

S. HRG. 119-176

**NOMINATION OF GLEN SMITH TO BE UNDER
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

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NOMINATION OF GLEN SMITH TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2025

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:02 p.m., in Room 328A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. John Boozman, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Boozman [presiding], Hoeven, Ernst, Hyde-Smith, Marshall, Grassley, Fischer, Klobuchar, Bennet, Smith, Luján, Welch, and Fetterman.

STATEMENT OF HON. BOOZMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS, CHAIRMAN, U.S. COMMITTEE ON AGRI- CULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Chairman BOOZMAN. It is my privilege to call this hearing to order. I thank my colleagues for joining us today. Today, we will consider the nomination of Mr. Glen Smith of Iowa to be Under Secretary for Rural Development at USDA.

Mr. Smith, congratulations on your nomination, and thank you for your willingness to serve. Then, also thank you to your family. These are all family affairs to allow you to serve, so we want to extend a warm welcome to your wife, Fauzan, and lovely family joining you here today.

Mr. Smith, when speaking with you, it is clear you understand the challenges facing rural America. Your experiences as a young farmer in the 1980s operating a family farm and serving on the board of the Farm Credit Administration, among other roles, will be critical for you to draw on as you make decisions that will have bearing on rural communities and an extremely challenging farm economy. Your nomination comes at a crucial time for American agriculture and the broader rural economy.

Members on this panel are all too familiar with the grave challenges facing the agriculture sector. While rural communities vary widely, many of them share the serious issues that rural development is uniquely equipped to tackle. Within the past 15 years, nearly 200 rural hospitals have closed or ended inpatient services. Home ownership has become more difficult to attain due to low housing stock and rising prices. Millions of Americans living in rural areas still do not have access to high-speed broadband or even clean drinking water and adequate sanitation.

If confirmed, you will be charged with the critical mission of improving the economy and quality of life in rural America through three agencies: the Rural Utility Service, the Rural Housing Service, and the Rural Business Cooperative Service.

In my own home State of Arkansas, I have seen firsthand the success of USDA's core Rural Development programs that improved access to infrastructure necessary to provide clean drinking water, reliable and affordable electricity, high-speed broadband, quality healthcare, and safe, affordable housing. It is not an exaggeration to say that many of RD's programs are lifesaving and generate tremendous results for the investment.

I am looking forward to the conversation today and hearing your thoughts on not only how Rural Development will continue to be a resource for Americans living in rural communities, but also ways we can work together to streamline programs, ensuring they reach the communities and individuals who need them most. Again, congratulations on your nomination.

Senator Klobuchar is going to join us in just a little bit, so I think what we will do is go ahead and ask you to start with your opening statement.

Oh, I am sorry. Go ahead.

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman BOOZMAN. I got ahead of myself. I was so excited. I was doing everything right—

Senator ERNST. We were so excited to hear from Mr. Smith.

Well, thank you, Chairman Boozman, and to the Ranking Member Klobuchar when she arrives. It is a privilege to introduce a fellow Iowan, Mr. Glen Smith, to this Committee. I also want to warmly welcome his wife, Fauzan, and their family. Special shout-out to Emma, who is entering into—you are in the seventh grade, correct, Emma? Well, thank you for being here today. It is always a family affair, and Glen, you have such a wonderful family. Welcome, everyone, to Washington, DC.

I am sorry? Oh, the Honorable Senator from Kansas said you married up.

[Laughter.]

Senator ERNST. I have had the very personal pleasure of knowing Glen and his family for many, many, many years. His hometown of Atlantic is just down the road from my home in Red Oak, and today feels full circle for me because in this very same Committee room eight years ago, I had the pleasure of introducing Glen during his nomination to the Farm Credit Administration. Since then, he has spent almost a decade helping strengthen the backbone of American agriculture, ensuring farmers and rural businesses have the credit and financial tools they need to succeed.

Now, President Trump has chosen him to serve as the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development, a role that impacts communities in every state. As a fellow Iowa State graduate with a degree in Agricultural Business, Glen built a career in agricultural real estate and appraisal, serving farmers and landowners all across southwest Iowa. Glen, Fauzan, and their family also operate Smith Generation Farms, working approximately 2,000 acres of row crops.

With his experience, Glen is exceptionally well-positioned to lead USDA's Rural Development mission. I could not be more excited about his nomination and look forward to seeing the revitalization of our rural communities under his leadership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you and thank you for getting me back on track. It is appreciated.

[Laughter.]

Chairman BOOZMAN. Again, thank you for being here, Mr. Smith. I will now administer the oath and then you may begin with your testimony. You will have five minutes.

Please stand and raise your right hand.

Do you swear or affirm that the statement you are about to provide is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. SMITH. I do.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Do you agree that, if confirmed, you will respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted Committee of the Senate?

Mr. SMITH. I do.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you. You are now recognized for your statement.

**STATEMENT OF GLEN SMITH, OF IOWA, TO BE UNDER
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. SMITH. Well, thank you for those introductions. Senator Ernst, Senator Grassley, you are a friend to our family for many years and a friend to all in agriculture.

Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar when she arrives, distinguished Members of the Ag Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the Under Secretary for Rural Development in the United States Department of Agriculture.

I am a fifth-generation farmer from the gently rolling hills of western Iowa. All our children behind me would represent the sixth generation, and as mentioned before, she would probably squirm a little bit for the attention, my special guest is our oldest granddaughter, Emma, which represent the seventh generation of agriculturalists, and that is if she continues her impressive career in the cattle business. She is quite a showman.

Like most farm kids, the important virtues of hard work and determination were instilled in me at a very early age. I witnessed for years my parents struggling to keep a small farm going. I watched my folks fight back after a disabling accident, working off-farm jobs, doing farm work—sorry—in the evenings, weekends, and holidays. Our rural community was always there, supportive, talking about our neighbors, our friends, family, church, pastor, emergency response, healthcare system, doctors, nurses, schools, teachers, coaches, local businesses offering jobs. The list is long, and the lessons learned from living in a rural community never leave you.

In order for rural communities to survive and prosper, we must have robust rural economies. As a lifelong farmer, I can tell you, when a farmer has a dollar in his pocket, chances are 80 to 90 cents of that dollar will be spent in town. It is that multiplier effect

we all read about. The key to that prosperity has and will continue to be adding value to our raw, bulk agricultural products. I have noted, I think it has been great to see the proliferation of consumer—directly to consumer from producer products that we have seen in the last decade, maybe since COVID. Locally raised beef from North Dakota and Kansas ranches, pork from Minnesota farms, locally raised dairy, vegetable, and fruit in Michigan and Vermont directed to our schools, hospitals, and farmers' markets.

I have witnessed this value added in our own backyard, as one of our Iowa farms actually borders one of the most efficient ethanol plants in the world. I have seen how it has boosted our local economy. It is not just the 80 jobs at that plant. It has all the support services and businesses it engages and the wealth it pumps into the trade area from the premium price paid for corn for the ethanol that is distributed all over our country and all over the world.

Now you capitalize those premiums by long-term investment rates. You are talking hundreds of millions, maybe billions of dollars over time that is pumped into that rural economy. Rural development could and should play a key role in that value-added investment and entrepreneurship encouragement.

The second area I would like to touch on is rural connectivity. During COVID, many of you saw, and I saw—actually saw a reversal of the historic rural-to-urban population migration. We actually saw rural populations grow, largely in areas that could support remote internet work. I firmly believe that many urban residents desire and would seek the amenities of rural living. However, they also need the tools to work remotely in meaningful occupations. Those same tools of connectivity allow schools, hospitals, and businesses in rural areas to compete with the rest of the world.

Let's take a history lesson. In 1936, under the New Deal, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Rural Development was charged with the challenge of bringing electricity to our country's rural regions, a mission that was admirably achieved. Given the right resources, Rural Development should strive to achieve that same level of success in rural connectivity, and again, given the right resources.

The last area I would like to touch on is the cost and availability of homes in rural America. While this is a challenging area, if confirmed, I pledge to ensure USDA programs on housing operate with transparency and efficiency. I will look at all options specific to different regions and make intelligent long-term investments in meeting housing demand. Intelligent investments, not just pushing money out the door. That is not fair to the recipients, and that is not being accountable to the public dollar.

These are a few of my ideas as I ponder a new role as advisor to Secretary Brooke Rollins in carrying out the goals of the Trump Administration in serving rural America. As Members of this Committee, I am sure you have many of your own ideas, some of which you shared last week. If confirmed, I pledge to you I will listen to those ideas. Together, we will work in improving the viability and prosperity of rural America.

I look forward to your conversations and questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found on pages 24–25 in the appendix.]

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you very much.

Without objection, I would like to add letters of support for Mr. Smith's nomination into the record. So ordered.

[The letter can be found on page 26 in the appendix.]

Chairman BOOZMAN. I will go ahead and get started. Arkansas is one of the largest shares of rural population in the country with almost 45 percent of the state's population residing in rural areas. While USDA data does show modest population gains in some rural communities following the COVID pandemic, many rural communities still continue to see declines. I guess the question is—and to me, that is really the major problem facing rural America. I think 53 percent of our counties lost population last census. It does not matter if you are the fastest growing state in the country or where you are at, even those states are losing rural population.

I guess the question is, what ideas do you have, how can you work with Congress to implement things that will help stem the flow of outmigration and generate sustained economic growth in rural areas?

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Chairman Boozman. In my opening comments in addressing the three areas of Rural Development, I think to look at solving some of the decline in rural American population, you look at it two-fold. Number one, we need to have good, vibrant rural economies, and successful agriculture contributes to that tremendously, again, the multiplier effect we speak of. Rural Development has so many programs, 88 programs I have learned, and many of those are support for businesses, for cooperatives, entrepreneurship endeavors in rural America, and all these contribute to that prosperity and moving ahead as far as that rural economy, but you also have to have quality of life.

Rural Development also plays a huge role in that with the community facilities, everything from water treatment to waste treatment to hospitals to fire stations, infrastructure—hospitals—infrastructure that contributes to the quality of life because you are not going to keep residents or attract residents, which would be even more positive, if you do not have that quality of life. Rural Development contributes hugely to that quality of life.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Very much, thank you. Mr. Smith, we have all seen news reports that hostile actors like China have targeted U.S. utility infrastructure such as water systems. What are your thoughts on the importance of cybersecurity to the core infrastructure programs at Rural Development? Will you commit to working with this Committee to better understand what new policy tools may be needed for USDA to ensure our rural water systems and other critical infrastructure are protected from those who wish to do us harm?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, that scares the bejesus out of me, and it should be every American, the vulnerability of our grid, particularly in rural areas that may not have the security measures that is needed to protect that distribution grid. I think any programs that Rural Development is involved in should make sure we have adequate cybersecurity measures, because a lot of this can be done by bad characters simply from cybersecurity. They are not going to show up at a site and plant a bomb at a substation. They are going to do it on their computer. The cybersecurity issue is very huge,

and it is something I think we should make sure we have those protections in place for new loans, for guarantees, and grants whatever—wherever Rural Development is contributing.

Chairman BOOZMAN. One thing that government struggles with is IT. How important do you think improving USDA's RD IT capabilities are to the success of the programs? How do you view technology improving the customer experience?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, I have not delved into it yet, but I can pull on my experience at Farm Credit Administration. In fact, my fellow board member, Jeff Hall, is here in the audience, and Jeff and I worked together for eight years. Cybersecurity is at the top of the issue, and a key to that is a very, very on-top-of-it IT program. We found with our employees, particularly during COVID, we really had to tap into those IT resources in order to continue with our mission.

My goal will be to find out, first of all, if our field offices, hundreds of field offices throughout the country, are equipped with the right equipment, the audio and the visual equipment that allow them to communicate between offices, and also communicate, obviously, with the hub offices and with us here in D.C. It is something I will look into and something that I think is a great deal of importance, and if there is improvement needed, you can believe that we will try to execute those changes.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you.

Senator Smith.

Senator SMITH. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the Committee, Mr. Smith. Maybe you are related to my husband's family. I cannot say for sure.

Mr. SMITH. You never know.

Senator SMITH. That is right. Mr. Chair, in preparation for this hearing, I asked my staff to check in with Minnesotans on this very important issue of rural economic issues, and the one question that we kept hearing over and over again was, what is this administration's plan for spurring rural economies? This question is being asked in the context of a lot of talk about moving things around within Rural Development, for example, moving the Rural Housing Service to HUD, or rural business financing programs to SBA, or rural broadband programs to Commerce. I do not know what this would look like yet. We do not have a concrete plan, but I can tell you that in Minnesota, this is giving people a lot of concern because they trust the USDA on these issues. They know where to go. They know how to find the help that they need, and they know that rural challenges are unique, and they believe that the USDA understands that.

I wanted to just raise this, Mr. Chair, because I think that as we are looking at a farm economy that is deeply challenging for so many folks right now, big credit crunch, a lot of challenges, it is really important that folks know that USDA Rural Development is going to be there for them.

I want to go to a piece of this right away. I appreciate that you mentioned rural housing in your opening statement. I am sure everybody around this Committee table knows that we have a serious shortage of housing, affordable housing in particular, in rural communities. These are places where our elders, folks living on fixed

incomes, people who are working two or three jobs but in low-wage jobs, this is where they live. Everyone agrees, I think, that the Rural Housing Service at USDA needs to be reformed and modernized.

This has been a special project of mine. I have worked with Senator Rounds on this for several years, strong bipartisan support. In fact, it passed out of the Senate.

I wanted to ask you about this, Mr. Smith. I think that the Rural Housing Service should stay at USDA. They know the program. They understand how it works. They can work with rural communities. Could you comment on that? Do you think that it should stay at USDA? Will you work with me on this piece of legislation? It is yet to pass the House. It is part of the NDAA right now bill that has passed out of the Senate. Could you just comment on this and let me know that you would be able to work with me on this?

Mr. SMITH. Certainly, Senator. I could not agree with you more. My firsthand experience with USDA is—as a farmer is the NRCS and FSA offices. They have very similar footprints out in rural America as Rural Development. We have got the mechanism for these programs, and I could not imagine it being in another area other than USDA.

One of my primary responsibilities is to be the advisor to Secretary Rollins, and that certainly would be my advice to her. As far as working with you, I would be more than happy to work with you on those ideas and that bill to make sure that comes about.

Senator SMITH. Thank you. I believe that this bill is one of those classic, common sense, bipartisan, does not cost very much, but let's just figure out how to make these programs that have been around for a long-time work better—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator SMITH [continuing]. for farmers and for homeowners. It could preserve up to 400,000 affordable units across the country, so it is a big deal.

Let me just ask you about one other thing in the minute I have left. I also hear all the time in rural communities about how important it is to find childcare. You know, if you do not have childcare, then, you know, you have got a lot of families that are working off-farm as well as on the farm, and there is a real shortage. It is a big issue. This is another bipartisan thing. I have worked with Senator Ernst and Senator Marshall on this legislation that would help the USDA, help local, often family-owned childcare providers in their communities. Would you just talk a little bit about this and kind of how you see this challenge?

Mr. SMITH. Well, actually, I probably should bring my wife up here in the chair because she can attest to the challenges we had raising four children, not having a lot of money, and basically her working a full-time job as a nurse at the hospital, me starting to try to get a business off the ground in town, and operating a farm besides. Yes, it was a constant challenge and juggling contest to see who would pick up who, who would take who to school, who would drop off here. Childcare has become a critical need in rural America, as the next generation can attest to with our grandchildren.

I know in our hometown community of Atlantic right now, there is an initiative to bring in new housing, and compatible with that

and right with that is expanding on a childcare center, which we have contributed to.

Absolutely, you have hit right on the point. The fact of life is many rural families are two-income families.

Senator SMITH. That is right.

Mr. SMITH. Back when I was growing up, you had your grandparents, you had your uncles, aunts and uncles and cousins. It was right there, and a lot of times, you all traded that off; you got on the school bus at the same time. Well, we are in a different era now with those two-income families. A lot of times, two-income families means a spouse works just to provide insurance—

Senator SMITH. Healthcare.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. for that family. I have got a young friend down the road that has got four young children. They are all healthy, thank God, and his insurance is like \$36,000 a year.

Senator SMITH. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. That does not even include—

Senator SMITH. You have got an idea to fix that, too.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. Well, okay. As far as—

Senator SMITH. I am being polite because this is the Ag Committee.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. Okay. As far as childcare, Senator, I could not be more supportive—

Senator SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. of that, and that would fall under the community facilities area.

Senator SMITH. That is right.

Mr. SMITH. Rural Development, as I understand it, is active in it right now.

Senator SMITH. Well, I am well over my time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you.

Senator Ernst.

Senator ERNST. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Smith. It is great to have you here before us today. I know that I am biased, but I always say we need more Iowans serving in our Federal Government, and truly those folks who understand what it is to be a rural American, so thank you so much for being willing to take this on.

Mr. Smith, as you know, the ag economy continues to struggle. We have got high input prices and low commodity prices. Just yesterday, CNH announced it will be closing its facility in Burlington, Iowa, and with that closure, it eliminates about 200 jobs. The plant produced heavy machinery and ag equipment, and its closure shows how low farm income ripples across our entire state.

I do thank the President and his team for delivering new trade deals and advancing strong policies to support the biofuel industry, which will help us build new markets. With that being said, there is still more work ahead to increase demand.

At USDA, the BioPreferred program plays a key role in promoting bio-based products. Many are made from Iowa-grown crops

like soy-based asphalt for roads and corn-based carbon fiber used in military munitions. Unfortunately, the program is not currently operating because it has run out of resources. With renewed backing from Congress and strong USDA leadership, BioPreferred can expand markets, create jobs, and strengthen rural communities.

Senator Slotkin and I introduced the Biomanufacturing and Jobs Act to modernize the program by increasing purchases of bio-based products, improving labeling and transparency, and better coordinating USDA's efforts to grow the bio-based economy here at home. Mr. Smith, if confirmed, will you commit to prioritizing improvements to the BioPreferred program and working with Congress to expand bio-based markets and Federal Government procurement?

Mr. SMITH. Senator Ernst, thank you for that question, and thank you for first introducing me to the idea of coming to Washington, DC, although the first couple months and getting used to the traffic and the standard of living here, I wondered about it a few times.

The question on the biofuel plant or any bioproduct is using our raw bulk commodities. I mentioned in my opening comments, any business that we can use—that we can utilize in the United States that uses that raw agricultural product, we are not relying on that bushel corn, bushel soybeans, whatever, to have to be exported to keep prices up. We are developing our own markets. It has that exponential effect not only of that industry being in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, whatever rural state it happens to be in, but it has that multiplier effect of creating the domestic demand.

Absolutely, I would support you in that. I know there is a lot of exciting products and technology out there that can utilize our raw bulk products. Anything we can invest in at Rural Development in the way of grants, loans, or guarantees I believe, will pay exponentially. Yes, ma'am, I would support that.

Senator ERNST. Thank you so much. Just switching gears very quickly in the time we have left, connectivity, as you mentioned, in rural America is very, very important, whether it is our hospitals, our schools, home businesses, small businesses. We need to make sure that we are able to compete and thrive with that connectivity.

Right now, there are more than 133 broadband programs across the government, including six under USDA Rural Development. Many of the programs are very duplicative and could be better coordinated. I have introduced the Streamlining Rural Broadband Act to consolidate the USDA's Community Connect grant program into the ReConnect program. Mr. Smith, if confirmed, will you commit to reviewing USDA's broadband programs to reduce that duplication and ensure that taxpayer dollars are targeted to truly connecting our unserved areas and underserved areas?

Mr. SMITH. [Off mic] resources and whether the resources we need are directed to USDA, but yes, a commitment to it. That is why I mentioned it in my opening comments. It would be a priority.

Senator ERNST. Thank you. I look forward to voting on your confirmation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Senator Welch.

Senator WELCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

You know, I had a very nice visit with you and really appreciated the time you took in my office. I share the concern about markets that Senator Ernst just spoke about. I think I also explained to you that in Vermont, we are really proud of the services that we have received from your agency. It has really made a difference for farmers. We are really worried about the staffing. I mean, this is something I brought up with you. In Vermont, we apparently have had the highest cuts of any regional office, and that is really worrisome to our farmers because they really think these guys do an excellent job. I do not know what you can do about that. I think they went way overboard on it.

You know, we have the lowest staffing rate of any regional office in the country. It is operating, Mr. Smith, at 61 percent of capacity, and that was last year before the office lost 12 more employees. Obviously, that was not anything you were involved in, but it is something you are going to have to deal with. What kind of assurance can you give to me on behalf of our Vermont farmers who really depend on that service that they are going to get the staffing that is absolutely essential to doing the job?

Mr. SMITH. Well, we absolutely need to be committed to that critical mission, Senator. As I told you, I have toured Vermont with young, beginning, and small program with the Farm Credit Administration—

Senator WELCH. You know, I get that. Here is the dilemma because, look, you are coming in. You are not in charge yet.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. You have got a lot of experience running a major organization, so—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH [continuing]. you have got the skills. The administration made a decision for other reasons, I think related to their view about spending.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. You seem sympathetic to my concern that there be adequate staffing.

Mr. SMITH. Yes, sir.

Senator WELCH. You are going to be in a situation where you may want to do something, but you will have to get authority from other places in order to do it.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. I guess I am asking you how you navigate that. I do not have a reservation about your commitment to doing everything you can, but it is a real practical problem for anybody who is taking your job. We have not seen any sign that the administration is particularly concerned about re-upping adequate staffing in Vermont.

Mr. SMITH. Well, the first thing, and I learned this at Farm Credit Administration, is get the data. Get the objective data. Find out just what your staffing issues are because I do not know right now, Senator.

Senator WELCH. I will work with you on that.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. Maybe I am just putting you on notice that that is a concern.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. It comes from a place where we really value—
Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH [continuing]. what you do.

A second thing is, last year, Congress had allocated \$362 million to the Disaster Assistance Fund, and Vermont is expecting to receive \$31 million. We had floods in July of 2024, July of 2023, and actually some floods in July of 2025. My understanding is that OMB released this funding to USDA in August, but where is the money? We do not have it in Vermont yet. Is that something you can help us out with?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, I promise I—if confirmed, I would check into that and be in—

Senator WELCH. Okay.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. direct contact with you—

Senator WELCH. Well, I would appreciate that, yes.

Mr. SMITH. Yes, a disaster, you need it—

Senator WELCH. Yes.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. now.

Senator WELCH. We really do. The Governor, you know, has been making efforts to get it, and so we are working together in that effort.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH. Also, I am working with my colleague, Senator Marshall, on the ReConnect program. I know you are really concerned about rural broadband and know—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator WELCH [continuing]. its importance, and my colleagues here in the Committee do as well. One of the things in that rural broadband program is that it would codify over 100 megabit. Basically, the proposition that we have in that bill is that you should not get second-rate internet service just because you are in rural America. What are your thoughts about that?

Mr. SMITH. I could not agree with you more, Senator. You know I was the Chairman of the Board, CEO of the Farm Credit Administration, the regulator for a \$600 billion farm credit system during COVID. There was times—there was some trying times, but I had to be in contact, in regular contact, and I had to have the speed necessary to do the video conferences—

Senator WELCH. Well, good.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. to do everything so—

Senator WELCH. That is what is important.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. I—

Senator WELCH. I am sorry.

Mr. SMITH. I understand the critical need for good rural broadband in rural America.

Senator WELCH. Yes, and not second-rate to—

Mr. SMITH. That is correct.

Senator WELCH [continuing]. the fancy cities that, you know, guys like Grassley prefer, you know.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. Okay.

Senator WELCH. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. You are welcome.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Senator Grassley.

Senator GRASSLEY. I am glad your roots are deep in rural America because you have been in this town long enough to know that this city is an island surrounded by reality, and I am glad to have some of your common sense. Been here for a few years.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRASSLEY. You have spoken a little bit about your work on the farm credit system. I know you know the importance of federal loan programs, and I think of rural hospitals as an example in this area, but I am not asking you just about rural hospitals. How will you use your experience at the Farm Credit Administration to improve loan functions at the USDA?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, that question is something that was posed to us early on, to myself and fellow Board Member Hall, years ago, six, seven, eight years ago. How can we—as we are regulating these sophisticated financial organizations, we need to have to—we need to understand it. What we have done in IT to advance that, as I get to USDA, certainly, that will be one of the first questions I ask is where are we in FinTech, in financial technology? Are we able to deliver those programs as efficiently as possible today in today's world? Hopefully, that look at the IT, if there is improvement, will help solve, in part—cannot completely—but in part, the question on personnel, but it is something we will look at real closely when I get there, if confirmed.

Senator GRASSLEY. You have an ethanol plant in your backyard. I do as well. Iowa is home to 40 of these plants. We are a national leader in biofuels. Ethanol demand increases corn demand, supporting farmers. Do you agree that supporting ethanol—now, I know you cannot make decisions in this area, it is mostly in EPA, but—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator GRASSLEY [continuing]. you can sure be an advocate. Do you agree that supporting ethanol and other biofuels in turn support rural communities and that we should expand domestic production, use, and export markets for ethanol?

Mr. SMITH. I am an advocate, Senator, and I would actively support that and will continue to support that. Critical, critical to rural America that we continue to utilize our biofuels, critical to use our agricultural products and add value to them. Ethanol is probably the shining example and the shining success, I might add, in America today.

Senator GRASSLEY. Yes. Like you are not a policymaker in this area, but speaking up for Rural Development is very important. Do not wait for opportunities to come to you. Seek them out. This town is kind of ignorant about biofuels and ethanol. Maybe people in this room are not, because this is an Agriculture Committee room. Just remember that when you hear people pronounce ethanol, ee-thanol, you are talking to somebody that does not know much about the program.

In Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program, you know that is a REDL&G program?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator GRASSLEY. You know what I am talking about?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator GRASSLEY. It is a critical tool for Iowa rural electric cooperatives. These loans and grants drive economic growth in rural communities that would otherwise not have access to financing for improvement and new projects. Will you work with my office and appropriators to ensure that the RECs are supported through the REDL&G program, REAP, and similar programs?

Mr. SMITH. I will, Senator. I will commit to that.

Senator GRASSLEY. Yes. I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you, Senator Grassley.

Ranking Member Klobuchar.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I apologize, Mr. Smith, for being late, and I thank our other Members for being here. I have had kind of a messed-up day. I went to the tariff argument at the Supreme Court, which was very interesting and good, and it went a lot longer than anyone thought. You cannot exactly jump up in the middle of the Supreme Court argument and put off the rest of the schedule.

I do want to welcome you and your wife—there she is—and your children, your son-in-law, your granddaughter. I also wanted to recognize Farm Credit Administration Board Chairman Jeffery Hall. I thank Senator Ernst for introducing you. We had such a good meeting a while back.

I just want to point out the importance of Rural Development right now. If we do come upon a moment where we can pass some kind of a farm bill, I think that is going to be one of the big reasons why we should do it.

I know Senator Welch asked about staff losses in Vermont that we have seen all over the country. That is something really important to me. We talked about this, about you working to try to build up the staff again.

We also have some issues, as I know you have heard of, with some of the broadband, electric co-ops, some of the projects that are going on that we want to make sure happen. Co-ops in Minnesota supply nearly 1/4 of our electricity. We are one of the biggest states, as we have talked about, for electric co-ops, which I love. They serve almost two million Minnesotans. I will hope that you will work with me on those projects.

As we discussed last week, we also care a lot about high-speed internet, both out of the Commerce Committee flow of money and then also out of USDA, discussed rural healthcare, childcare, markets, and the like.

I just have a few questions here. The first is we have very—most of us on this Committee have worked across the aisle to improve broadband access. The ReConnect Loan and Grant Program has delivered high-quality internet to rural areas, often partnering with electric and telephone co-ops. As Under Secretary, you will have a great deal of discretion over broadband funds at the USDA. Do you believe this program should prioritize speeds like those available in urban areas? How do you plan to ensure these programs are accessible to rural electric co-ops and other small rural providers?

Mr. SMITH. Thanks for the question, Senator. Yes, I do think it should have the same priority as urban broadband. We should have

the same access to connectivity. It is the key for rural America to stay connected with the rest of the country, with the world. We have had success with ReConnect. The main thing we are going to look at is do we have the resources for ReConnect, and that is entirely up to you in Congress whether—where those resources are allocated. I can tell you that in Rural Development, we have that footprint in rural America that I think we can deliver.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. There are a lot of projects out there, already-awarded energy projects that have been frozen, and I hope that you will work with us to look at those projects. Some of them, interestingly enough, in Minnesota involve neighboring States of North Dakota and South Dakota, I think Iowa. Some of these projects, if you would be willing to look with us at them, they involve the electric grid, they involve all kinds of things that both Democrat and Republican Senators are interested in. When I looked at the list, I am like, whoa, for the ones that were frozen in Minnesota. I hope you will be willing to look at those with us.

Mr. SMITH. We should all work together for that, yes.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Okay. Very good. High blend biofuel infrastructure, Senator Ernst and I have worked on this at length and been successful in passing some things into law. Do you commit to reopening funding opportunities for high blend biofuel infrastructure and making sure the funds are spent on that?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, I do.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Okay. That is wonderful. The housing, what are your affordable housing preservation strategies to keep existing properties in USDA programs?

Mr. SMITH. One thing, I think, Senator, that has become obvious to me, I had no idea the breadth and scope of Rural Development before I started looking into it. I did not realize how much they are involved in housing. Now, we probably cannot cure the problems of the high cost of building a new home or the high cost of major repairs, but we do offer grants, we do offer loans and loan guarantees to those parties that qualify at subsidized interest rates, so it is one step closer to affordability of rural housing.

One thing I do hear from some states is the whole regulatory process, the permitting and the licensing of the contractors and all that becomes almost prohibitive and does add to the cost—can add to the cost of that house, maybe in a town of 1,200, which does not make sense in fitting in with possibly the federal regs. I would strongly encourage looking at somewhat of a deregulatory structure to make sure that those homes can be built in the most efficient manner possible.

The other thing, though, Senator, I would like to talk about is that 88 programs. I have lived in a rural community almost my whole life, not realizing the depth and scope of those programs. I think our visibility needs to be improved in rural America. I have talked to my Deputy Under Secretary, Neal Robbins, about that. He comes from the publication business and has some ideas on where we can get that word out, that there are programs in Rural Development—subsidized programs that allow low- and moderate-income people to invest in their dream of living in their own home.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Okay. Well, thank you very much. I see my colleagues are here to ask questions. I will save some time on the clock here. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you.

Senator Hyde-Smith.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Smith, for being here. Good to see you again. We had a nice visit before, and I appreciate all that you are willing to do for us.

There are three things that I want to talk about today, and the first one is expanding some markets and opportunities for U.S. forestry timber products and improving rural water and wastewater infrastructure, and ensuring proper access to healthcare in rural America.

In Mississippi, we have over 19 million acres of forest land, and we have 130,000 forest landowners, very important in Mississippi. The activity generates 84,000 jobs and \$4.4 billion in income annually. We are often referred to as the wood basket, but right now, the basket is full, and the bottom line is we need to expand existing markets and create new ones for our timber and our wood residuals.

My colleagues and I are exploring ways to utilize existing USDA programs to support renewable energy systems that will strengthen rural communities through timber, through biomass, and there is really a significant opportunity there for us to encourage sustainable forest management practices and keeping our forests working to support local economics because it is a driving engine there, build markets that will ultimately serve our landowners and our rural businesses. Obviously, there will be challenges and costs to all of that.

My question for you is, will you work with me going forward to strengthen these programs within USDA and Rural Development's mission area to support the forestry sector as we seek to create new and expanded markets for American timber and biomass?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, thank you for that question. Regardless whether it is corn, cattle, soybeans, or timber, whatever business that Rural Development can support that adds value to that and adds a new market, Rural Development should be involved, should and could. Certainly, in the timber industry, I confess, I know it was part of our—part of the loan portfolio at Farm Credit, but I do not know a lot about it, so I would look forward to hearing more about it and looking forward to hearing about the industries that you think need support. I would say to your staff, make sure you are in contact with our staff and programs that would fit, because we need anything that adds markets for our domestic products, we need to support.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Well, thank you very much for that, and I do have some ideas that I want to get with you on.

Mr. SMITH. Very good.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. In our water systems across Mississippi, we have more than 1,000 water systems. Our towns and rural water associations are often understaffed, and they are working hard to keep the taps running and the wastewater safely disposed of. Many towns have infrastructure needs that far exceed their fi-

nancial capabilities, which often requires rate increases that are insufficient or not feasible to comply with federal environmental regulations.

The communities that need assistance most often do not have the financial resources to hire an experienced grant writer or provide technical expertise needed to apply for the various federal water and wastewater assistance programs. If confirmed, will you be mindful of the unique water-related challenges faced by many of our rural communities? Will you commit to working with me to eliminate as much unnecessary red tape as possible?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Rural Development has always played a key role in delivering clean, safe water to rural America, and anything I could do to influence and encourage that, I will.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Great. Thank you. Maybe get to my third one, ensuring proper access to healthcare in rural America. We farm and we have farming accidents and we use a lot of rural healthcare, but nearly half of all rural hospitals operate at a loss, and many have had to close their doors or discontinue certain services to stay afloat. Mississippi is a rural state, and it is critical that we maintain access to care, particularly those living in our rural communities.

Rural Development administers the USDA Technical Assistance Program for rural hospitals, which has been a lifeline to helping hospitals manage their finances, and to prevent defaults on USDA loans, and to just simply keep their doors open. Through this program, Jasper General Hospital in Bay Springs, Mississippi, received technical assistance that really helped. It improved its financial performance, and it enhanced access to healthcare services in rural underserved areas.

Since 2018, almost 120 rural hospitals across the country have participated in the program, with each project identifying significant ways to reduce costs and establish a more financially stable path forward. Would you please speak to the importance of this program for rural hospitals and how you plan to maintain and grow the program, which has proven effective in helping rural hospitals?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, thank you for that question. Obviously, I stated earlier I recognize the importance of the rural hospital, and that is what kept groceries on the table and paid our electric bill for early years of our marriage, as my wife is an RN and retired now, proudly, but now she supports me.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. The Rural Development makes loans, grants, and guaranteed loans to build facilities. We—we are not involved in the operational lending. It is a whole different area, different from investing in facilities. You mentioned something that I thought was important to some of those rural hospitals is that they got technical assistance. I think that is where RD can help. Again, getting back—and I hate to be repetitive, but for something you feel strongly about and that connectivity of rural areas, that is so important.

In order for those hospitals—let's say it is just an emergent care facility out 200 miles from a major hospital, a farmer comes in with a major accident, major injury, that he can get on the internet to

one of the finest hospitals in the country and understand what to do until that patient can be transferred. That, to me, is things we need to investigate in rural America, and that is how Rural Development can help in that technology and that assistance in giving you the tools for that.

Does that answer your question, Senator?

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Absolutely. Very, very critical. Again, I appreciate what you are willing to do for us, and I look forward to supporting you.

Mr. SMITH. You know, Senator, do you recall our conversation last week that I thought was—I mean, we talked about attracting doctors and professionals to rural areas, which is important and difficult. Number one, you have to have that quality of life to attract them in the first place. I know that Rural Development had a grant down in your state, and they were not medical doctors, they were veterinarians, which is very important to you and I's business, right? A grant to veterinarian college at Mississippi State to pay back tuition for students that stayed in the state and practiced large animal practice in the state, and that was a Rural Development grant. That is another way that we can encourage the type of services that we need so much in rural America.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Yes, you are so right because there is a shortage.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. No doubt.

Mr. SMITH. Yes, ma'am.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Yes, ma'am.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you.

Senator LUJÁN.

Senator LUJÁN. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Do you commit to follow the law?

Mr. SMITH. I am sorry, the question?

Senator LUJÁN. Do you commit to follow the law?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, sir, of course.

Senator LUJÁN. Do you commit to follow court orders?

Mr. SMITH. Of course.

Senator LUJÁN. Are you a man that keeps your word?

Mr. SMITH. Am I what, sir?

Senator LUJÁN. A man that keeps your word?

Mr. SMITH. I believe so sir.

Senator LUJÁN. I appreciate that, sir.

Mr. SMITH. I would not be here if I was not.

Senator LUJÁN. I appreciate that. I grew up on a small farm myself. I think there is a lot that you learn growing up in a small community.

Mr. SMITH. Sure.

Senator LUJÁN. My colleagues get sick and tired of me talking about how my father would leave my rubber boots and my shovel outside the door when I would come home to visit, and that meant it was time to clean the barns.

Mr. SMITH. Okay.

Senator LUJÁN. Now, people that giggle at this are the ones that have done it because—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN.—you know it is not the top layer that builds character, it is the second layer—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN.—that gets really ripe.

Mr. SMITH. Yes. I have wielded that shovel many times.

Senator LUJÁN. I wish more of us did it, sir.

[Laughter.]

Senator LUJÁN. Now, with that being said, Mr. Smith, you know, there is a difference of opinion, I think, with my colleagues and I on different sides of the aisle right now, and all that is going on with the President. The reason I asked about the court order is, as you know, at the end of last week, the courts had to say that the President had to roll out the SNAP funding because the President said he did not want to do it. I mean, heck, even Monday, after he said he would, he said he would not. Then his staff then correctly said, no, no, no, we are going to roll it out, but there is still a question about it.

Now, the reason I bring that up, even though that is not your responsibility, sir, is one of the programs the Trump Administration canceled was a program to support local farmers and ranchers with food banks. It was called the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement and the Local Food for School Cooperative Agreement, about a billion bucks. As you know, these agreements get entered into with local farmers and ranchers, and then they change how they are going to grow for the next year, what they are going to raise for the next year. They do not look for other customers because they know that they have one, and it got cut.

I certainly hope that when you are at the table, Mr. Smith, that you stand up for the farmers and ranchers where we grew up, where you grew up, and just make sure that programs that help them, that we find a way to do it. Now, if there needs to be changes or adjustments based on leanings one way or the other, I am fine with that. My Republican colleagues in the majority, they are in charge. I get that. The program swings that way. In the end, farmers and ranchers should not get hurt arbitrarily because someone just had a whim about something, so I hope that is something we can agree on.

One of the questions that I also have is, you know, in the healthcare space, I appreciate these questions being asked. One of the concerns that I have is in these rural health clinics, I do not know, 15 to 35 percent of the revenue comes from Medicaid beneficiaries. Earlier this year, my Republican colleagues passed a piece of legislation the President signed into law that takes almost a trillion bucks out of the program. That does not just hurt people. That is going to close rural clinics.

Three years ago, I survived a stroke. Now, I always joke, this is what a stroke survivor looks like. If you have access to healthcare, if you get good doctors, if you have faith—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN.—if you have good family, people that help you understand, you have to have a positive way of getting better. I am very concerned with the way that things have been going with OMB and Mr. Vought, that a lot of these grants and things, they

have just been getting stalled. Again, you know, not necessarily a question, sir. I just hope that is another area when, at the table because you will be in the room, you will be at the table with the Secretary and everyone else, that we say, hey, we have got to find a way to keep these rural clinics open so that when a farmer or someone gets cut by an implement or they are pulling out the bandsaw, man, and something happens and you have got to get in quick to be able to reconnect, that we get that done. I hope that we can find some time there.

Now, in the last minute, I want to talk about electricity prices.

Mr. SMITH. Okay.

Senator LUJÁN. You are aware of what rural electric co-ops are, Mr. Smith?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN. You are aware of what G&Ts are, the generation and transmission components are?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN. For everyone that does not, the G&Ts are the entities that actually generate the power, and they move the transmission to the smaller electric co-ops, and those are the ones that are called the distribution co-ops. Sorry for talking about it. I served on the Public Utility Commission before I came here, and I grew up as a member of a co-op. That is where my electricity comes from today.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN. One of the questions that was asked earlier, I think by Senator Klobuchar, she asked about some of these grants that were canceled to our G&Ts across the country. There is one that was canceled to a G&T that matters to us in New Mexico that resides in Colorado called Tri-State.

What are your thoughts about the cancellation of these contracts that supported generation at these electric co-ops, which would arguably lower power for rural families that benefit from being a member of an electric co-op?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, obviously, I am not there, so I am not familiar with that particular case. I—

Senator LUJÁN. Let me ask the question this way, Mr. Smith. Is that something that you will commit to look into? Understanding that it is a Republican administration, they may have preferences over one generation or another—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN.—but if a local generation, G&T, which is made up of trustees from electric co-ops—

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN.—it is not us. It is not partisan. As a matter of fact, these are real conservative folks for the most part.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator LUJÁN. That if they choose that they want to do some generation in a certain area, that is something I would hope that we would all respect as well. Is this something that you will commit just to look into and see if there is a better way that we can go forward in looking at G&Ts across the country to support electric rural co-ops?

Mr. SMITH. I think that is part of the job, Senator.

Senator LUJÁN. I appreciate that, sir.

I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all so much.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Senator Hoeven.

Senator HOEVEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith, thanks for coming in and visiting with me earlier, and I appreciate you being here today. Of course, Rural Development is vital in rural America in so many ways, so this is a really important position.

One of the things that we are working on in North Dakota is what we call Crack the Code 2.0. Crack the Code 1.0 was where we worked on developing directional drilling and hydraulic fracturing to produce oil from shale. Traditionally, that was not economically viable. Back during the time I was Governor, actually, we worked with a lot of innovative companies that came in and figured out how to do that.

Now we are working on Crack the Code 2.0, which is actually trying to connect our coal-fired electric plants with the oil field, wherein we will take the CO₂ off the coal plants, and then we will put it downhole for enhanced oil recovery. We think we can double the life of those coal plants at a time when we badly need electricity, and we can double the production out of the shale. Just in our state, that is over five billion barrels of oil that we have gotten so far. It has huge implications for energy not only for our state, but, you know, for the country, because if we can do it successfully in North Dakota, they will do it in the Permian Basin, in the shale play, in the Marcellus, in Ohio and Pennsylvania, and so on and so forth.

The cooperatives are an important part of this effort, and Rural Development is an important part of this effort because of your credit programs. Talk to me about your commitment to make sure that with companies like Minn Kota, which is a cooperative in Minnesota and North Dakota, their project, Tundra, is heavily involved in this, and your credit programs play a big role, and I want to know if you support and how you will support that effort.

Mr. SMITH. Well, thank you, Senator, for that question. It would appear that the technology you are describing enhances more efficient oil production, cheaper oil that I think we all agree is good for the American consumer, and it benefits rural America, which is what we are all about at Rural Development. I think anything that reduces the dependency on foreign oil, encourages domestic production is something that we should look at strongly.

Senator HOEVEN. As you know, in rural America, I mean, cooperatives have been incredibly important, and your credit programs are incredibly important.

Another area is hospitals. In the One Big Beautiful Bill, we included \$50 billion to help our rural hospitals. One of the programs that we have used in North Dakota for our rural hospitals is the Rural Development Program for them to build new facilities, and combining that with the critical access reimbursement has enabled us to put first-class critical access hospitals out there in rural North Dakota, and they are doing well. They are serving their customers. Their customers tell me they would rather go to their hospital in their small community than go into the larger communities. It really works.

Talk to me about the credit programs, and then also for our farmers, the credit programs are really important as well. One of the things we have really got to do more on is helping with rural housing. It is a big need out there. Talk to me about the healthcare, the hospitals, you know, some of the ventures for rural businesses, and then also, you know, for our farmers. Those programs, how are you going to, you know, use and expand—and for our livestock guys, for example, for creating more opportunities with small processing and that kind of plans for options, talk to me about what you can do there because that is a powerful range of tools that you have for all those uses.

Mr. SMITH. Let me take a breath here, Senator, and focus on which question I want to answer first.

Senator HOEVEN. Yes, exactly. Joni has been bragging you up now, so we have to get—

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. Let me talk, first of all, on your comments on healthcare and the success you have had in North Dakota. The—that is great to hear that critical-access hospitals are having a great deal of success and acceptance among their residents, and I would guess part of that is the personalized care.

Senator HOEVEN. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. They are not waiting in line for days or weeks or months. I know that—we had a close relative that was having some health issues, heart issues, and she could not get an appointment to get in and see a doctor for evaluation for two months in the city, and yet she clearly had some issues. At least at that critical care facility, you had somebody to look at her, number one, evaluate, and then, if need be, receive technical assistance from a larger facility, maybe a long ways away, but at least you are getting some—that patient is getting care right away. It does not have to be a huge facility. It does not have to be a \$100 million facility to do that.

I think what you are landing on is maybe a model that maybe we could take to other areas of the country. I know I had a long conversation with Senator Marshall in Kansas that had much the same type of model, and that is something that I think Rural Development should be fluent in, be able to discuss, and be able to encourage to the different state directors.

Senator HOEVEN. That model works.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Senator HOEVEN. You could have a real impact out there.

Mr. SMITH. Well, sharing best practices is something that we encouraged all the time on my position on the board with the Farm Credit Administration. That would be exactly what we would be looking at.

As far as businesses, any business that supports the rural economy, obviously, we have got to be involved in. I mentioned earlier livestock, and how we have seen just a real explosion of branded farm- or ranch-to-consumer products in the next 10 years. You cannot turn on the television without seeing a nice model of cattle, maybe in North Dakota, and then a nice steak sitting there—

Senator HOEVEN. Probably in Arkansas.

[Laughter.]

Senator HOEVEN. Don't you think? Probably in Arkansas.
[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. I am sure Chairman Boozman would agree with that.
Senator HOEVEN. No, we have them in North Dakota too.

Mr. SMITH. Part of that is you cannot go to our huge packing plants and get the kind of service you need for that specialized consumer care, and that is where—and I think we have had a great—a good success, maybe just a start, but a good success in Rural Development in supporting those livestock—that livestock industry and those endeavors. Again, it is value-added—

Senator HOEVEN. Right on.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. because those producers, I am hoping—and I think get a good premium for their hard work, but it takes marketing and specialized plants to be able to turn out that product.

Senator HOEVEN. Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate the answers, and I think it is exciting opportunities that you can be part of out there, and I think you nailed it in how you talked about it.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Senator. Thank you for the questions.

Chairman BOOZMAN. Thank you again, Mr. Smith, for appearing before the Committee. I think from the questions you could tell that there is a lot of interest in this particular position, how important it is for rural America, and for our Nation.

I also want to thank Members for their participation today in this important hearing, and, as always, our staffs do a tremendous job in making it happen. The record will remain open for two business days.

Today's hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:11 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

November 5, 2025

Senate Ag Committee Confirmation Hearing

Hon. Glen R. Smith

Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, distinguished members of the Ag Committee; it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the Under Secretary for Rural Development in the United States Department of Agriculture.

I'm a fifth-generation farmer from the gently rolling hills of Western Iowa. All of our children behind me are involved in various degrees of production agriculture and represent the sixth generation and my special guest, our oldest granddaughter, Emma, represent the seventh generation of agriculturalists if she continues her impressive accomplishments in the cattle business.

Like most farm kids, the important virtues of hard work and determination were instilled in me at a very early age. When I was ten, I witnessed my father run over by a tractor, a disabling accident that drained all our farm resources having to sell our farm equipment and livestock to pay hospital bills. For years, I watched my folks fight their way back, working off-farm jobs, doing farmwork in the evenings, weekends and holidays and raising a large family on the limited resources of a small farm. But our rural community was always there, supportive, our neighbors, friends and family; church, emergency response, health care system, schools and local businesses offering jobs. The list is long, and the lessons learned from living in a rural community never leave you.

In order for rural communities to survive and prosper, we must have robust rural economies. As a life-long farmer, I can tell you; when a farmer has a dollar in his pocket, chances are 80-90 cents of that will be spent in town. It's that multiplier effect. The key to that prosperity has and will continue to be adding value to our raw, bulk agricultural products. It's been great to see in the last decade (maybe since Covid) a proliferation of branded farm products; beef from Texas and Montana ranchers, pork from Minnesota farms, locally raised vegetable and fruit in our schools, hospitals and farmers markets. I have witnessed this value-added in our own backyard as one of our farms borders one of the most efficient ethanol plants in the country and I've seen how it's boosted our local economy. It is not just the 80 some jobs at the plant, it's all the support services and businesses it engages and the wealth it pumps into the trade area from the premium price paid for corn. Capitalize those premiums by long-term investment rates and you're talking hundreds of million, possibly billions over time. Rural Development could and should play a key role in that value added investment and entrepreneurship encouragement.

The second area I'd like to touch on is rural connectivity. During Covid, we actually saw a reversal of the historic rural to urban population migration, largely in areas that could support remote internet work. I firmly believe that many urban residents desire and would seek the amenities of rural living; however, they also need the tools to work remotely in meaningful occupations. Those same tools of connectivity allow schools, hospitals and businesses in rural areas to compete with the rest of the world. In 1936, under the New Deal, Rural Development was charged with the challenge of bringing electricity to our country's rural regions, a mission that was admirably achieved. Given the right resources, Rural Development should strive to achieve the same level of success in rural connectivity.

The last area I'd like to touch on is the cost and availability of homes in rural America. While this is a challenging area, if confirmed, I pledge to ensure USDA programs on housing operate with transparency and efficiency. I will look at all options specific to different regions and make intelligent, long-term investments in meeting housing demand, not just "push money out the door". That's not fair to the recipients. That is not being accountable to the public dollar.

These are a few ideas I've been pondering as I look ahead to a new role as adviser to Secretary Brooke Rollins in carrying out the goals of the Trump administration in serving rural America. As members of this committee, I'm sure you have many of your own ideas that are applicable to your area of the country. If confirmed, I pledge to you to listen to those ideas in improving the viability and prosperity of Rural America. I look forward to your conversations and questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



November 5, 2025

Chairman John Boozman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

The Ag Bioeconomy Coalition (ABC) is pleased to offer its full support of Glen Smith of Iowa to serve as Under Secretary for Rural Development at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The ABC includes leading industry associations whose members contribute to the vibrant value chain of the U.S. agriculture bioeconomy. The coalition is committed to advocating for policies that support the development of renewable chemicals, biobased fuels, and biobased materials and consumer goods.

USDA Rural Development (RD) programs are an essential driver of bioeconomy innovation and growth. By supporting biomanufacturing facilities, expanding markets for farmers' agricultural products, and improving rural infrastructure, RD investments generate new economic opportunities and accelerate the deployment of technologies across rural America. The success of these programs requires leadership that understands the interconnectedness of agriculture, innovation, manufacturing, and rural livelihoods.

Glen Smith brings exactly that. Raised in Atlantic, Iowa, Mr. Smith has spent years learning from experience in crop and livestock production. After earning an agricultural business degree from Iowa State University, he went on to work as state-wide manager of farm real estate for an agricultural management company. Eventually Glen started his own business in agricultural management services, all while actively farming. Later, he was selected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Farm Credit Administration (FCA). His subsequent service as Chairman and CEO of the FCA underscores his deep understanding of agricultural finance and federal policy.

Through his ties to agriculture, professional expertise, and public service, Glen has proven his understanding of how innovation and new markets complement conventional levers of demand that make up the ag bioeconomy. He recognizes the critical role that biobased innovation plays in strengthening traditional markets, creating new ones, and building a resilient rural economy. His diverse experience and vision make him a uniquely qualified leader for USDA Rural Development at this pivotal moment for American agriculture.

The ABC strongly supports Glen Smith's confirmation and stands ready to work with him to expand the economic, environmental, and national security benefits of the U.S. bioeconomy.

Sincerely,

The Ag Bioeconomy Coalition



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, & FORESTRY
Questions for Executive Nominees
119th Congress: Part I

1. Basic Biographical Information

Please provide the following information.

<i>Position to Which You Have Been Nominated</i>	
Name of Position	Date of Nomination
Under Secretary for Rural Development – USDA	June 2, 2025

<i>Current Legal Name</i>			
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
Glen	Richard	Smith	Hon.

<i>Addresses</i>					
Residential Address (do not include street address)			Office Address (include street address)		
			Street: 1501 Farm Credit Drive		
City: Atlantic	Iowa	50022	McLean	Virginia	22102-5090

<i>Other Names Used</i>						
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	Check if Maiden Name	Name Used From (Year) (Check box if estimate)	Name Used To (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)
					Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>
					Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Birth Year and Place</i>	
Year of Birth (Do not include month and day.)	Place of Birth
1956	Atlantic, Iowa

<i>Marital Status</i>					
Check All That Describe Your Current Situation:					
Never Married	Married	Separated	Annulled	Divorced	Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Spouse's Name (current spouse only)</i>			
Spouse's First Name	Spouse's Middle Name	Spouse's Last Name	Spouse's Suffix
Fauzan	Marie	Smith	Mrs.

<i>Spouse's Other Names Used (current spouse only)</i>						
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	<small>Check if Maiden Name</small>	Name Used From (Year) (Check box if estimate)	Name Used To (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)
Fauzan	Marie	Nemer		X	1956 <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>
					Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>

Children's Names (if over 18)			
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
Rachel	Marie	Wayson	Mrs.
Jacob	Glen	Smith	Mr.
Peter	Thomas	Smith	Mr.
Anna	Kathryn	Stadel	Mrs.

2. Education

List all post-secondary schools attended.

Name of School	Type of School (vocational/technical/trade school, college/university/military college, correspondence/distance/extension/online school)	Date Began School (month/year) (check box if estimate)	Date Ended School (month/year) (check box if estimate) "present" box if still in school)	Degree	Date Awarded
Iowa State University	Land Grant University	Est August 1974 <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present February 1979 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelor of Science	February 1979
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		

3. Employment

(A) In reverse chronological order, list all of your employment activities, including unemployment and self-employment. If the employment activity was military duty, list separate employment activity periods to show each change of military duty station. Do not list employment before your 18th birthday unless to provide a minimum of two years of employment history.

<u>Type of Employment</u> (Active Military Duty Station, National Guard/Reserve, USPHS Commissioned Corps, Other Federal employment, State Government (Non-Federal Employment), Self-employment, Unemployment, Federal Contractor, Non-Government Employment (excluding self-employment), Other)	<u>Name of Your Employer/Assigned Duty Station</u>	<u>Most Recent Position Title/Rank</u>	<u>Location</u> (City and State only)	<u>Date Employment Began</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Employment Ended</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check “present” box if still employed)
Federal Employee-Presidential Nominated, Senate Confirmed	Farm Credit Administration	Board Member, Chairman/FCSIC	McLean, VA	12/2017	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Self	Smith Generation Farms, Inc.	President	Atlantic, IA	Est 4/1982 <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present 12/2017 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Self	Smith Land Service, Co.	President	Atlantic, IA	4/1982	12/2017
Self	S & K Land Co. LLC	Member/Manager	Atlantic, IA	Est 2003 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Est Present 12/2016 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Government Employee	Doane Agricultural Service	State Manager	Ankeny, IA	1979 est.	Est Present 3/1982 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Contractor	Iowa State University/USAID	Team Member	Czech Republic /Slovakia	1994	1994
Employee	Jim and Nancy Pellett	Farm Hand	Atlantic, Iowa	1970	1978

(B) List any advisory, consultative, honorary or other part-time service or positions with federal, state, or local governments, not listed elsewhere.

<u>Name of Government Entity</u>	<u>Name of Position</u>	<u>Date Service Began</u>	<u>Date Service Ended</u>

		(month/year) (check box if estimate)	(month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still serving)
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

(C) List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other for profit or nonprofit organization that is not otherwise listed in response to question 3(A).

<u>Name of Entity</u>	<u>Name of Position</u>	<u>Date Service Began</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Service Ended</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still serving)
Smith Generation Farms, Inc.	Director	Est <input type="checkbox"/> 01/91	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 10/25
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

(D) Please submit a copy of your resume with this questionnaire.

4. Honors and Awards

List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, civilian service citations, military medals, academic or professional honors, honorary society memberships and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievement.

Accredited Rural Appraiser in American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers- 1990

5. Memberships

List all memberships that you have held in professional, social, business, fraternal, scholarly, civic, or charitable organizations in the last 10 years.

Unless relevant to your nomination, you do NOT need to include memberships in charitable organizations available to the public as a result of a tax deductible donation of \$1,000 or less, parent-teacher associations or other organizations connected to schools attended by your children, athletic clubs or teams, automobile support organizations (such as AAA), discounts clubs (such as Groupon or Sam's Club), or affinity memberships/consumer clubs (such as frequent flyer memberships).

<u>Name of Organization</u>	<u>Dates of Your Membership</u> (You may approximate.)	<u>Position(s) Held</u>
Cass Atlantic Development Corporation	2015-2017	Board Member
Atlantic Community Schools	2002-2011	Board Member and Past President
Wesley Retirement Services	1994-1999	Board Member
Nishna Valley YMCA	2003-2005	Board Member
Iowa Chapter, American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers	1985-Present	Member
Atlantic Rotary Club	1985-2014	Board Member and Past President
First United Methodist Church	1983-Present	Members and Administrative Council
Atlantic Golf and Country Club	1992-2015	Social Member
Glen Oaks Country Club	2016-2017	Social Member
Iowa Farm Bureau Association	Present	Member
Atlantic Elks Club	1982-Present	Social Member
Iowa Corn Growers Association	Present	Member

Iowa Soybean Growers Association	Present	Member
Iowa Cattlemen's Association	Present	Member
Iowa State Sheriffs' and Deputies' Association	Present	Member
Cass County 4-H & FFA Fair	1982-2014	Swine Superintendent

6. Political Activity

(A) Have you ever been a candidate for or been elected or appointed to a political office?

Yes No (If yes, please complete the chart below)

<u>Name of Office</u>	<u>Elected/Appointed/ Candidate Only</u>	<u>Year(s) Election Held or Appointment Made</u>	<u>Term of Service (if applicable)</u>
Atlantic Community Schools Board Member	Elected	2002	2002-2011
Township Trustee	Elected	Early 80's	Served until 2018

(B) List any offices held in or services rendered, including volunteer services, to a political party or election committee during the last 10 years that you have not listed elsewhere.

<u>Name of Party/Election Committee</u>	<u>Office/Services Rendered</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>
Co-Host, Senator Charles Grassley Event	8 Fundraising Contacts	Organization of Event	8/10/16
Co-Host, Senator Joni Ernst Event	39 Fundraising Contacts	Organization of Event	10/23/14

Republican Caucus	Spoke on Behalf of Governor Jeb Bush	Attendance	January 2016

(C) Itemize all individual political contributions of \$200 or more that you have made in the past five years to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity. Please list each individual contribution and not the total amount contributed to the person or entity during the year.

<u>Name of Recipient</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Year of Contribution</u>
Mike Naig	\$250	2025
GSM Charity Auctions – Inauguration	\$675	2025
Donald Trump/Never Surrender, Inc. – Fauzan Smith	\$2,070	2024
Donald Trump – Glen Smith	\$520	2024
Donald Trump – Glen Smith	\$2,300	2024
Donald Trump – Fauzan Smith	\$520	2024
Zach Nunn	\$1,000	2024
Mariannette Miller-Meeks	\$500	2024
Bipartisan INA – Inaugural	\$1,135	2024
Mike Naig	\$250	2023
Charles Grassley	\$1,000	2022
Kim Reynolds	\$250	2022
Cass County Republicans	\$350	2022
Cass County Republicans	\$700	2022
Joni Ernst	\$2,500	2020
Donald Trump	\$2,800	2020

7. Publications and Speeches

(A) List the titles, publishers and dates of books, articles, reports or other published materials that you have written, including articles published on the Internet. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication via email if available. Please list all required publications even if no copy of the publication is available to provide. **NONE**

(B) List any formal speeches or presentations you have delivered during the last 10 years relevant to the position to which you have been nominated, and all speeches/presentations you have delivered related to any topic for the last five years. Include any testimony to Congress or any other legislative or administrative body. Include a link to each speech when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication via email if available. Please list all known required speeches even if no copy is available to provide.

Please find the supplemental document which includes digital copies of the publications.

Title/Topic	Place/Audience	Date(s) of Speech
AgriBank, FCB Annual Meeting State of the Farm Credit Administration	Phoenix, Arizona Farm Credit System Stakeholders	5 March 2018 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith05Mar2018.pdf
AgFirst Monthly Board Meeting State of the Farm Credit Administration	Columbia, SC AgFirst Board Members	19 March 2018 See supporting documents
Farm Credit Council Board of Directors Meeting	Washington, DC Farm Credit System Stakeholders	4 June 2018 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith04June2018.pdf
Farm Credit West Board Meeting	Monterey, CA Farm Credit System Stakeholders	1 August 2018 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith01Aug2018.pdf
Meeting with a delegation from the National Bureau of Statistics of China	McLean, VA Chinese Delegation and FCA Staff	13 November 2018 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith13Nov2018.pdf
Meeting of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers	Ames, Iowa Iowa Farmers	6 February 2019 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith06Feb2019.pdf
Salute to Agriculture Event U.S. Agricultural Credit Conditions	Iowa Rotary Iowa Rotarians and other farm business stakeholders	5 March 2019 https://www.facebook.com/AtlanticIowaRotary/posts/thanks-to-glen-smith-for-speaking-at-our-rotary-salute-to-agriculture-this-noon-1248237838658441/ See supporting documents
Farm Credit Bank of Texas Annual Stockholders Meeting	New Orleans, Louisiana Farm Credit System Stakeholders	10 April 2019 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith10April2019.pdf

Northwest Farm Credit Services Board Strategic Planning Meeting State of the Farm Credit Administration	Seattle, Washington Northwest Farm Credit Services Board of Directors	15 July 2019 See supporting documents
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers History & Organization of the FCS and FCA	McLean, Va ASFMRRA Staff	9 September 2019 See supporting documents
YBS Conference Missouri Young, Beginning and Small Farmers	St. Louis, Missouri FCS Financial, ACA (MO) Stakeholders	12 November 2019 See supporting documents
AgVentures Alliance & IA Quality Producers	Atlantic, Iowa Local farm producers	2 December 2019 See supporting documents
Farm Credit Council Annual Meeting	Farm Credit Council Staff and Stakeholders Washington, D.C.	3 February 2020 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith03Feb2020.pdf
FC Carolina Ag Leadership Institute	Asheville, NC Farm Credit System Stakeholders	13 March 2020 See supporting documents
Farm Credit System – U.S. Agricultural Credit Conditions	McLean, Va American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers	12 November 2020 See supporting documents
The Farm Credit System and the Farm Credit Administration	Blacksburg, VA Ag Financing and Ag Entrepreneurship classes at Virginia Tech	16 November 2020 See supporting documents
Farm Credit System – U.S. Agricultural Credit Conditions	Atlantic, Iowa Cass/Atlantic Development Corp.	13 July 2021 See supporting documents
Farm Credit System – U.S. Agricultural Credit Conditions	McLean, Va Western Oklahoma Young Farmer Group	19 July 2021 See supporting documents

Farm Credit Legislative/Advocacy Training Farm Credit Administration Update	McLean, Va Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit & Farm Credit of the Virginias Staff	20 July 2021 See supporting documents
The Farm Credit System and the Farm Credit Administration	Des Moines, Iowa Local, State and National Farm Stakeholders to include Ambassador Terry Branstad and USDA Bill Northey	17 September 2021 See supporting documents
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers Young, Beginning and Small Farmers	Las Vegas, NV Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers	4 November 2021 See supporting documents
Young, Beginning, and Small Farmer Symposium	Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln College Students; University Ag Officials; state and federal officials, Farm Credit System Stakeholders	8 November 2021 https://youtu.be/YIrwN0s9Rz0
Farm Credit Administration Office of Examination Conference	Phoenix, Ariz Internal Staff Only	14 December 2021 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith2021Dec14.pdf
Farm Credit Council Annual Meeting	New Orleans, Louisiana Farm Credit System Stakeholders	8 February 2022 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith2022Feb8.pdf
Young, Beginning, and Small Farmer Symposium	Colorado Springs, CO Colorado State University College Students; University Ag Officials; state and federal officials, Farm Credit Stakeholders	23 March 2022 https://youtu.be/SU_f6Y0RMNI https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/Smith2022March23.pdf
The Farm Credit System and the Farm Credit Administration	Colorado Spring, CO Ag Finance and Ag Enterprise classes at Colorado State	24 March 2022 See supporting documents

	University	
Iowa State University Ag Finance Class Guest Lecturer	Ames, Iowa University faculty and students	15 April 2022 See supporting documents
Iowa State University Ag Finance Class Guest Lecturer	Ames, Iowa University faculty and students	22 April 2022 See supporting documents
MidWest Farm Tour Minnesota and Iowa Opening Remarks, State of Farm Credit Administration	<i>See attached NR Various cities in MN and IA</i> Internal FCA Staff Farm Credit System Stakeholders Local Agricultural Media	16 May 2022 Midwest Farm Tour NR FCA Farm Tour Midwest May 2022
The Farm Credit System and the Farm Credit Administration	McLean, Va American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers	12 November 2020 See supporting documents
Iowa State University Ag Finance Class Guest Lecturer	Ames, Iowa University faculty and students	14 November 2023 See supporting documents
FCA Innovation Symposium Video Presentation	George Washington University, DC Internal Staff and Farm Credit System Stakeholders	19 September 2024 https://vimeo.com/1000886757/10906c9d3b See supporting documents

(B) List any formal speeches or presentations you have delivered during the last 10 years relevant to the position to which you have been nominated, and all speeches/presentations you have delivered related to any topic for the last five years. Include any testimony to Congress or any other legislative or administrative body. Include a link to each speech when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication via email if available. Please list all known required speeches even if no copy is available to provide.

Title/Topic	Place/Audience	Date(s) of Testimony
FCA Nomination Testimony	U.S. Capitol	https://www.congress.gov/event/115th-congress/senate-event/LC64962/text https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/nomination-of- https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony_Smith5.pdf
Hearing on Credit Conditions Before the Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit	U.S. Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture	19 November 2019 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/OralStatement19Nov19.pdf https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/HouseTestimony19Nov2019.pdf https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQVX4WrqjY&feature=youtu.be
Budget Request for FY 2021 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations	12 February 2020 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/SenateTestimony12Feb2020.pdf
Budget Request for FY 2021 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations	12 February 2020 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/OralStatement12Feb2020.pdf https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/HouseTestimony12Feb2020.pdf https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dj5h3oTtGao
Hearing on the Rural Economy Before the Subcommittee	U.S. Capitol U.S. House of Representatives	24 March 2021 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/2021March24OralStatement.pdf

on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	Committee on Appropriations	https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/2021March24HouseTestimony.pdf https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4AkWWChM0I
Budget Request for FY 2022 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations	28 May 2021 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/SenateTestimony.pdf
Budget Request for FY 2022 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations	28 May 2021 https://www.fca.gov/template-fca/news/HouseTestimony.pdf
Budget Request for FY 2023 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations	28 March 2022 See supporting documents
Budget Request for FY 2023 Before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	U.S. Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations	28 March 2022 See supporting documents

8. Lobbying

In the past 10 years, have you registered as a lobbyist? If so, please indicate the state, federal, or local bodies with which you have registered (e.g., House, Senate, California Secretary of State).

Not Applicable

9. Digital Platforms

Please list all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently operate, or have formerly operated, an account, regardless of whether the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the full “alias” or “handle”, including a link to each account if possible. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant.

Not Applicable

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT ETHICS

July 8, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by Glen Smith, who has been nominated by President Trump for the position of Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture.

We have reviewed the report and have obtained advice from the agency concerning any possible conflict in light of its functions and the nominee's proposed duties. Also enclosed is an ethics agreement outlining the actions that the nominee will undertake to avoid conflicts of interest. Unless a date for compliance is indicated in the ethics agreement, the nominee must fully comply within three months of confirmation with any action specified in the ethics agreement.

Based thereon, we believe that this nominee is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,
**HEATHER
JONES**
Heather Jones
Senior Counsel for Financial Disclosure


Digitally signed by HEATHER
JONES
Date: 2025.07.08 12:26:36
-04'00'

Enclosures

★ ★ ★ ★

250 E STREET SW • SUITE 750 • WASHINGTON DC • 20024

June 27, 2025

Stuart Bender
Director, Office of Ethics
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 347-W
Washington, DC 20250-1400

Dear Mr. Bender:

The purpose of this letter is to describe the steps that I will take to avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest in the event that I am confirmed for the position of Under Secretary for Rural Development in the Department of Agriculture. It is my responsibility to understand and comply with commitments outlined in this agreement.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL COMMITMENTS

As required by the criminal conflicts of interest law at 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter in which I know that I have a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the matter, or in which I know that a person whose interests are imputed to me has a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the particular matter, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I understand that the interests of the following persons are imputed to me:

- Any spouse or minor child of mine;
- Any general partner of a partnership in which I am a limited or general partner;
- Any organization in which I serve as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee, even if uncompensated; and
- Any person or organization with which I am negotiating or have an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with an agency ethics official and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict, such as recusal from the particular matter or divestiture of an asset.

If I have a managed account or otherwise use the services of an investment professional during my appointment, I will ensure that the account manager or investment professional obtains my prior approval on a case-by-case basis for the purchase of any assets other than cash, cash equivalents, investment funds that qualify for the regulatory exemption for diversified mutual funds and unit investment trusts at 5 C.F.R. § 2640.201(a), obligations of the United States, or municipal bonds.

I will receive a live ethics briefing from a member of the ethics office after my confirmation but not later than 15 days after my appointment pursuant to the ethics program

regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2638.305. Within 90 days of my confirmation, I will submit my Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance which documents my compliance with this ethics agreement.

I will not modify this ethics agreement without your approval and the approval of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) pursuant to the ethics agreement requirements contained in the financial disclosure regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2634.803(a)(4).

SECTION 2 - FARMLAND OWNERSHIP

My wife and I own farmland in Cass County, Iowa. This farmland is leased out on an annual basis for a cash lease for farming. My spouse and I are not engaged in this farming operation. During my tenure as Under Secretary, my spouse and I will not engage in this farming operation, and we will maintain an annual cash lease on the farmland. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on my financial interest in the farmland in Cass County, Iowa, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208.

My wife and I also own commercial real estate in Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa. This property is leased out to a tenant. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on my financial interest in the commercial real estate in Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208.

SECTION 3 – SMITH GENERATION FARMS, INC.

My family and I own Smith Generation Farms, Inc., a C-Corporation run solely by my adult son. I do not hold a position with this entity. I will continue to have a financial interest in Smith Generation Farms, Inc., but I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from this entity. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Smith Generation Farms, Inc., unless I first obtain a written waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

SECTION 4 – CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM PAYMENTS

I receive annual Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments from USDA for my farmland property in Cass County, Iowa and land held in the farm corporation, Smith Generation Farms, Inc. The CRP program is administered by USDA through the Farm Service Agency and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge will have a direct and predictable effect on any payments I receive from USDA programs, unless I obtain a waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b).

SECTION 5 – SMITH LAND SERVICE CO.

I have a passive investment interest in the Smith Land Service Co., which provides consulting services for farm sales, farm management, and conducts farm appraisals. I do not hold a position with this entity. Because I will retain a passive investment interest in this entity, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Smith Land Service Co., unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §208(b)(1).

SECTION 6 – TRUSTEE POSITION

I will retain my position as a trustee of the Glen R. Smith Generation Trust. I will not receive any fees for the services that I provide as a trustee during my appointment to the position of Under Secretary. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the Glen R. Smith Generation Trust, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2).

SECTION 7 – PUBLIC POSTING

I have been advised that this ethics agreement and the Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance will be posted publicly, consistent with the public information law at 5 U.S.C. § 552, on the website of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics with ethics agreements of other presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith

OGC Form 278e (Updated 08/2024) (Expires 08/31/2027)
U.S. Office of Government Ethics; 5 C.F.R. part 2634 | Form Approved: OMB No. (3209-0001)

Report Type: Nominee Report

Year (Annual Report only):

Date of Appointment:

Date of Termination:

Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGC Form 278e)

Filer's Information

Smith, Glen

Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture

Other Federal Government Positions Held During the Preceding 12 Months:

Board Member, Farm Credit Administration (12/2017 - Present) See endnote

Names of Congressional Committees Considering Nomination:

- Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Electronic Signature - I certify that the statements I have made in this form are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

/s/ Smith, Glen [electronically signed on 06/04/2025 by Smith, Glen in Integrity.gov]

Agency Ethics Official's Opinion - On the basis of information contained in this report, I conclude that the filer is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations (subject to any comments below).

/s/ Bender, Stuart, Certifying Official [electronically signed on 07/07/2025 by Bender, Stuart in Integrity.gov]

Other review conducted by

U.S. Office of Government Ethics Certification

/s/ Jones, Heather A, Certifying Official [electronically signed on 07/08/2025 by Jones, Heather A in Integrity.gov]

1. Filer's Positions Held Outside United States Government

#	ORGANIZATION NAME	CITY, STATE	ORGANIZATION TYPE	POSITION HELD	FROM	TO
1	Glen R. Smith Generation Trust	See Endnote	Atlantic, Iowa	Trust	Trustee	3/2016

2. Filer's Employment Assets & Income and Retirement Accounts

#	DESCRIPTION	EIF	VALUE	INCOME TYPE	INCOME AMOUNT
1	IRA	No			
1.1	Vanguard Total World Stock ETF	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
1.2	Capital World Growth & Income FD Income Class A	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
1.3	U.S. Brokerage account (cash).	N/A	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	

3. Filer's Employment Agreements and Arrangements

None

4. Filer's Sources of Compensation Exceeding \$5,000 in a Year

None

5. Spouse's Employment Assets & Income and Retirement Accounts

#	DESCRIPTION	EIF	VALUE	INCOME TYPE	INCOME AMOUNT
1	Cass County Memorial Hospital, defined benefit plan (value not readily ascertainable)	N/A		Retirement payments	
2	IRA #2	No			
2.1	American Capital Income Builder Fund CLF3	Yes	\$15,001 - \$50,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.2	American Fundamental Investors Fund	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.3	American Funds Washington Mutual Investors	Yes	None (or less than \$1,001)	None (or less than \$201)	
2.4	American Growth Fund of America CLF3	Yes	\$15,001 - \$50,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.5	American Income Fund of America	Yes	\$15,001 - \$50,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.6	FRANKLIN LOW DURATION TOTAL RETURN FUND Class R (FLPRX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.7	JP Morgan Mid Cap Value Fund	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.8	Victory Sycamore Small Company Opportunity Fund Class R Shares (OGFXY)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.9	Dodge & Cox Income Fund Class I (DODIX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.10	InvescoGlobal Targeted Returns Fund Class R Shares (GLTRX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.11	MFS Emerging Markets Equity Fund Class R6 Shares (MEMIX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.12	MFS High Income Fund Class R6 Shares (MHKX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	

#	DESCRIPTION	EIF	VALUE	INCOME TYPE	INCOME AMOUNT
2.13	PIMCO Emerging Markets Corporate Bond Fund Class C (PECCX)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.14	Vanguard Growth Index Fund ETF Class Shares (VUG)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
2.15	Vanguard S&P 500 ETF (VOO)	Yes	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	

6. Other Assets and Income

#	DESCRIPTION	EIF	VALUE	INCOME TYPE	INCOME AMOUNT
1	USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) See Endnote	N/A	None (or less than \$1,001)	CRP Rental Payments	\$18,234
2	U.S. bank account #1 (cash)	N/A	\$100,001 - \$250,000	None (or less than \$201)	
3	U.S. bank account #2 (cash)	N/A	\$15,001 - \$50,000	None (or less than \$201)	
4	U.S. bank account #3 (cash)	N/A	\$1,001 - \$15,000	None (or less than \$201)	
5	U.S. bank account #4 (cash)	N/A	\$100,001 - \$250,000	\$201 - \$1,000	
6	Smith Generation Farms, Inc (Crop Production of corn, soybeans and hay all located in Cass County, Iowa)	N/A	\$5,000,001 - \$25,000,000	None (or less than \$201)	
7	Smith Land Service, Co.	N/A	\$250,001 - \$500,000	Ownership Distribution	\$60,041
8	Glen R. Smith Generation Trust	No			
8.1	Commercial Real Estate, Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa	N/A	\$250,001 - \$500,000	Rent or Royalties	\$15,001 - \$50,000

#	DESCRIPTION	E/F	VALUE	INCOME TYPE	INCOME AMOUNT
8.2	Farmland, Cass County, Iowa, leased for cash rent	N/A	\$5,000.001 - \$25,000,000	Rent or Royalties	\$100,001 - \$1,000,000
8.3	SG3 Land Holdings Co. LLC	No			
8.3.1	Farmland 80 acres, Pymosa Twp, Cass County, Iowa	See Endnote	N/A	\$250,001 - \$500,000	Rent or Royalties \$5,001 - \$15,000
8.4	Residential farm real estate, Pymosa Twp, Cass County, Iowa	See Endnote	N/A	\$100,001 - \$250,000	Rent or Royalties \$5,001 - \$15,000

7. Transactions

(N/A) - Not required for this type of report

8. Liabilities

#	CREDITOR NAME	TYPE	AMOUNT	YEAR INCURRED	RATE	TERM
1	First Whitney Bank and Trust	Mortgage (investment/rent at property)	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	2020	3.0%	10 years

9. Gifts and Travel Reimbursements

(N/A) - Not required for this type of report

Endnotes

PART	#	ENDNOTE
Filer's Information	1	The Farm Credit Administration is a Federal agency that regulates the Farm credit system.
1.	1	The Trust consists of the land and real estate property that I own.
6.	1	USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) pays a yearly rental in exchange for farmland owners removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and planting species that will improve environmental quality. These CRP payments concern the farmland properties identified in Part 6, Item 6 and Part 6, Item 8.2.
6.	8.2	This real estate is leased out to a tenant on a cash lease for farming on an annual cash basis based upon current cash-rent farm surveys independently conducted by Iowa State University.
6.	8.3.1	This farmland is property that is leased for cash rent.
6.	8.4	This is residential real estate and includes a house and land.

Summary of Contents

1. Filer's Positions Held Outside United States Government

Part 1 discloses positions that the filer held at any time during the reporting period (excluding positions with the United States Government). Positions are reportable even if the filer did not receive compensation.

This section does not include the following: (1) positions with religious, social, fraternal, or political organizations; (2) positions solely of an honorary nature; (3) positions held as part of the filer's official duties with the United States Government; (4) mere membership in an organization; and (5) passive investment interests as a limited partner or non-managing member of a limited liability company.

2. Filer's Employment Assets & Income and Retirement Accounts

Part 2 discloses the following:

- Sources of earned and other non-investment income of the filer totaling more than \$200 during the reporting period (e.g., salary, fees, partnership share, honoraria, scholarships, and prizes)
- Assets related to the filer's business, employment, or other income-generating activities (1) that ended the reporting period with a value greater than \$1,000 or (2) from which more than \$200 in income was received during the reporting period (e.g., equity in business or partnership, stock options, retirement plans/accounts and their underlying holdings as appropriate, deferred compensation, and intellectual property, such as book deals and patents)

This section does not include assets or income from United States Government employment or assets that were acquired separately from the filer's business, employment, or other income-generating activities (e.g., assets purchased through a brokerage account). Note: The type of income is not required if the amount of income is \$0 - \$200 or if the asset qualifies as an excepted investment fund (EIF).

3. Filer's Employment Agreements and Arrangements

Part 3 discloses agreements or arrangements that the filer had during the reporting period with an employer or former employer (except the United States Government), such as the following:

- Future employment
- Leave of absence
- Continuing payments from an employer, including severance and payments not yet received for previous work (excluding ordinary salary from a current employer)
- Continuing participation in an employee welfare, retirement, or other benefit plan, such as pensions or a deferred compensation plan
- Retention or disposition of employer-awarded equity, sharing in profits or unvested interests (e.g., vested and unvested stock options, restricted stock, future share of a company's profits, etc.)

4. Filer's Sources of Compensation Exceeding \$5,000 in a Year

Part 4 discloses sources (except the United States Government) that paid more than \$5,000 in a calendar year for the filer's services during any year of the reporting period.

The filer discloses payments both from employers and from any clients to whom the filer personally provided services. The filer discloses a source even if the source made its payment to the filer's employer and not to the filer. The filer does not disclose a client's payment to the filer's employer if the filer did not provide the services for which the client is paying.

5. Spouse's Employment Assets & Income and Retirement Accounts

Part 5 discloses the following:

- Sources of earned income (excluding honoraria) for the filer's spouse totaling more than \$1,000 during the reporting period (e.g., salary, consulting fees, and partnership share)
- Sources of honoraria for the filer's spouse greater than \$200 during the reporting period
- Assets related to the filer's spouse's employment, business, activities, other income-generating activities: (1) that ended the reporting period with a value greater than \$1,000 or (2) from which more than \$200 in income was received during the reporting period (e.g., equity in business or partnership, stock options, retirement plans/accounts and their underlying holdings as appropriate, deferred compensation, and intellectual property, such as book deals and patents)

This section does not include assets or income from United States Government employment or assets that were acquired separately from the filer's spouse's business, employment, or other income-generating activities (e.g., assets purchased through a brokerage account). Note: The type of income is not required if the amount of income is \$0 - \$200 or if the asset qualifies as an excepted investment fund (EIF). Amounts of income are not required for a spouse's earned income (excluding honoraria).

6. Other Assets and Income

Part 6 discloses each asset, not already reported, (1) that ended the reporting period with a value greater than \$1,000 or (2) from which more than \$200 in investment income was received during the reporting period. For purposes of the value and income thresholds, the filer aggregates the filer's interests with those of the filer's spouse and dependent children.

This section does not include the following types of assets: (1) a personal residence (unless it was rented out during the reporting period); (2) income or retirement benefits associated with United States Government employment (e.g., Thrift Savings Plan); and (3) cash accounts (e.g., checking, savings, money market accounts) at a single financial institution with a value of \$5,000 or less (unless more than \$200 in income was received). Additional exceptions apply. Note: The type of income is not required if the amount of income is \$0 - \$200 or if the asset qualifies as an excepted investment fund (EIF).

7. Transactions

Part 7 discloses purchases, sales, or exchanges of real property or securities in excess of \$1,000 made on behalf of the filer, the filer's spouse or dependent child during the reporting period.

This section does not include transactions that concern the following: (1) a personal residence, unless rented out; (2) cash accounts (e.g., checking, savings, CDs, money market accounts) and money market mutual funds; (3) Treasury bills, bonds, and notes; and (4) holdings within a Federal Thrift Savings Plan account. Additional exceptions apply.

8. Liabilities

Part 8 discloses liabilities over \$10,000 that the filer, the filer's spouse or dependent child owed at any time during the reporting period.

This section does not include the following types of liabilities: (1) mortgages on a personal residence, unless rented out (note: certain PAs, nominees and appointees are required to report all mortgages); (2) loans secured by a personal motor vehicle, household furniture, or appliances, unless the loan exceeds the item's purchase price; and (3) revolving charge accounts, such as credit card balances, if the outstanding liability did not exceed \$10,000 at the end of the reporting period. Additional exceptions apply.

9. Gifts and Travel Reimbursements

This section discloses:

- Gifts totaling more than \$480 that the filer, the filer's spouse, and dependent children received from any one source during the reporting period.
- Travel reimbursements totaling more than \$480 that the filer, the filer's spouse, and dependent children received from any one source during the reporting period.

For purposes of this section the filer need not aggregate any gift or travel reimbursement with a value of \$192 or less. Regardless of the value, this section does not include the following items: (1) anything received from relatives; (2) anything received from the United States Government or from the District of Columbia, state, or local governments; (3) bequests and other forms of inheritance; (4) gifts and travel reimbursements given to the filer's agency in connection with the filer's official travel; (5) gifts of hospitality (food, lodging, entertainment) at the donor's residence or personal premises; and (6) anything received by the filer's spouse or dependent children totally independent of their relationship to the filer. Additional exceptions apply.

Privacy Act Statement

5 U.S.C. § 13101 et seq., and 5 C.F.R. Part 2834 of the U. S. Office of Government Ethics regulations require the reporting of this information. Failure to provide the requested information may result in separation, disciplinary action, or civil action. The primary use of the information on this report is for review by Government officials to determine compliance with applicable Federal laws and regulations. This report may also be disclosed upon request to any requesting person in accordance with 5 U.S.C. §§ 13107 and § 13122(b)(1) or as otherwise authorized by law. You may inspect applications for public access of your own form upon request. Additional disclosures of the information on this report may be made: (1) to any requesting person, subject to the limitation contained in section 208(g)(1) of title 18, any determination pursuant to sections 208(b)(1) and 208(b)(3) of title 18; (2) to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency if the disclosing agency becomes aware of violations or potential violations of law or regulation; (3) to a source when necessary to obtain information relevant to a conflict of interest investigation or determination; (4) to the National Archives and Records Administration or the General Services Administration in records management inspections; (5) to the Office of Management and Budget during legislative coordination or private relief legislation; (6) when the disclosing agency determines that the records are arguably relevant to a proceeding before a court, grand jury, or administrative or adjudicative body, or in a proceeding before an administrative or adjudicative body when the adjudicator determines the records to be relevant to the proceeding; (7) to reviewing officials in a new office, department or agency when an employee transfers or is detailed from one covered position to another; a public financial disclosure report and any accompanying documents, including statements notifying an employee's supervising ethics office of the commencement of negotiations for future employment or compensation or of an agreement for future employment or compensation; (8) to a Member of Congress or a congressional office in response to an inquiry made on behalf of and at the request of an individual who is the subject of the record; (9) to contractors and other non-Government employees working on a contract, service or assignment for the Federal Government when necessary to accomplish a function related to this system of records; (10) on the OGE Website and to any person, department or agency, any written ethics agreement, including certifications of ethics agreement compliance, filed with OGE by an individual nominated by the President to a position requiring Senate confirmation; (11) on the OGE Website and to any person, department or agency, any certificate of divestiture issued by OGE; (12) on the OGE Website and to any person, department or agency any waiver of the restrictions contained in Executive Order 13969 or any superseding executive order; (13) to appropriate agencies, entities and persons when there has been a suspected or confirmed breach of the system of records, the agency maintaining the records has determined that there is a risk of harm to individuals, the agency, the Federal Government, or national security, and the disclosure is reasonably necessary to assist in connection with the agency's efforts to respond to the suspected or confirmed breach or to prevent, minimize, or remedy such harm; and (14) to another Federal agency or Federal entity, when the agency maintaining the record determines that information from this system of records is reasonably necessary to assist the recipient agency or entity in responding to a suspected or confirmed breach or in preventing, minimizing, or remedying the risk of harm to individuals, the recipient agency or entity, the Federal Government, or national security. See also the OGE/GOV'T-1 executive branch-wide Privacy Act system of records.

Public Burden Information

This collection of information is estimated to take an average of ten hours per response, including time for reviewing the instructions, gathering the data needed, and completing the form. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Program Counsel, U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE), 250 E Street, S.W., Suite 750, Washington, DC 20024-3249.

Pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB (that control number 3209-0001, is displayed here and at the top of the first page of this OGE Form 278e).

November 3, 2025

Mr. Stuart Bender
Designated Agency Ethics Official
U.S. Department of Agriculture
J.L. Whitten Building
Room 347-W
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Re: Amendment and Supplement to Ethics Agreement of Glen Smith

Dear Mr. Bender:

The purpose of this letter is to supplement my ethics agreement signed on June 27, 2025. In a separate document, I also am amending and supplementing my Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e) by reporting my position that I inadvertently omitted from the report as an uncompensated Director of the Smith Generation Farms, Inc. I resigned from my Director position with Smith Generation Farms, Inc. effective on October 31, 2025.

My family and I own Smith Generation Farms, Inc., a C-Corporation run by my adult son and my adult daughter. As noted above, I no longer hold a position with this entity. I will continue to have a financial interest in Smith Generation Farms, Inc., but I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from this entity. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Smith Generation Farms, Inc., unless I first obtain a written waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

I have been advised that this supplement to my ethics agreement will be posted publicly, consistent with 5 U.S.C. § 552, on the website of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics with ethics agreements of other Presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith

November 3, 2025

Mr. Stuart Bender
 Designated Agency Ethics Official
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 J.L. Whitten Building
 Room 347-W
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20250

Re: Amendment and Supplement to Financial Disclosure Report of Glen Smith

Dear Mr. Bender:

The purpose of this letter is to correct an inadvertent oversight in the Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e) that I signed on June 4, 2025. In my initial disclosure, I inadvertently omitted my uncompensated position as a Director of Smith Generation Farms, Inc. Moreover, I resigned from this position on October 31, 2025. This correction and additional information are noted below.

The item identified below is added, as follows:

Part 1 Filer's Positions Held Outside United States Government

#	Organization Name	City, State	Organization Type	Position Held	From	To
2	Smith Generation Farms, Inc.	Cass County, Iowa	Corporation	Director (uncompensated)	January, 1991	October, 2025

As noted above, I have submitted my resignation to the Smith Generation Farms, Inc. and it is effective as of October 31, 2025. I understand that this amendment will be attached to my financial disclosure report and released upon request with that report.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT ETHICS

November 14, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

By letter dated July 8, 2025, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) transmitted to the Committee the financial disclosure report of Glen Smith in connection with his nomination for the position of Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture. Enclosed are a letter from the Department of Agriculture and two letters from Mr. Smith supplementing his financial disclosure report and ethics agreement.

We have reviewed this additional submission and have also obtained advice from the Department of Agriculture concerning any possible conflict in light of its functions and the nominee's proposed duties. Based on the information provided, OGE continues to believe that Mr. Smith is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,
HEATHER
JONES

Heather Jones
Acting Chief, Ethics Law Branch

 Digitally signed by HEATHER
JONES
Date: 2025.11.14 06:57:32
-05'00'

Enclosures



250 E STREET SW • SUITE 750 • WASHINGTON DC • 20024

November 13, 2025

Mr. Stuart Bender
Designated Agency Ethics Official
U.S. Department of Agriculture
J.L. Whitten Building
Room 347-W
1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington,
DC 20250

Re: Amendment and Supplement to Ethics Agreement of Glen Smith

Dear Mr. Bender:

The purpose of this letter is to supplement my ethics agreement signed on June 27, 2025. In a separate document, I also am amending and supplementing my Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e) by reporting my position that I inadvertently omitted from the report as Director of the Smith Generation Farms, Inc. I resigned from my Director position with Smith Generation Farms, Inc. on October 31, 2025.

My family and I own Smith Generation Farms, Inc., a C-Corporation run by my adult son and my adult daughter. As noted above, I no longer hold a position with this entity. I will continue to have a financial interest in Smith Generation Farms, Inc., but I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from this entity. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Smith Generation Farms, Inc., unless I first obtain a written waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

I have been advised that this supplement to my ethics agreement will be posted publicly, consistent with 5 U.S.C. § 552, on the website of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics with ethics agreements of other Presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of Ethics

1400
Independence
Avenue, SW,
J.L. Whitten
Building
Room 347-W
Washington, DC
20250-2120

(202) 720-2251

Eric M. Ueland
Acting Director
U.S. Office of Government Ethics
250 E Street, SW, Suite 750
Washington DC 20024

Dear Mr. Ueland,

November 13, 2025

The purpose of this letter is to forward the attached supplement to Mr. Glen Smith's Ethics Agreement dated June 27, 2025, and to supplement and amend his Public Financial Disclosure Report (278e) dated June 4, 2025. Mr. Smith explains in his letter dated November 13, 2025, the reasons for the supplement are as follows:

- Mr. Smith inadvertently omitted his position as Director of the Smith Generation Farms, Inc., from his Public Financial Disclosure Report (278e), a position he held from January 1991 through October 2025.
- Mr. Smith previously reported his financial interest and income from the Smith Generation Farms, Inc., in Part 6 of his 278e report. This entry has been moved to Part 2 of the 278e report.
- Mr. Smith's Director position was added to Part 1 of the 278e report. Mr. Smith's income from Smith Generation Farms, Inc., was also added to Part 4 of the 278e report. Mr. Smith noted that all of the income derived from the farm is reinvested in the Smith Generation Farm, Inc.
- A section has been added to Mr. Smith's Ethics Agreement in which he states that he no longer holds a position with Smith Generation Farms, Inc. Mr. Smith will continue to have a financial interest in this entity, but he will not provide services material to the production of income. Mr. Smith will receive only passive investment income from Smith Generation Farms, Inc. Mr. Smith has agreed that he will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to his knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Smith Generation Farms, Inc., unless he first obtains a written waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

As the Designed Agency Ethics Official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I have reviewed the updated information contained in the supplements and amendment. Based upon my review of these and the prior commitments made by Mr. Smith in his previously transmitted Ethics Agreement, I continue to believe that Mr. Smith is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Page 2 of 2

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at Stuart.Bender@usda.gov.

Sincerely,

**STUART
BENDER** 
Digitally signed by
STUART BENDER
Date: 2025.11.13
13:13:45 -05'00'

Stuart Bender
Designated Agency Ethics Official
and
Director
Office of Ethics
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Enclosures

November 13, 2025

Mr. Stuart Bender
 Designated Agency Ethics Official
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 J.L. Whitten Building Room 347-W
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20250

Re: Amendment and Supplement to Financial Disclosure Report of Glen Smith

Dear Mr. Bender:

The purpose of this letter is to supplement and amend the Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e) that I signed on June 4, 2025. In my initial disclosure, I inadvertently omitted my position as a Director of Smith Generation Farms, Inc., which I resigned from on October 31, 2025. Due to the addition of the position, the Smith Generation Farms, Inc., entry in Part 6, Line 6 is moved to Part 2, Line 2 of the OGE-278e. I have also added an entry to Part 4 reflecting my compensation for the position.

The items identified below are added, as follows:

Part 1 Filer's Positions Held Outside United States Government

#	Organization Name	City, State	Organization Type	Position Held	From	To
2	Smith Generation Farms, Inc.	Cass County, Iowa	Corporation	Director	January 1991	Present

Part 2 Filer's Employment Assets and Income Retirement Accounts

#	Description	EIF	Value	Income Type	Income Amount
2	Smith Generation Farms, Inc (Crop Production of corn, soybeans and hay -- income derived from the farm is reinvested in the farm).	N/A	\$5,000,001 - \$25,000,000		\$15,000 to \$50,000

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Part 4 Filer's Sources of Compensation Exceeding \$5,000 in a Year

#	Source Name	City, State	Brief Description of Duties
1	Smith Generation Farms, Inc.	Cass County, Iowa	Director of family farm that produces corn, soybeans and hay (income derived from the farm is reinvested in the farm).

I understand that this amendment will be attached to my financial disclosure report and released upon request with that report.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith

November 3, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman, Chairman Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar, Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

The Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (the Act), as amended, provides that Presidential nominees for a position requiring the advice and consent of the Senate shall provide any necessary updates to their public financial disclosure report with respect to any outside earned income and honoraria received through the period ending no more than five days prior to the commencement of the Senate hearing of their nomination. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 13103(b)(1) and 5 C.F.R. § 2634.606(a).

Please be advised that I have informed the appropriate ethics officials that the information required by section 102(a)(I)(A) of the Act with respect to income and honoraria contained in OGE Form 278e (Executive Branch Public Financial Disclosure Report) executed by me on June 4, 2025, is current as of November 3, 2025. This date is within five days prior to the date of the hearing scheduled to consider my nomination.

Sincerely,



Glen Smith

cc: Stuart Bender, Designated Agency Ethics Official and Director, USDA Office of Ethics

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Nomination Hearing
November 5, 2025
Questions for the Record
Glen Smith

Senator Amy Klobuchar

1. Responsiveness to Congress

If you are confirmed, do you agree to:

- a. Promptly reply to any request for information from members of this Committee or any duly constituted committee of Congress and provide the requested information?

Yes.

- b. Promptly respond to requests for data and technical assistance in informing or drafting legislation or implementation of the law?

Yes.

- c. Notify the Chair and Ranking Member of this Committee in advance of any major changes made by you or within the Department of Agriculture during your tenure?

Yes.

2. Oversight

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Inspectors General play a critical role in providing oversight of the executive branch, regardless of administration. Will you commit to responding promptly and thoroughly to GAO and the Inspector General on all oversight requests?

I will follow the law.

3. Rural Development Field Offices

Reduced staffing levels in the Rural Development mission area remain a concern. Rural Development offices are important sources of information and assistance for rural communities, and lack of staff will negatively impact those communities. Under section 12410 of the 2018 Farm Bill, USDA is required to notify this Committee if USDA permanently relocates any field offices employees in the Rural Development mission area that would result in a field office of the Rural Development mission area with two or fewer employees. Will you commit to complying with section 12410 of the 2018 Farm Bill and ensure that this Committee is notified if any field office of the Rural Development mission area has two or fewer employees?

I will follow the law.

4. Implementing REAP

At your hearing, you talked about supporting rural economies and helping rural communities with rising costs. The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) has helped thousands of farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses to adopt renewable energy, cut energy costs, and boost rural economic development. The program is popular and over-subscribed. Applications were paused in December 2024 due to a backlog, and the window for applications has not been reopened.

- a. Will you commit to implementing REAP, including clearing the backlog and opening applications for new applicants?

I will commit to implementing REAP within available budgetary resources and opening applications for new applicants.

- b. Will you commit to implementing important REAP components like the Underutilized Technology Set Aside Fund and the Technical Assistance Grant Program?

I am committed to follow the law faithfully and responsibly. That said, any spending decisions must reflect the administration's priorities and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively.

5. IRA REAP

REAP has grants under the Farm Bill, with a 25% cost share, and under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), with up to a 50% cost share. The Farm Bill REAP offers a more limited pool of funds than IRA REAP. It is my understanding that USDA has told REAP applicants, including those who were the recipients of awards of IRA REAP grants but not obligated grants, to reapply for Farm Bill REAP.

- a. Will you commit to ensuring that farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses receive the benefit of all the funds that have been allocated for their use under REAP, including IRA funds?

I am committed to follow the law faithfully and responsibly. That said, any spending decisions must reflect the administration's priorities and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively.

- b. For those who have started projects because they were recipients of awarded but not obligated IRA REAP grants, will you ensure that they are able to move forward on their projects with a REAP grant?

I am committed to follow the law faithfully and responsibly. That said, any spending decisions must reflect the administration's priorities and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively.

- c. Will you commit to reporting back to the Committee the amount of IRA funds remaining at USDA, including funds from prior fiscal years?

I will follow the law.

6. PACE Loan Forgiveness

At your hearing, you discussed the importance of supporting energy generation in rural areas and the programs administered by Rural Development toward that end. One particular program, Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE), provided forgivable loans for renewable energy sources and energy storage. Depending on eligibility, recipients can obtain up to 60% forgiveness on the loans. Awardees went forward with projects with the expectation a certain amount would be forgiven if they hold up their end of the bargain. Will you commit to forgiving the loan amounts that PACE loan awardees expected would be forgiven if they meet the terms of the loan?

I will follow the law.

7. Farm Credit Administration Board Composition

As you know, there is only one other Board Member at the Farm Credit Administration (FCA), Jeffery Hall, who is a Republican serving an expired term. No one has been nominated to replace him or you; nor has a Democrat been nominated for the Board. While we have been assured that FCA can carry out most functions with only one board member, it seems risky to leave only one person to do the job of three people. Do you believe the President should nominate a full complement of three Board members, including both Republican and Democratic nominees?

This is a decision for President Trump.

Senator Tommy Tuberville

- 1. Farmers and rural communities often rely upon USDA Rural Development (RD) for access to credit, particularly when they are unable to access credit from traditional sources. However, loan processing and approvals can take months, burdening producers who need financial assistance. Would you commit to working across government agencies, like the Small Business Administration, to learn from where they have utilized private-sector, commercial lending solutions to expedite loan processing that could then be utilized at RD?

I will commit to learning and implementing best practices from other government agencies and the private sector to deliver customer service results that save time for the public and provide better customer service.

Senator Michael Bennet

1. Section 514 and 516 Technical Assistance Grants provide essential support to organizations that help farmworkers and very low-income rural families access safe, affordable housing. These grants fund the expertise needed to navigate complex housing development processes, from site identification to construction oversight. Without timely access to these technical assistance funds, rural housing projects face significant delays or may not move forward at all.

- a. What specific steps would you take as Under Secretary at USDA Rural Development to address the delays in awarding Section 514 and 516 Technical Assistance Grants, and what would your timeline be for processing pending applications?

I am unaware of the current roadblocks that delay awarding Technical Assistance Grants. If confirmed, I will ensure that unnecessary red tape that delay timelines for pending applications are removed. However, I do believe that a thorough review of all applications is needed to ensure program integrity.

- b. Given that these grants are critical for helping farmworkers and rural communities develop and maintain affordable housing, how will USDA ensure that future grant cycles are executed in a timely manner to prevent disruptions in technical assistance services?

If confirmed, I will ensure that unnecessary red tape is removed from future grant funding cycles.

2. Nonprofit organizations in Colorado that serve agricultural workers depend on predictable funding announcements to plan projects, secure matching funds, and maintain organizational capacity. However, the lack of clarity around when—or even if—funding announcements will be made has caused communities to lose interested and capable nonprofit partners who cannot sustain operations without reliable funding cycles. This uncertainty undermines both the nonprofits' ability to serve farmworkers and the technical assistance investments USDA has already made in building their capacity.

- a. Will you commit to establishing a predictable and transparent schedule for Section 514 and 516 Farm Labor Housing funding announcements?

Yes.

- b. What steps will you take to ensure that communities and organizations can plan effectively and maintain the capacity needed to serve agricultural workers?

If confirmed, I will ensure that unnecessary red tape is removed from future grant funding cycles.

- c. How will you address the current uncertainty that is causing experienced nonprofit partners to withdraw from this critical work?

If confirmed, I will commit to being fully transparent on funding timelines and announcements. I would be willing to meet with and work on programs with stakeholders who feel this uncertainty.

3. I have heard from my constituents in Colorado that there are families waiting for someone at USDA to close on their Section 502 loans for Section 523 eligible homes. The Section 523 Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance program enables non-profit technical assistance providers to assist families in rural communities to build equity and achieve homeownership. The 523 program has successfully helped thousands of rural families in Colorado purchase homes they otherwise could not afford. However, delays in loan closings from USDA prevent families from beginning construction and force nonprofit developers to carry financial burdens while waiting for federal approvals.

- a. What measures would you implement to expedite loan closings?

I am unaware of the current reasons why there are delays in loan closings. I will commit to making Rural Development programs more effective and efficient, if confirmed.

- b. What resources or staffing changes would you consider to address this bottleneck affecting self-help housing organizations and the families they serve?

I am unaware of the current resource or staffing levels that are creating a bottleneck. I will commit to looking into this issue and ensure these programs are more effective and efficient.

4. USDA's technical assistance partners in Colorado play a critical role in developing housing for agricultural workers and rural communities. This technical assistance is funded by USDA grants and is available to communities, non-profits, and housing authorities free of charge. However, since the beginning of this administration, these Colorado partners have not received appropriate levels of communication regarding program changes, availability of grant funding, application statuses, or policy updates. As the frontline implementers of federal rural development programs in the state, these organizations depend on clear, consistent communication from USDA to effectively plan projects, secure matching funds, and serve rural residents. This communication gap has hampered their ability to deliver critical housing services efficiently to Colorado's agricultural workers and rural families.

- a. How will you improve communication and coordination between USDA Rural Development and rural community partners, including nonprofit organizations, housing authorities, and local governments?

Rural Development needs to do a better job of promoting our programs and provide information to stakeholders in a better way. I will commit to working

with Rural Development State Directors and communication staff within Rural Development to make sure stakeholders are receiving timely and accurate data.

- b. What specific procedures will you put in place to ensure that rural stakeholders receive timely updates on program changes, funding availability, and application status?

I am unaware of the current roadblocks on why rural stakeholders are not receiving timely updates on program changes or funding availability. If confirmed, I commit to looking into these problems and ensuring our communication with stakeholders is improved.

- c. Will you commit to having an appropriate level of staff dedicated to maintaining consistent communication with rural development partners?

Yes.

Senator Cory Booker

- 1. There are tens of thousands of families in rural communities who do not have access to a wastewater system, meaning their homes are not connected to a sewer system or even have a septic tank. This often leaves families with no choice but to pipe waste directly into their backyards. These unsanitary conditions have led to children testing positive for neglected tropical diseases like hookworm that we didn't even think we still had in the United States. I have visited families in the Black Belt in Alabama that are living in these conditions, but the problem is not limited to that area. In the last Farm Bill, Congress expanded an existing Rural Development grant program to authorize funding that addresses this issue. But we need to be doing more, and we need to be acting with urgency. If you are confirmed, will you make providing assistance to these low-income rural families a priority?

Yes.

Senator Raphael Warnock

- 1. On February 11, 2025, President Trump signed another EO, entitled “Implementing the President’s ‘Department of Government Efficiency’ Workforce Optimization Initiative,” which directed the Department of Government Efficiency to reform the federal workforce and “promptly undertake preparations to initiate large-scale reductions in force.”¹

¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/implementing-the-presidents-department-of-government-efficiency-workforce-optimization-initiative/>

According to a July 2025 announcement, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has already lost at least 15,364 employees across its mission areas.²

- a. If confirmed, how will you ensure that the USDA Rural Development mission area has the necessary staffing and resources needed to meet the unique needs of rural America as the Administration continues its efforts to reform the federal workforce?

If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough workforce analysis on the unique staffing needs for Rural Development programs. I commit to ensuring rural communities across the nation have access to our programs with the current field-based structure.

2. From providing funding for public safety services to local food systems to health care facilities, USDA's Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program has been a critical tool to invest in rural communities.³ If confirmed, how do you plan to strengthen the Community Facilities Program to guarantee continued support for rural infrastructure and provide economic stability for rural communities?

I agree that the Community Facilities Program is a critical tool used by rural communities across the nation. While I am unaware of changes needed to strengthen the program, ensuring the long-term success of rural communities is my highest priority and I will commit to supporting the program.

3. Georgia's families need reliable internet access for their jobs, education, healthcare, and so much more. That is why I am committed to strengthening broadband access in every corner of the Peach state.

- a. If confirmed, how do you plan to utilize USDA's broadband programs to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban America to ensure rural communities have the connectivity they need to support rural economic growth, innovation, and healthcare?

As mentioned in my opening statement, ensuring rural communities have access to affordable, high-speed internet is a cornerstone of creating rural prosperity across the country. I am fully committed to focusing the agency's efforts on servicing existing customers so that projects can reach financial completion and begin construction.

- b. If confirmed, how do you envision USDA's broadband programs supplementing or complementing the Department of Commerce's broadband buildout under the

² <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/07/24/secretary-rollins-announces-usda-reorganization-restoring-departments-core-mission-supporting>

³ <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD)? How will you plan to fill any gaps left after BEAD deployment?

My understanding is that the USDA and Department of Commerce have a working relationship and MOU in place. It is important that we do not duplicate funding. If there are gaps after BEAD deployment, I will work to deploy all resources that Congress provides to fill those gaps.

4. Rural Development's water programs offer multiple financing options to help rural communities upgrade their clean water and wastewater infrastructure.⁴ If confirmed, how will you work to make these programs more accessible to rural communities, particularly those who may not have the resources to apply for these programs?

Making certain that all Rural Development programs are accessible to rural communities is a high priority of mine. I will make it a priority to better market our programs to mayors, city council members, and county commissioners so that there is a better awareness of our programs in rural communities of all sizes.

5. Rural communities in Georgia have been hit hard by recent natural disasters, including Hurricane Helene. If confirmed, you would oversee USDA's Rural Development Disaster Assistance Programs, which have helped homeowners, businesses, and families recover and rebuild after disaster strikes.
 - a. If confirmed, how will you bolster USDA's Disaster Assistance Programs to ensure Georgia's rural communities have access to the support they need following natural disasters?

Improving Disaster Recovery is one of the top priorities of President Trump and the Disaster Assistance Fund at Rural Development is a great tool that Congress has provided to assist rural communities, and it gives Rural Development the flexibility to use resources where rural communities most need the support. Since all disasters impact rural communities different and the resulting needs differ. I will ensure timely support to rural communities hit by disaster using the Disaster Assistance Fund.

- b. If confirmed, will you commit to expediting the delivery of USDA's Rural Disaster Assistance Program funding in the aftermath of a disaster?

Yes.

6. According to the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform, 20 out of 71 rural hospitals⁵ in Georgia are at risk of closure. As rural hospitals disproportionately rely on

⁴ <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs>

⁵ https://chqpr.org/downloads/Rural_Hospitals_at_Risk_of_Closing.pdf

Medicaid funding,⁶ which has been cut by \$1 trillion via One Big Beautiful Bill, health providers are also facing increased pressure to reduce critical services.⁷ This would have ripple effects on rural economic growth in Georgia, as rural hospitals attract small businesses and serve as major employers. Given the Medicaid cuts in H.R.1, how will you ensure that the USDA Rural Development program supports the financial viability of rural hospitals and economic growth in communities across rural Georgia?

Rural Development's Community Facilities Program offers affordable financing to rural hospitals. Access to healthcare is an important part of improving the quality of life in rural communities. I look forward to working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Rural Health Transformation Program which was given \$50 billion in the One Big Beautiful bill to ensure that rural communities continue to have affordable health care options.

7. If confirmed, you would oversee the Rural Utility Service's (RUS) Electric programs, which provide loans to rural electric cooperatives to help provide affordable and reliable electric service to rural families, farms, and businesses.⁸ As demand for electricity increases nationwide, electric cooperatives need certainty that RUS will continue to have the resources and flexibility to help them meet this increasing demand. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that RUS Electric programs continue to be flexible and driven by the needs of the borrower?

Yes.

Senator Peter Welch

1. The USDA Rural Development title supports the backbone of rural communities — everything from hospitals to childcare facilities. The Community Facilities Loan & Grant Programs are vital for providing rural hospitals with capital and sustaining the economic health of small towns. As Under Secretary, how do you plan to strengthen the Rural Development Program to guarantee continued support for rural infrastructure and provide economic stability for rural communities?

While I am unaware of the current needs to be able to answer how to strengthen the program, I do believe the Community Facilities Program is an essential program for rural hospitals. If confirmed, I will commit to supporting this program and ensuring this program remains in a strong position to help rural communities.

⁶ <https://gbpi.org/deficit-spending-regressive-revenue-and-rural-harm-how-federal-reconciliation-hurts-georgians/>

⁷ <https://www.wabc.org/nurses-union-warns-georgia-to-see-more-rural-healthcare-losses-under-one-big-beautiful-bill-cuts/>

⁸ <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/electric-programs>

2. Nearly half of all rural hospitals are operating in the red, and almost 195 have closed or ended inpatient services in the past 15 years. The USDA Technical Assistance Program for Rural Hospitals, run out of Rural Development, has been a lifeline — helping hospitals manage finances, prevent defaults on USDA loans, and stay open. Since 2018, 118 rural hospitals have participated, with each project identifying an average of \$1.7 million in financial opportunity at a cost of just \$52,000. Will you commit to maintaining and growing this program that's proven so effective in keeping rural hospitals afloat?

I will commit to assisting rural hospitals through the infrastructure and technical assistance programs available within the Rural Development Mission Area including the USDA Technical Assistance Program for Rural Hospitals.

3. Local officials in small towns, especially mayors and township trustees often find themselves staring down complicated applications for federal programs. Unlike big cities that can hire high-priced consultants, many of these local leaders are left to navigate these programs on their own.
 - a. What role do you believe USDA Rural Development plays in helping rural local governments navigate federal programs?

Rural Development's local field offices are often the first interaction that small towns have when there is a question on federal government programs. I believe it is essential for our staff to have the expertise of the federal government to best direct small towns to the resources available.

- b. How do you plan to use this role to advocate for rural towns among other federal agencies?

If confirmed, I will ensure that rural communities across the nation have an advocate for them at the federal level. I will work with federal government partners to make sure the concerns faced by rural communities are being heard.

Senator John Fetterman

1. The Rural Business-Cooperative Service administers, in close collaboration with the Agricultural Marketing Service, programs to support the development of local and regional food systems, including value-added producer grants, that support small to medium-sized producers. What is your vision for local and regional food systems, and do you think that RD can play a role in expanding this work?

Local and regional food systems vary greatly and are all unique in the market dynamics they face. Instead of supporting systems, which RD does not have the resources to do, I

believe RD should support individuals. Between the Value-Added Producer Grant and the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program, Rural Development can provide financing or grants in order to assist individuals who are looking to expand their businesses.

2. RD also houses the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI), a collaboration between Treasury and USDA to fund grocery stores and food businesses in food deserts with new market tax credits and other financial tools. What are your views on supporting the work of HFFI and how do you envision using other RD resources to ensure rural communities have access to healthy food?

If Congress provides the resources to Rural Development, I will commit to effectively running the program.

3. Many senators request and secure Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) through the annual appropriations process to send money directly to projects in their states. Most of the USDA funds I have sought and secured are through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities programs. Will you commit to obligating and supporting all CDS projects passed through Congress, regardless of party affiliation of the member who requested them or potential policy disagreements?

I am committed to following the laws Congress enacts as well as to applying the Administration's policies where that flexibility is authorized.

4. Supporting housing across the Commonwealth is one of my priorities, especially in rural communities, and I agree that the focus must be on creating viable, long-term solutions for USDA housing programs. However, in President Trump's FY2026 proposed budget, not only is the Rural Development budget cut by \$721 million, but programs, including Single Family Housing Direct Loans, Self-Help Housing Grants, Telecommunications Loans, and Rural Housing Vouchers, are eliminated. This proposed budget cut indicates that Rural Development, an intentionally distinct policy approach from other development programs, is not a priority for USDA RD. Would you continue to carry out the statutorily mandated Rural Development programming that millions of my constituents across the Commonwealth depend on?

I commit to carrying out the programs authorized and funded by Congress.

5. USDA's federal housing subsidies are crucial to rural Pennsylvania, including loans and loan guarantees to support homeownership, affordable housing development, and housing preservation in rural areas. Nearly 10,000 affordable rental units in Pennsylvania have been subsidized by USDA's Section 515 and 514 programs. According to HUD and USDA data, Pennsylvania is at risk of losing 815 USDA subsidized units by 2030, exacerbating the housing crisis. Do I have your commitment to work together to preserve these critical housing units in rural parts of the commonwealth?

Yes.

6. You and I both share the vision of a prosperous rural America. With that important goal come challenges that are unique to rural development, especially in parts of the Commonwealth where once-flourishing coal communities continue to struggle with reclamation efforts, generating sufficient tax revenues, mitigating blight, and building strong local economies. Many current and former mines are located in rural areas of the Commonwealth, imposing economic, health, and quality-of-life burdens that impact 43 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Will you work to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) to address abandoned mine lands (AML) and pursue redevelopment opportunities such as housing or arable land?

Redeveloping abandoned mines seems like a worthy goal that will increase rural communities' quality of life and be a key economic development driver. While I am unsure about formally establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Office, I will commit to working with them to make sure we are maximizing opportunities to redevelop these sites.

Senator Adam Schiff

1. Several California counties have a very particular set of circumstances with respect to USDA's Rural Development programs. Many counties in the state are unique because of the state's sheer landmass and thus counties' sheer landmass. As a result, many counties have total populations that make them ineligible for RD programs. Bolstering Rural Development programs' funding is one solution so more areas can access their benefits, and that's something I'd like to address through funding and appropriations mechanisms. In the meantime, will you and your team commit to working with Congress to explore practical solutions that allow California counties which are genuinely rural in character to benefit from USDA's rural programs?

The definitions of rural areas are defined in statute for most Rural Development programs, but where there is flexibility to the interpretation, I'd be happy to discuss alternatives.

2. Unfortunately, since the start of the current administration, there have been many accounts of Rural Development grants being held up or cut without any explanation from USDA to Congress or to its stakeholders. As just one example, the Administration has significantly cut back funding for the Rural Energy for America Program, preventing more farmers from adopting on-farm energy projects and posing as contradictory to the goal of energy independence. If confirmed, will you correct course and commit to distributing funding for Rural Development programs in a timely and complete manner?

I am committed to follow the law faithfully and responsibly. That said, any spending decisions must reflect the administration's priorities and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively.

3. If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress to address the lapse in authorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act?

I will assist Congress in providing technical assistance to any legislation that impacts Rural Development programs or rural communities in general.

4. The Rural Development Title of the Farm Bill supports the backbone of rural communities, everything from hospitals to childcare facilities. The Community Facilities Loan & Grant Programs are vital for providing rural hospitals with capital and sustaining the economic health of small towns. As Under Secretary, how will you strengthen this program to guarantee continued support for rural infrastructure and provide economic stability for rural communities?

The Community Facilities Program is a critical tool used by rural communities across the nation. While I am unaware of changes we need to make to strengthen the program, ensuring the long-term success of rural communities is my highest priority and I will commit to supporting the program.

5. Nearly half of all rural hospitals are operating in the red, and almost 195 have closed or ended inpatient services in the past 15 years. USDA's Technical Assistance Program for Rural Hospitals, run out of Rural Development, has been a lifeline — helping hospitals manage finances, prevent defaults on USDA loans, and stay open. Since 2018, 118 rural hospitals have participated, with each project identifying an average of \$1.7 million in financial opportunity at a cost of just \$52,000. Will you commit to maintaining and growing this program that's proven so effective in keeping rural hospitals afloat

I will commit to assisting rural hospitals through the infrastructure and technical assistance programs available within the Rural Development Mission Area including the USDA Technical Assistance Program for Rural Hospitals.

6. Broadband access is fundamental to telehealth, and programs like Community Connect, ReConnect, and Distance Learning & Telemedicine have been critical in closing coverage gaps. How do you plan to strengthen broadband access in rural areas and remove barriers that limit telemedicine expansion?

As mentioned in my opening statement, ensuring rural communities have access to affordable, high-speed internet is a cornerstone of creating rural prosperity across the country. I am fully committed to focusing the agency's efforts on servicing existing customers so that projects can reach financial completion and begin construction.

