

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1617

To establish a White House Rural Council, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 8, 2021

Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. KIND, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. PAPPAS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To establish a White House Rural Council, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Transforming Hiring
5 in Rural Industries and Vital Economies Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. WHITE HOUSE RURAL COUNCIL.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
8 Executive Office of the President a White House Rural
9 Council (in this section referred to as the “Council”).

1 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

2 (1) CHAIR.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall
3 serve as the Chair of the Council.

4 (2) MEMBERS.—The Council shall be composed
5 of the heads of the following:

6 (A) The Department of the Treasury.

7 (B) The Department of Defense.

8 (C) The Department of Justice.

9 (D) The Department of the Interior.

10 (E) The Department of Commerce.

11 (F) The Department of Labor.

12 (G) The Department of Health and
13 Human Services.

14 (H) The Department of Housing and
15 Urban Development.

16 (I) The Department of Transportation.

17 (J) The Department of Energy.

18 (K) The Department of Education.

19 (L) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

20 (M) The Department of Homeland Secu-
21 rity.

22 (N) The Environmental Protection Agency.

23 (O) The Federal Communications Commis-
24 sion.

1 (P) The Office of Management and Budget
2 et.

3 (Q) The Office of Science and Technology
4 Policy.

5 (R) The Office of National Drug Control
6 Policy.

7 (S) The Council of Economic Advisers.

8 (T) The Domestic Policy Council.

9 (U) The National Economic Council.

10 (V) The Small Business Administration.

11 (W) The Council on Environmental Qual-
12 ity.

13 (X) The White House Office of Public En-
14 gagement and Intergovernmental Affairs.

15 (Y) The White House Office of Cabinet Af-
16 fairs.

17 (Z) Any other department, agency, or of-
18 fice of the executive branch as the President or
19 Secretary of Agriculture may designate.

20 (3) DESIGNEES.—Any member of the Council
21 may designate a senior-level official, who is employed
22 full-time in the department, agency, or office of such
23 member, to carry out the duties of the member
24 under this section.

1 (c) MEETINGS.—Not later than six months after the
2 date of the enactment of this Act, and every six months
3 thereafter, the Council shall convene a meeting of rep-
4 resentatives of the executive departments, agencies, and
5 offices represented on the Council to develop plans to co-
6 ordinate the efforts of such executive departments, agen-
7 cies, and offices and facilitate efficient services to stake-
8 holders. At such meetings, each such representative
9 shall—

10 (1) share information regarding the rural eco-
11 nomic development efforts and activities of the rep-
12 resentative’s executive department, agency, or office;

13 (2) identify opportunities for collaboration and
14 coordination of research agendas, vulnerability as-
15 sessments, data collection and analysis, and plan-
16 ning and implementing rural economic development
17 projects;

18 (3) identify rural economic development infor-
19 mation needs, research gaps, and decision support
20 needs that are not met by any executive department,
21 agency, or office represented on the Council and
22 make available such identification for purposes of in-
23 formation to be submitted to the Council;

1 (4) identify common and complementary goals
2 for rural economic development within each region
3 to be prioritized for the coming year and beyond;

4 (5) identify barriers to rural economic develop-
5 ment planning and implementation that can be over-
6 come or minimized through Federal action and spe-
7 cific suggestions for improvement;

8 (6) evaluate progress and jointly develop a
9 strategy for realizing rural economic development-re-
10 lated goals, including clearly identified responsibil-
11 ities by each collaborating regional office, center, or
12 program; and

13 (7) share experiences and best practices in
14 stakeholder engagement and communication, deci-
15 sion support, and economic development interactions
16 that support the realization of identified rural eco-
17 nomic development goals.

18 (d) DUTIES.—The Council shall carry out the fol-
19 lowing:

20 (1) Coordinate with the Domestic Policy Coun-
21 cil and the National Economic Council to develop
22 the policy of the Council.

23 (2) Coordinate with departments, agencies, and
24 offices of the executive branch to develop policy rec-
25 ommendations that promote economic prosperity and

1 quality of life in rural areas (as defined by the Sec-
2 retary of Agriculture) throughout the United States.

3 (3) Make recommendations to the President,
4 through the Director of the Domestic Policy Council
5 and the Director of the National Economic Council,
6 on how to best use Federal investments in rural
7 areas for the purpose of facilitating job growth and
8 economic development.

9 (4) Coordinate and increase the effectiveness of
10 Federal engagement with rural stakeholders, includ-
11 ing agricultural organizations, small businesses, edu-
12 cation and training institutions, health care pro-
13 viders, telecommunications services providers, re-
14 search and land grant institutions, law enforcement,
15 State, local, and Tribal governments, and non-
16 governmental organizations regarding the needs of
17 rural areas throughout the United States.

18 (5) Coordinate Federal efforts directed toward
19 the growth and development of geographic regions
20 that encompass both urban and rural areas.

21 (6) Identify and facilitate rural economic oppor-
22 tunities associated with energy development, outdoor
23 recreation, and other conservation-related activities.

24 (e) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of Agriculture
25 (or staff designated by the Secretary) shall provide to the

1 Council administrative support services and additional re-
2 sources, as appropriate, to the extent permitted by law and
3 within existing appropriations. The Secretary shall deter-
4 mine the amount of funding and personnel necessary for
5 the Council to carry out its duties and the amount of fund-
6 ing and personnel each department, agency, or office rep-
7 resented on the Council should contribute in order for the
8 Council to carry out such duties. Such department, agen-
9 cy, or office shall, upon the request of the Secretary, make
10 available to the Council personnel, administrative support
11 services, and information.

12 (f) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No addi-
13 tional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements
14 of this section. Such requirements shall be carried out
15 using amounts otherwise authorized.

