

NATIONAL FOREST COUNTIES & SCHOOLS COALITION

The Secure Rural Schools program was intended as a safety net for forest communities in 41 states. SRS payments are based on historic precedent and agreements established in 1908 removing federal lands from local tax bases and from full local community economic activity. The expectation was that the federal government and Congress would develop a long term system based on sustainable active forest management.

The safety net is unraveling in 775 counties and 4,400 school districts serving 9 million students in 41 states.

The 114th Congress failed to act on SRS and forest management. On March 7, 2017, the National Forest Service issued 25 % payments of timber receipts to states based on the original 1908 Act. These payments, actually based on timber receipts, are well below Secure Rural Schools funding and also are subject to a 6.9% sequestration cut. 775 Counties and over 4,400 schools serving over 9 million students in 41 states now directly face the grim financial reality of budget cuts and the loss of county road, fire and safety services, and reductions in education programs and services for students.

The 115th Congress did not act to fund the Secure Rural Schools program when it completed FY 2017 funding (H.R.244). Congress funded many programs but it did not fund SRS for the 9 million students in 4,400 school districts in 775 counties in 41 states across the country.

This Congress must continue the historic national commitment established in 1908 to the 775 rural counties and 4,400 schools in rural communities and school districts served by the SRS program. Without immediate Congressional action on forest management and SRS, forest counties and schools face the loss of irreplaceable essential fire, police, road and bridge, community and educational services.

The 115th Congress must act on Secure Rural Schools with short term FY 2016- 2017 funding as it develops active long term forest management programs generating revenues and local jobs to actively manage and restore National Forest and BLM lands promoting social and economic stability in local communities.

- **ASK House members to cosponsor H.R.2340 - To extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.**
- **ASK Senators to cosponsor S. 1027 - To extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.**
- **ASK Members of Congress to request his/her leadership in the House and Senate to act on Secure Rural Schools authorization and short term funding for Fiscal Years 2016-2017.**