



INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

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December 4, 2024

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Environment & Public
Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chair, U.S. House Committee on Transportation &
Infrastructure
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on
Environment & Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on
Transportation & Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: IEDC Support for S. 4367, the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024

Dear Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Capito, Chairman Graves, and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and the thousands of economic development organizations and professionals we serve, thank you for your bipartisan work and leadership on the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (S. 4367). In addition to authorizing projects under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for water infrastructure, this legislation would reauthorize the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the first time in 20 years.

S. 4367 would make important improvements and reforms to EDA's core programs and activities including disaster assistance, workforce development, broadband deployment, and renewable energy, ensuring that the agency's investments are maximized and impactful.

Specifically, we support your efforts to:

- Increase the overall authorization level for EDA and its programs to reflect the important role of EDA in serving distressed and underserved communities across the country.
- Revise cost sharing requirements, increasing the baseline percentage for EDA's federal share and reducing the baseline requirement for local matching funds. This includes a focus on small communities with fewer than 10,000 residents where the federal share can be increased up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project.
- Authorize EDA planning grants to be utilized for predevelopment activities, capacity building, and administrative expenses, and allow the agency to increase the federal share up to 100 percent for Partnership Planning grants and other disaster recovery investments.
- Strengthen EDA's ability to collaborate with relevant Federal economic development technical assistance and service providers to provide expertise and technical assistance to develop, implement, and support comprehensive economic development strategies and other economic development planning.
- Modernize EDA's authorities to award grants to public-private partnerships or consortia for high-speed broadband projects.

- Establish an Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience and a new Office of Tribal Economic Development within EDA.
- Authorize EDA to make grants to support the development and expansion of workforce training programs.
- Strengthen EDA's ability to coordinate with the regional commissions, to reduce duplication and develop best practices across agencies

We commend S. 4367 and support its passage through Congress. As the legislation moves forward, IEDC and our members stand ready to serve as a resource and partner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Ohle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nathan" being more prominent than the last name "Ohle".

Nathan Ohle
President and CEO