, schools, and farms in 48 states. This means that the many hard-working, rural communities across America who need this help will not receive the benefit from the largest investment in rural utilities since the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.
  - This funding was announced on May 16 so it is very possible the money will be spent and not be available for Republicans to use in their shell game.
  - More information on which co-ops provide service in each Congressional District can be found [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Economically distressed farm loan borrowers:** Stripping an estimated 104,000 farmers with direct and guaranteed farm loans from the assistance they are expecting. This means farmers who are in the process of applying for assistance to make up for pandemic losses will not receive payments. State-by-state data on the loan borrowers can be found [here](#).
  - With this cut, House Republicans are eliminating a lifeline that has already helped more than 20,000 distressed farmers who have received assistance from the Inflation Reduction Act.

- **Rural Energy for America Program (REAP):** Cutting REAP by \$500 million and eliminating all grants under the program. House Republicans are raising energy costs for approximately 15,000 rural small businesses and agriculture producers and cutting farmers out of the green energy economy while carving out profits for the banks that benefit from loans under the program. See state-by-state data on the Rural Energy for America Program [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Discrimination against farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners:** Cutting funding in the Inflation Reduction Act for financial assistance to any farmer, rancher, or forest landowner who can show he or she was discriminated against in USDA farm loan programs.

Other key provisions of the bill as passed by the full committee include:

- Includes \$800 million less than what the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) needs, on top of underfunding the cash value vouchers noted above.
- Cuts funding for rural housing loans by 39 percent. These cuts mean at least 2,800 rural families across the country would not be able to get a loan to afford a house. District-by-district and state-level information can be found [here](#).
- Slashes funding for water and waste disposal projects by 36 percent. This means that at least 165 projects to ensure that rural Americans have clean drinking water and modern sewage systems would not happen. District-by-district and state-level information can be found [here](#).
- Blocks FDA from acting on important tobacco issues – banning menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars and limiting the nicotine in cigarettes.
- Blocks three Biden executive orders on diversity, equality, inclusion, and accessibility.
- Cuts funding for key rural broadband programs by over 34 percent. This includes over \$141 million in cuts to the ReConnect program, which has already funded connections for nearly 410,000 households in rural America to high-speed internet.