

S. 1619, THE LIVABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

Creating Better And More Affordable Places To Live, Work And Raise Families

Senator Dodd's Livable Communities Act (S. 1619) will help local communities plan for and create better and more affordable places to live, work, and raise families. With sustainable development, our communities will cut traffic congestion; reduce greenhouse gas emissions and gasoline consumption; protect rural areas and green spaces; revitalize existing Main Streets and urban centers; and create more affordable housing.

FUNDS REGIONAL PLANNING TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES MORE LIVABLE

Incentives To Plan For Livable Communities. The Comprehensive Planning Grant Program will help communities develop comprehensive regional plans that incorporate transportation, housing, community and economic development, and environmental needs. Grantees must demonstrate a commitment to integrated planning and sustainable development. The Act authorizes \$400 million in competitive grants over four years.

Funding to Implement Sustainable Development Projects. The Challenge Grant Program will enable communities to implement cross-cutting projects according to their comprehensive regional plans. With \$3.75 billion authorized for competitive grants over three years, these projects will help communities create and preserve affordable housing; support transit-oriented development; improve public transportation; create pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares; redevelop brownfields; and foster economic development.

Partnering with Local Communities. The legislation ensures that the federal government is a supportive partner for communities' sustainable development efforts, offering technical assistance to regions that apply for Livable Communities grants and giving special assistance to smaller communities that may need additional help to get started. As a resource for sustainability best practices and technical assistance, the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities will ensure that communities learn from each other's successes.

ELIMINATES BARRIERS TO FEDERAL AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER TO FACILITATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities. By bringing together the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal agencies, the Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities will coordinate federal sustainable development policies; coordinate federal sustainability research; coordinate with HUD to implement Livable Communities grants; identify barriers to sustainable development; and promote coordination of transportation, housing, community development, energy, and environmental policies.

Office of Sustainable Housing And Communities. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will establish the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities to coordinate federal policies that foster sustainable development and administer HUD's sustainability initiatives; recommend and conduct research; implement and oversee Livable Communities grant programs in coordination with the Interagency Council; and provide guidance, best practices and technical assistance to communities seeking to plan for the future.