

**(1) Benchmark**

The term “benchmark” means an annual set of goals and performance measures established for the purpose of assessing performance in meeting a regional investment strategy of a Regional Board.

**(2) Indian tribe**

The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 450b of title 25.

**(3) National Board**

The term “National Board” means the National Rural Investment Board established under section 2009dd-2(c) of this title.

**(4) National Institute**

The term “National Institute” means the National Institute on Regional Rural Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship established under section 2009dd-2(b)(2) of this title.

**(5) Regional Board**

The term “Regional Board” means a Regional Rural Investment Board described in section 2009dd-3(a) of this title.

**(6) Regional innovation grant**

The term “regional innovation grant” means a grant made by the Secretary to a certified Regional Board under section 2009dd-5 of this title.

**(7) Regional investment strategy grant**

The term “regional investment strategy grant” means a grant made by the Secretary to a certified Regional Board under section 2009dd-4 of this title.

**(8) Rural heritage****(A) In general**

The term “rural heritage” means historic sites, structures, and districts.

**(B) Inclusions**

The term “rural heritage” includes historic rural downtown areas and main streets, neighborhoods, farmsteads, scenic and historic trails, heritage areas, and historic landscapes.

(Pub. L. 87-128, title III, §385B, as added Pub. L. 107-171, title VI, §6030, May 13, 2002, 116 Stat. 402; amended Pub. L. 110-234, title VI, §6028, May 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 1183; Pub. L. 110-246, §4(a), title VI, §6028, June 18, 2008, 122 Stat. 1664, 1945.)

## CODIFICATION

Pub. L. 110-234 and Pub. L. 110-246 made identical amendments to this section. The amendments by Pub. L. 110-234 were repealed by section 4(a) of Pub. L. 110-246.

## AMENDMENTS

2008—Pub. L. 110-246, §6028, amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section defined terms for this subchapter.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2008 AMENDMENT

Amendment of this section and repeal of Pub. L. 110-234 by Pub. L. 110-246 effective May 22, 2008, the date of enactment of Pub. L. 110-234, see section 4 of Pub. L. 110-246, set out as an Effective Date note under section 8701 of this title.

**§ 2009dd-2. Establishment and administration of Rural Collaborative Investment Program****(a) Establishment**

The Secretary shall establish a Rural Collaborative Investment Program to support comprehensive regional investment strategies for achieving rural competitiveness.

**(b) Duties of Secretary**

In carrying out this subchapter, the Secretary shall—

(1) appoint and provide administrative and program support to the National Board;

(2) establish a national institute, to be known as the “National Institute on Regional Rural Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship”, to provide technical assistance to the Secretary and the National Board regarding regional competitiveness and rural entrepreneurship, including technical assistance for—

(A) the development of rigorous analytic programs to assist Regional Boards in determining the challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed to receive the greatest regional competitive advantage;

(B) the provision of support for best practices developed by the Regional Boards;

(C) the establishment of programs to support the development of appropriate governance and leadership skills in the applicable regions; and

(D) the evaluation of the progress and performance of the Regional Boards in achieving benchmarks established in a regional investment strategy;

(3) work with the National Board to develop a national rural investment plan that shall—

(A) create a framework to encourage and support a more collaborative and targeted rural investment portfolio in the United States;

(B) establish a Rural Philanthropic Initiative, to work with rural communities to create and enhance the pool of permanent philanthropic resources committed to rural community and economic development;

(C) cooperate with the Regional Boards and State and local governments, organizations, and entities to ensure investment strategies are developed that take into consideration existing rural assets; and

(D) encourage the organization of Regional Boards;

(4) certify the eligibility of Regional Boards to receive regional investment strategy grants and regional innovation grants;

(5) provide grants for Regional Boards to develop and implement regional investment strategies;

(6) provide technical assistance to Regional Boards on issues, best practices, and emerging trends relating to rural development, in cooperation with the National Rural Investment Board; and

(7) provide analytic and programmatic support for regional rural competitiveness through the National Institute, including—

(A) programs to assist Regional Boards in determining the challenges and opportunities that must be addressed to receive the greatest regional competitive advantage;

(B) support for best practices development by the regional investment boards;

(C) programs to support the development of appropriate governance and leadership skills in the region; and

(D) a review and evaluation of the performance of the Regional Boards (including progress in achieving benchmarks established in a regional investment strategy) in an annual report submitted to—

(i) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

**(c) National Rural Investment Board**

The Secretary shall establish within the Department of Agriculture a board to be known as the “National Rural Investment Board”.

**(d) Duties of National Board**

The National Board shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date of establishment of the National Board, develop rules relating to the operation of the National Board; and

(2) provide advice to—

(A) the Secretary and subsequently review the design, development, and execution of the National Rural Investment Plan;

(B) Regional Boards on issues, best practices, and emerging trends relating to rural development; and

(C) the Secretary and the National Institute on the development and execution of the program under this subchapter.

**(e) Membership**

**(1) In general**

The National Board shall consist of 14 members appointed by the Secretary not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

**(2) Supervision**

The National Board shall be subject to the general supervision and direction of the Secretary.

**(3) Sectors represented**

The National Board shall consist of representatives from each of—

(A) nationally recognized entrepreneurship organizations;

(B) regional strategy and development organizations;

(C) community-based organizations;

(D) elected members of local governments;

(E) members of State legislatures;

(F) primary, secondary, and higher education, job skills training, and workforce development institutions;

(G) the rural philanthropic community;

(H) financial, lending, venture capital, entrepreneurship, and other related institutions;

(I) private sector business organizations, including chambers of commerce and other for-profit business interests;

(J) Indian tribes; and

(K) cooperative organizations.

