



U.S. Department of Agriculture
4440 N.W. 25th Place, Suite 200
Gainesville, FL 32606
www.rd.usda.gov/fl

News Release

Contact:
Caroline Evans (352) 338-3444

USDA Helped Improve Essential Services for 7 Million Rural Residents in 2017

Funding Supports Schools, Libraries, Municipal Centers, First Responder Vehicles and Equipment, Other Community Needs

Gainesville, Florida January 29, 2018 - Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced in Washington D.C. recently that USDA invested in nearly 400 projects to provide essential services for more than 7 million people in rural areas across the country in Fiscal Year 2017.

“Partnering with our small towns and cities to support essential services that rural residents need is one way USDA is facilitating prosperity in rural America,” Perdue said. “These investments will help communities significantly improve their schools, hospitals and public safety facilities and improve the quality of life.”

In Putnam County Florida, the Putnam Academy of Arts and Sciences Charter School received Community Facilities Direct Loan Program funds to construct a 4,500 square foot building housing classrooms and an enclosed physical education area. Funding will also be used to refinance existing debt and complete renovations to existing buildings.

To build stronger, thriving rural communities, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity in April 2017 to identify how federal regulations impact agriculture and rural communities. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue was selected to chair the group, which includes 22 federal agencies as well as local leaders. Member of the task force travelled across the country, holding listening sessions and gathering recommendations from the people living and working in rural America. Earlier this month Secretary Perdue presented the task force’s [findings](#) to President Trump. They include more than 100 recommendations for the federal government to consider to restore rural prosperity.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.