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**Governor Kaine Recommends More than \$3.1 Million in Appalachian Regional Commission Funding for Southwest Virginia**  
*– Sixteen projects directed at economic development, clean and safe water, workforce education and tourism –*

**RICHMOND** – Governor Timothy M. Kaine announced today that he has recommended more than \$3.1 million in Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funding for 16 projects in Southwest Virginia. The funds will help support economic development, clean and safe water, workforce education programs, and cultural heritage tourism.

"Each year projects funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission benefit Virginians in Southwest Virginia through increased access to clean water, economic development, educational programs, and healthcare," Governor Kaine said. "Again I am recommending additional projects to the ARC for consideration that will draw tourism dollars to the region, strengthen the economic development efforts in the region, and create a better quality of life."

The ARC is a federal-state partnership that works for sustainable community and economic development in Appalachia, assisting the region in achieving economic prosperity that more completely reflects the nation's overall prosperity. Each year the governor makes funding recommendations to the ARC for projects in Virginia's Appalachian region.

Projects are awarded in two categories: Area Development Funding (AD) and Asset-Based Development Initiative Funding (ABD). Projects funded through AD are designed to encourage economic development in the region by funding projects such as infrastructure, entrepreneurship support and workforce development. Projects funded through ABD are designed to build a strong and sustainable asset-based economy by bringing jobs and prosperity to Appalachian communities, while preserving their character.

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has served as the designated agency for Virginia's ARC program since its inception in 1965.

"These grants focus on many areas key to the development of a healthy and thriving community," said Bill Shelton, DHCD director. "The funding of programs targeted toward economic development, infrastructure improvements, cultural heritage tourism and education work together as a comprehensive mix that will enable citizens of Southwest Virginia to enjoy a higher quality of life in a community where they are able to live, work, and do business."

A list of projects, funding and descriptions are below.

**Area Development (AD) Funding Awards**

Project Title, Applicant, Award	Project Description
<b>Tri-Community Water Project</b> Dickenson County Award: \$500,000	The county will provide safe and adequate potable water to three rural communities which are difficult to serve because of the mountainous terrain, yet which are at risk from unsafe water supplies. The project is expected to serve 55 households with public water, which will improve their standard of living, provide opportunities for growth, and encourage homeowners to remain in Dickenson County.
<b>St. Paul Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion</b> Town of St. Paul Award: \$500,000	The project will expand and upgrade an existing wastewater treatment plant to support current and future economic development opportunities and provide residential areas with future access to public sewer services. Wise County and surrounding areas are facing economic development challenges because they are unable to provide wastewater treatment without the upgrade to this facility, which will bring the plant from 0.06 million-gallons-per-day (MGD) to 1 MGD, a substantial upgrade. This project is critical to the location of 90 new jobs and potential for additional jobs.
<b>Birthplace of Country Music Cultural Heritage Center</b> Birthplace of Country Music Alliance Award: \$500,000	The project will develop the Birthplace of County Music Cultural Heritage Center to house exhibits, educational programs, and artistic programming. The center will be developed through the rehabilitation of an existing historic structure in the City of Bristol and is expected to become a major tourist destination that will draw more than 25,000 tourists a year, create new jobs, and generate more than \$14 million in revenue over the first five years of operations.
<b>Renovation and Arts / Crafts Expansion</b> Fine Arts Center for the New River Valley	The project will construct an arts center in an existing vacant building in the Town of Pulaski, which will contain four classrooms / studios, glass and pottery studios, three galleries – the larger of which doubles as a special event space, a digital lab, expanded storage for the permanent collection, and other amenities. The facility will provide increased educational opportunities in the arts and will draw an increased number of



