

NACo applauds Senate for support of public lands

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties™ (NACo) this week applauded the 75 U.S. Senators for voting Wednesday to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act. Additionally, this vote would reauthorize this Act and fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for five years.

The Senate voted 75-22 for the bipartisan amendment that devotes \$2.8 billion over five years (2007-2011) for payments to counties and states affected by the loss of timber revenue from federal land and \$1.9 billion to fully fund PILT from fiscal 2008 through 2012.

“This is an important first step in a process that’s far from over, but we greatly appreciate the support of the senators who demonstrated their understanding of the plight of public lands counties by their votes,” said Robert Cope, commissioner, Lemhi County, Idaho. Cope is president of NACo’s Western Interstate Region (WIR), which fought aggressively for reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools bill and full funding of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program.

NACo particularly thanked the Senators who co-sponsored the bi-partisan amendment and worked to get the votes necessary for passage:

Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), Gordon Smith (R-Ore.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Pete Domenici (R-N.M.), Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Larry Craig (R-Ida.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Mike Crapo (R-Ida.), John Tester (D-Mont.), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), Robert Bennett (R-Ut.), Diane Feinstein (D-Calif.), John Salazar (D-Colo.), Orin Hatch (R-Ut.) and Jay Rockefeller (D-W.V.).

The approved amendment was attached to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill to fund the

military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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