

Senate panel funds rural housing for 2007. Most USDA rural housing programs maintained level funding for FY 2007 in H.R. 5384, approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee on June 22. Many programs received increases in the House version of H.R. 5384 (see *HAC News*, 5/31/06). In the Senate, farm labor housing, Section 502 direct loans, and Section 523 self-help grants did not receive the increases provided by the House. The Senate bill also opens farm labor housing to processing workers. Both versions of H.R. 5384 and accompanying legislative reports are available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app07.html>.

USDA RD Program (in millions of dollars)	FY 2006 Approp.	FY 2007 Proposed Budget	FY 2007 House- Passed Bill (H.R. 5384)	FY 2007 Sen. Approp. Committee Bill (H.R. 5384)
Loans				
502 Single Fam. Direct	\$1,129.4	\$1,237.5	\$1,237.5	\$1,129.4
502 Single Fam. Guar.	3,644.2	3,564.2	3,564.2	3,644.2
504 Very Low-Inc. Repair	34.7	36.3	36.3	34.7
514 Farm Labor Hsg.	38.1	41.6	50	35
515 Rental Housing	99	0	100	100
538 Rental Hsg. Guar.	99	198	100	100
Grants & Payments				
504 Very Low-Inc. Repair	30	30	*	29.7
516 Farm Labor Hsg. Grants	13.9	13.9	23.6	13.9
523 Self-Help Tech. Asst.	33.6	37.6	37.6	33.7
533 Hsg. Preserv. Grants	10	9.9	*	9.9
521 Rental Assistance	646.6***	486.3***	335.4***	335.4***
Multifamily Housng Revitalizatn	-	74.25	29	28
542 Rural Rental Vouchers	15.8	0	**	10**
Preservation Revolving Loans	3	0	**	3**
Rental Preservation Demonstration	9	0	**	15**
Rural Community Devel. Init.	6.35	0	0	6.29

* Included in the Rural Housing Assistance Grants account. The House version of H.R. 5384 would provide a total of \$40.6 million for RHAG, lower than the \$44 million appropriated for FY 2006.

** Included in Section 542 Vouchers/Revitalization Program.

*** Section 521 Rental Assistance is provided through four-year contracts in FY 2006. The budget proposed reducing the contract length to two years, and the House and Senate bills would reduce it to one year.

HUD proposes changing GSE risk-based capital requirements. Comments are due July 26. See *Federal Register*, 6/26/06, pp. 36231-52 or <http://www.hudclips.org>. Isabella W. Sammons, HUD, 202-414-3790.

Minimum wage lowest in 50 years. After 10 years without an increase, the inflation-adjusted value of the \$5.15 per hour federal minimum wage is the lowest since 1956, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research. CEPR's press release and a graph, which also shows that in 1989 the minimum wage dipped to \$5.27 (in today's dollars), are at http://www.cepr.net/pressreleases/2006_06_19.htm.

Housing plus services model featured in new HAC report. *Formulas for Success: Housing Plus Services in Rural Areas* examines ways rural organizations are providing housing plus services and is available free at <http://www.ruralhome.org>. Print copies are \$4.00 from Luz Rosas, HAC, 202-842-8600, luz@ruralhome.org.

2006 National Rural Housing Conference registration to begin soon. *Building Communities, Celebrating Partnerships: HAC Rural Housing Conference 2006*, December 6-8 in Washington, D.C., will provide the latest news and training, as well as celebrations of HAC's 35th anniversary and SHOP's 10th. Registration information will be posted soon at <http://www.ruralhome.org>.

HAC News e-mail subscribers get news sooner. For faster notice about conference details and other rural housing news, change to an e-mail *HAC News* subscription at http://lists.ruralhome.org/lists/info/hac_news. To be removed from the postal mailing list, send a request to Luz Rosas, luz@ruralhome.org.