

December 3, 2007

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chair, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar,

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) strongly urges the expedited passage of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) reauthorization to ensure that comprehensive progress continues in the distressed regions served by ARC. NARC supports ARC's mission and applauds its success in helping achieve cooperation and solutions that best promote the necessary economic development and community growth of the thirteen-state region.

NARC, representing local elected officials, Councils of Government (COGs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Economic Development Districts (EEDs), serves as the national voice for regionalism – advocating regional cooperation as the most effective way to address community planning, development and infrastructure issues. Many of our members are represented within the ARC region and work with ARC from a grassroots perspective at the local level to develop projects that advance economic development within the area. The program approach and flexibility of ARC has allowed many of these communities to effectively transition and positively impact citizens and businesses to compete and grow globally.

During its more than four decades of experience, ARC has proven its value. It has taken responsibility for improving the quality of life and opportunities for residents of Appalachia. NARC is a dedicated advocate of ARC and its efforts to ensure that comprehensive and prioritized economic development plans and projects are given adequate federal financial assistance to strengthen the region which continues to face a complex set of challenges.

Thank you for your support and consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact me directly for more information or assistance at fred@narc.org or 202.986.1032, x.216.

Sincerely,



Fred Abousleman
Executive Director