**(4) Selection of members**

**(A) In general**

In selecting members of the National Board, the Secretary shall consider recommendations made by—

(i) the chairman and ranking member of each of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(ii) the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate; and

(iii) the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

**(B) Ex-officio members**

In consultation with the chairman and ranking member of each of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, the Secretary may appoint not more than 3 other officers or employees of the Executive Branch to serve as ex-officio, nonvoting members of the National Board.

**(5) Term of office**

**(A) In general**

Subject to subparagraph (B), the term of office of a member of the National Board appointed under paragraph (1)(A)<sup>1</sup> shall be for a period of not more than 4 years.

**(B) Staggered terms**

The members of the National Board shall be appointed to serve staggered terms.

**(6) Initial appointments**

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, the Secretary shall appoint the initial members of the National Board.

**(7) Vacancies**

A vacancy on the National Board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

**(8) Compensation**

A member of the National Board shall receive no compensation for service on the National Board, but shall be reimbursed for related travel and other expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of the member of the National Board in accordance with section 5702 and 5703 of title 5.

**(9) Chairperson**

The National Board shall select a chairperson from among the members of the National Board.

**(10) Federal status**

For purposes of Federal law, a member of the National Board shall be considered a special Government employee (as defined in section 202(a) of title 18).

**(f) Administrative support**

The Secretary, on a reimbursable basis from funds made available under section 2009dd-7 of

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “paragraph (1)”.

this title, may provide such administrative support to the National Board as the Secretary determines is necessary.

(Pub. L. 87-128, title III, § 385C, as added Pub. L. 107-171, title VI, § 6030, May 13, 2002, 116 Stat. 403; amended Pub. L. 110-234, title VI, § 6028, May 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 1184; Pub. L. 110-246, § 4(a), title VI, § 6028, June 18, 2008, 122 Stat. 1664, 1945.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, referred to in subsec. (e)(1), (6), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 110-246, which was approved June 18, 2008.

#### CODIFICATION

Pub. L. 110-234 and Pub. L. 110-246 made identical amendments to this section. The amendments by Pub. L. 110-234 were repealed by section 4(a) of Pub. L. 110-246.

#### AMENDMENTS

2008—Pub. L. 110-246, § 6028, amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section provided for certification of Regional Investment Boards.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2008 AMENDMENT

Amendment of this section and repeal of Pub. L. 110-234 by Pub. L. 110-246 effective May 22, 2008, the date of enactment of Pub. L. 110-234, see section 4 of Pub. L. 110-246, set out as an Effective Date note under section 8701 of this title.

### § 2009dd-3. Regional Rural Investment Boards

#### (a) In general

A Regional Rural Investment Board shall be a multijurisdictional and multisectoral group that—

(1) represents the long-term economic, community, and cultural interests of a region;

(2) is certified by the Secretary to establish a rural investment strategy and compete for regional innovation grants;

(3) is composed of residents of a region that are broadly representative of diverse public, nonprofit, and private sector interests in investment in the region, including (to the maximum extent practicable) representatives of—

(A) units of local, multijurisdictional, or State government, including not more than 1 representative from each State in the region;

(B) nonprofit community-based development organizations, including community development financial institutions and community development corporations;

(C) agricultural, natural resource, and other asset-based related industries;

(D) in the case of regions with federally recognized Indian tribes, Indian tribes;

(E) regional development organizations;

(F) private business organizations, including chambers of commerce;

(G)(i) institutions of higher education (as defined in section 1001(a) of title 20);

(ii) tribally controlled colleges or universities (as defined in section 1801(a) of title 25); and

(iii) tribal technical institutions;

(H) workforce and job training organizations;

(I) other entities and organizations, as determined by the Regional Board;

(J) cooperatives; and

(K) consortia of entities and organizations described in subparagraphs (A) through (J);

(4) represents a region inhabited by—

(A) more than 25,000 individuals, as determined in the latest available decennial census conducted under section 141(a) of title 13; or

(B) in the case of a region with a population density of less than 2 individuals per square mile, at least 10,000 individuals, as determined in that latest available decennial census;

(5) has a membership of which not less than 25 percent, nor more than 40 percent, represents—

(A) units of local government and Indian tribes described in subparagraphs (A) and (D) of paragraph (3);

(B) nonprofit community and economic development organizations and institutions of higher education described in subparagraphs (B) and (G) of paragraph (3); or

(C) private business (including chambers of commerce and cooperatives) and agricultural, natural resource, and other asset-based related industries described in subparagraphs (C) and (F) of paragraph (3);

(6) has a membership that may include an officer or employee of a Federal agency, serving as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the Regional Board to represent the agency; and

(7) has organizational documents that demonstrate that the Regional Board will—

(A) create a collaborative public-private strategy process;

(B) develop, and submit to the Secretary for approval, a regional investment strategy that meets the requirements of section 2009dd-4 of this title, with benchmarks—

(i) to promote investment in rural areas through the use of grants made available under this subchapter; and

(ii) to provide financial and technical assistance to promote a broad-based regional development program aimed at increasing and diversifying economic growth, improved community facilities, and improved quality of life;

(C) implement the approved regional investment strategy;

(D) provide annual reports to the Secretary and the National Board on progress made in achieving the benchmarks of the regional investment strategy, including an annual financial statement; and

(E) select a non-Federal organization (such as a regional development organization) in the local area served by the Regional Board that has previous experience in the management of Federal funds to serve as fiscal manager of any funds of the Regional Board.

#### (b) Urban areas

A resident of an urban area may serve as an ex-officio member of a Regional Board.

#### (c) Duties

A Regional Board shall—

(1) create a collaborative planning process for public-private investment within a region;