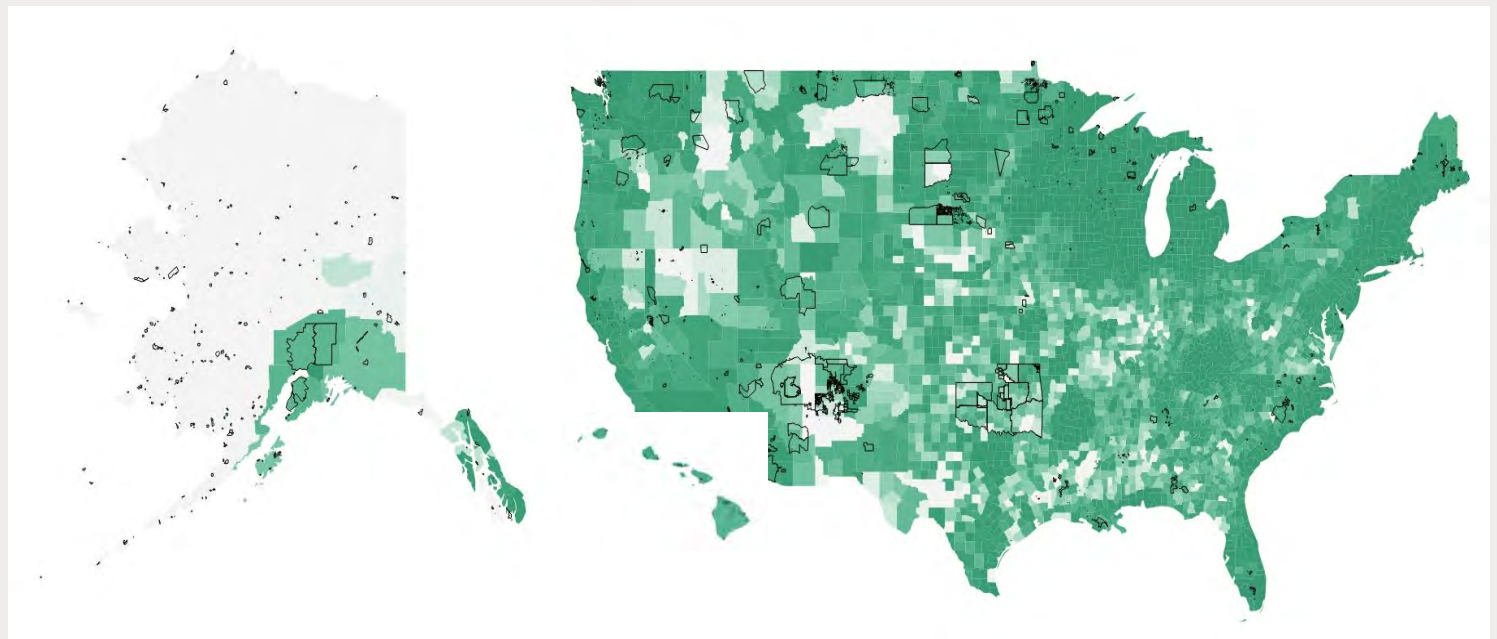


Economic Development Opportunities in the 2018 Farm Bill

From better broadband access to new funding streams supporting the sale and marketing of Native foods, the 2018 Farm Bill contains many opportunities to promote economic development in Indian Country. The provisions outlined here are just some of the programs in this legislation that can strengthen business and commerce for Tribes and Tribal producers across the country.



Percentage of Population with 2 or More Broadband Providers
0.0 100.0

Map of US counties with 2 or more broadband providers with an overlay of Indian Country and Alaska. ¹

Broadband Programs

There are two provisions in Rural Development title (VI) regarding the expansion of broadband to rural regions. The **Strategic Community Investment Plans** (2) require the Secretary to coordinate with Tribes and other governments and gives priority to plans that improve broadband across a multi-jurisdictional basis and include investment from strategic partners (such as Tribal governments). Another Provision establishes priority for Tribes and other underserved communities for broadband grants and loans (3). E-connectivity is imperative in today's global economy and will increase productivity for farms, factories, forests, mining, and small businesses.

Local Agriculture Management Program (LAMP) ⁴

A provision in the Horticulture Title (X), establishes Tribal eligibility in local food programs to grow, process, and market Native foods. With eligibility, Tribes will be able to cultivate, process and sell traditional foods at a variety of alternative merchandising models such as farmers markets and community-supported agriculture programs. For SNAP participants, this would be an opportunity to spend funds on locally produced traditional foods.

FDPIR 638 Demonstration Project ⁵

Through this new provision in the Nutrition title (IV), Tribes now have the opportunity to have more control over how their Tribal members are served by this critical program through food procurement, potentially allowing more choices for Tribes in directly selecting suppliers and food products for the program. This could result in increased economic activity among Tribal producers and local/regional food businesses. The first 638 contracts for this new provision began in Fall 2021, and the 7 Tribes participating have already begun sourcing foods like halibut, bison, beef, wild rice, and fresh fruits and vegetables from Tribal producers for their programs.

Council on Rural Community Innovation and Economic Development ⁶

This provision in the Rural Development title (VI) creates a council with representatives from 26 Executive Branch agencies to streamline and leverage federal investments in rural areas, and coordinate with all stakeholders, including Tribal governments. This will allow Tribal leaders a seat at the table to bring awareness to the needs of their communities regarding community and economic development.

Rural Innovation Stronger Economy Program ⁷

This provision in the Rural Development title (VI) introduces a grant program to create job accelerators and programs in low-income rural areas, prioritizing applications with a Tribal government as the lead applicant. Grants will provide funds to individuals or groups looking to establish programs in their communities to enhance economic growth.

Sources

1. FCC 2017
2. H.R. 2 Sec. 6401
3. H.R. 2 Sec. 6201
4. H.R.2: Sec. 10102
5. H.R.2: Sec. 4003(b)
6. H.R. 2 Sec. 6306
7. H.R. 2 Sec. 6424



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