Award: \$500,000	visitors to the region, creating tourism revenue and supporting local artisans.
<b>Wise Inn Restoration and Redevelopment</b> Wise County IDA Award: \$500,000	The Wise County Industrial Development Authority will oversee the redevelopment of the historic Wise Inn property. The Inn will be a hub for regional tourism and is expected to host a variety of educational, cultural, and entertainment activities. The restoration will result in an upscale, 40-room hotel, restaurant, conference and meeting space, and additional parking. At least 30 jobs are expected to be created as a result of the Inn's operation.
<b>Growing Green Collar Jobs in Southwest Virginia</b> Southwest Virginia Community College Award: \$200,000	The college will implement an educational program that will train students for "green collar" positions in construction and related fields. It is anticipated that 84 students will complete the training in the program's first year and 50 of them will obtain employment in the green building sector.
<b>Together We Can</b> Occupational Enterprises, Inc. Award: \$100,000	The project will implement a best practice substance abuse recovery program as a catalyst to improving the quality of the workforce in Dickenson County. This project will provide in-depth services to 25 families and is expected to result in 20 persons gaining and maintaining employment.
<b>"Welcome to My Southwest Virginia" Project</b> 'Round the Mountain Award: \$150,000	This project will develop 20 professional, high-quality videographies that will showcase different localities' historical, cultural, artistic, recreational, and natural features. The videos produced will highlight the diverse attractions across Southwest Virginia and contribute to the increasingly important cultural heritage tourism based economy of the region. The project is expected to draw additional visitors to each of the showcased localities, to directly impact at least ten businesses, and to add at least 30 jobs to the region.
<b>Great Expectations Initiative for Foster Youth</b> Virginia Foundation for Community College Education Award: \$99,700	The project will provide educational programs at five area community colleges to meet the unique needs of foster youth and prepare them for greater employment opportunities. This project is expected to lead to 90 of these youth entering the workforce, 100 youth enrolled in degree or workforce development programs, 130 receiving a Career Readiness Certificate, and 25 completing high school equivalency. These outcomes will directly contribute to a more qualified workforce and higher earning potential for the at least 130 students a year who participate in the program.
<b>Daniel Boone Interpretive Center Geothermal Project</b> Scott County Economic Development Authority Award: \$100,000	The Scott County EDA will complete an interpretive center that showcases the cultural heritage of the area and increase the attractions available on the Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail. The project is expected to draw 500,000 visitors to the trail and result in an increase of \$850,000 in tourism revenue per year.
<b>Traditional Music of Southwest Virginia Educational Plan</b> The Crooked Road Award: \$100,000	The project will assess and examine traditional music resources and assets across nine Southwest Virginia counties, create a Traditional Music Education Committee, and develop a comprehensive education plan for incorporating this music into education at all grade levels. The project includes pilot programs in traditional music at two public school systems, youth music programming and the development of a larger youth traditional music event, creation of a traditional music certification program at a community college, and developing standards for traditional music teacher certifications.



**Asset-Based Development (ABD) Funding Awards**

Project Title, Applicant, Award	Project Description
<b>S.P.E.E.E.D. – Successful Professional Early Education Entrepreneur Development</b> Appalachian Community Action Development Agency, Inc. Award: \$45,500	The project will provide training, business development, and mentoring to entrepreneurs in working to start childcare services. The project is expected to create at least 6-10 new childcare entrepreneurs, develop 10-20 apprenticeship training partners to assist new entrepreneurs, and provide business development planning to 10-15 childcare facilities.

<p><b>Appalachian Heritage Garden Trail</b></p> <p>Virginia Highlands Community College Educational Foundation</p> <p>Award: \$50,000</p>	<p>The heritage garden trail will enhance the thriving heritage tourism industry by adding another component to the story of the traditional music and crafts of the region. The project is expected to increase tourism and result in an increase in \$20,000 of new revenues in the first year.</p>
<p><b>Meat Harvesting Facility for Southwestern Virginia</b></p> <p>Grayson Landcare, Inc.</p> <p>Award: \$50,000</p>	<p>The project will develop capacity, identify feasible locations, design and engineer, and develop a business plan and financing structure for a fully operating USDA approved meat harvesting and processing facility. The products of the study are expected to lead to the production of the facility which will create local jobs and support agricultural businesses through out the region.</p>
<p><b>Settlers Museum of Southwest Virginia Enhancement Project – Phase I</b></p> <p>Settlers Museum Foundation</p> <p>Award: \$17,500</p>	<p>The Settlers Museum Foundation will complete a strategic master plan which will include a physical assessment of a historic farm structures to prioritize critical structural repairs, a market/branding study to increase visitor traffic to the facility, the development of concepts for additional programming, and an agricultural tourism feasibility study. The project will contribute to the long term sustainability and economic growth of a 22 year-old Smyth County attraction.</p>
<p><b>Establishing and Sustaining a Community Kitchen</b></p> <p>Spencer-Penn School Preservation Organization, Inc.</p> <p>Award: \$42,200</p>	<p>This project will establish and staff a certified community kitchen in the Martinsville / Henry County area. This facility will offer educational opportunities and foster entrepreneurship through supporting food based small business start-ups. In doing so it will incubate the development and growth of food based entrepreneurship which is an essential element of sustaining Virginia's agricultural economy and responding to increased interest and demand in locally grown foods. In the initial year the project is expected to educate approximately 70 students on food safety and handling and business skills; and it will additionally serve at least 5 small businesses which will produce a minimum of \$20,000 of marketable products.</p>

DHCD is committed to creating safe, affordable, and prosperous communities to live, work and do business in Virginia. DHCD partners with Virginia's communities to develop their economic potential, regulates Virginia's building and fire codes, provides training and certification for building officials, support for Virginia's homeless, and invests more than \$100 million each year into housing and community development projects throughout the state. By partnering with local governments, nonprofit groups, state and federal agencies, and others, DHCD is working to improve the quality of life for Virginians.

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