

ELAINE LURIA  
2ND DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE

VICE CHAIR OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
SEAPOWERS AND PROJECTION FORCES

534 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4215

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

CHAIR OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY  
ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4602**

February 16, 2021

Chairman David Scott  
House Agriculture Committee  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott,

Though Congress has long invested in rural development programs, it is time to modernize those efforts. I urge you to hold a hearing to discuss the benefit of regional commissions and innovative approaches to rural development.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was the country's first federal regional commission and is the model for the other seven. In 1965, Congress formally established the Appalachian Regional Commission to coordinate federal, state, and local actions to address the region's economic disparities and pressing issues like lack of high-speed internet and automation of rural professions. The Commission established the Appalachian Development Highway System and has supported nearly 28,000 economic development projects in the region.

While Congress has reauthorized and robustly funded some regional commissions, others have received few resources to accomplish their purpose. In the 2008 Farm Bill, Congress authorized the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC) to serve parts of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida. The commission would make grants to support infrastructure, jobs training, telecommunications, and economic development in the region. The Commission is currently inactive but could be activated if the President names a federal co-chair to be confirmed by the United States Senate.

As President Biden considers his agenda for rural America, a hearing on regional commissions would provide an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and hear from regional leaders about what updates they need. This hearing would raise awareness to the changing needs of rural communities, regional commissions, and the untapped potential of the SCRC. Thank you for time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress