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Smart Growth America opposes zeroing out funding for EPA smart growth programs

Interior Appropriations bill, on the House floor this week,
zeroes out the EPA's smart growth programs

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This week the United States House of Representatives will vote on the Fiscal Year 2012 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill that drastically reduces the effectiveness of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and zeroes out the EPA's Smart Growth programs.

Smart Growth America opposes this shortsighted budget cut because it will be detrimental to economic growth. Geoff Anderson, President and CEO of Smart Growth America said, "The EPA's smart growth programs offer critical assistance to communities across the country on a range of issues from supporting farmers and farmland to helping small towns revitalize their Main Streets and growing local businesses, all while protecting the country's environmental health."

The EPA's smart growth programs support local communities as they determine how to grow and develop in economically and environmentally sustainable ways. Helping America's communities develop more sustainably generates jobs, lowers housing and transportation costs and uses the country's limited public funds more wisely. Cutting the EPA's incredibly modest budget for smart growth programs is not a fiscally sound decision, nor will it create jobs or stimulate our economy - in fact it does the opposite.

The EPA's smart growth programs assist communities on a diversity of projects, like creating a range of housing and transportation choices for residents and workers, growing local economies, protecting the environment and public health, and improving local infrastructure. For example, the rural communities of Driggs and Victor in Idaho received a Smart Growth Implementation Assistance award to help identify steps to redevelop their downtown economies. Hundreds of other communities across the country have received similar assistance under the smart growth program, but these economically vital efforts would come to an end under the House legislation.

As President George W. Bush's former EPA Administrator Governor Christine Todd Whitman said, "Smart Growth is so important - it is critical to economic growth, the development of healthy communities, and the protection of our environment all at the same time."

Smart Growth America encourages Members of the House of Representatives to vote "NO" on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill this week.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For more information visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

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