

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
INTELLIGENCE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

August 16, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Leahy, and Ranking Member Lowey:

As you move to Conference Committee on H.R. 5895, the minibus appropriations bill, which includes the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies; Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies; and Legislative Branch Appropriations Acts, we respectfully request that you support the bipartisan Senate provision that would ensure that if the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) were to move outside of its current headquarters in Washington, D.C, it would be relocated to the state of West Virginia.¹ While ARC stretches across 13 U.S. states, West Virginia remains the only state fully within ARC's jurisdiction. It is also located at the midpoint of the Appalachian Region, making it a sensible location to serve as the headquarters of the ARC.


West Virginia is also central to the creation of the ARC. President John F. Kennedy visited West Virginia during his campaign for the presidency in 1960, and was so deeply moved by the poverty that he observed there that he resolved to create the ARC, which was founded in 1965 through an Act of Congress. Since that time, the Commission has provided focused investments in areas such as business development, education and job training, telecommunications, critical infrastructure, community development, housing, and transportation. In FY 2017, the Commission supported 591 projects totaling \$152.3 million, with 73% of these investments going toward the most distressed areas within the region. These

¹ Senate Report 115-258, Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill of 2019, 24 May 2018, page 139, lines 3-21 (<https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt281/CRPT-115srpt281.pdf>)


community development efforts are critical to our economic vitality and progress, and we are pleased that both the Senate and House bills provide level funding at \$155 million for ARC. We hope that the final version of the appropriations bill contains this funding level as well as the Senate's language regarding the relocation of the ARC to West Virginia, which received a vote in Committee and passed with bipartisan support.

If it were not for President Kennedy's fateful trip to West Virginia, the ARC might not exist today. It is only fitting then that the birthplace of this vital institution would be its next home. We strongly encourage conferees to include the Senate language regarding the ARC headquarters in the final bill.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



David B. McKinley, P.E.
United States Representative