



# Federal Legislative Update

SWREDA Annual Conference

May 3, 2023

Joe McKinney, NADO Executive Director

## BILLS THAT ARE MOVING IN CONGRESS THIS YEAR

- The Farm Bill

Nothing Else



# Questions?

**Joe McKinney**

**Executive Director, NADO**

**[jmckinney@nado.org](mailto:jmckinney@nado.org)**



The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a 501c4 membership association that represents the interests of regional community and economic development practitioners.

Established in 1967, NADO advocates for policies and programs that promote equitable community development, economic competitiveness, rural development, economic mobility, and quality of place.

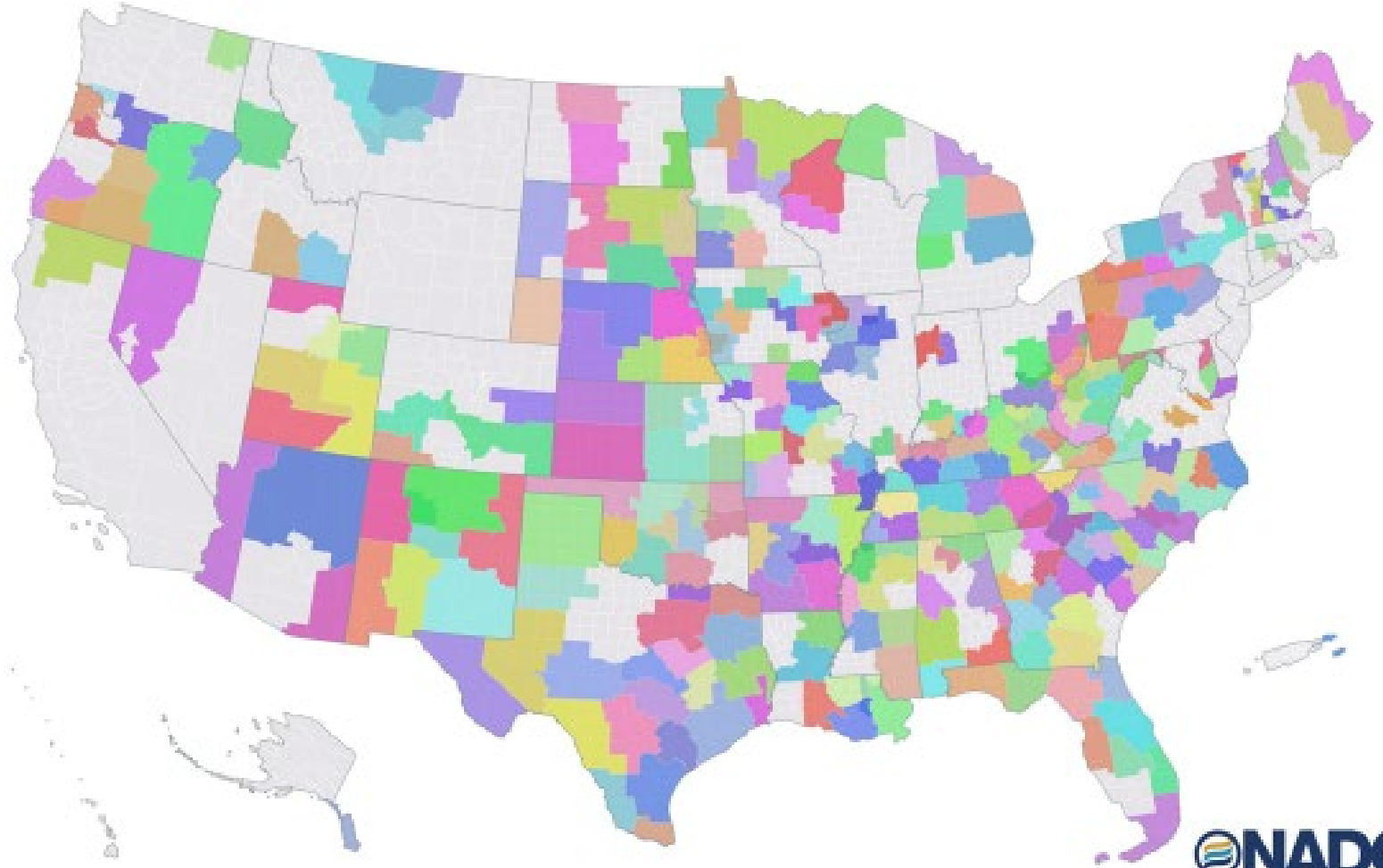
NADO represents a national network of more than 500 Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) across the country.



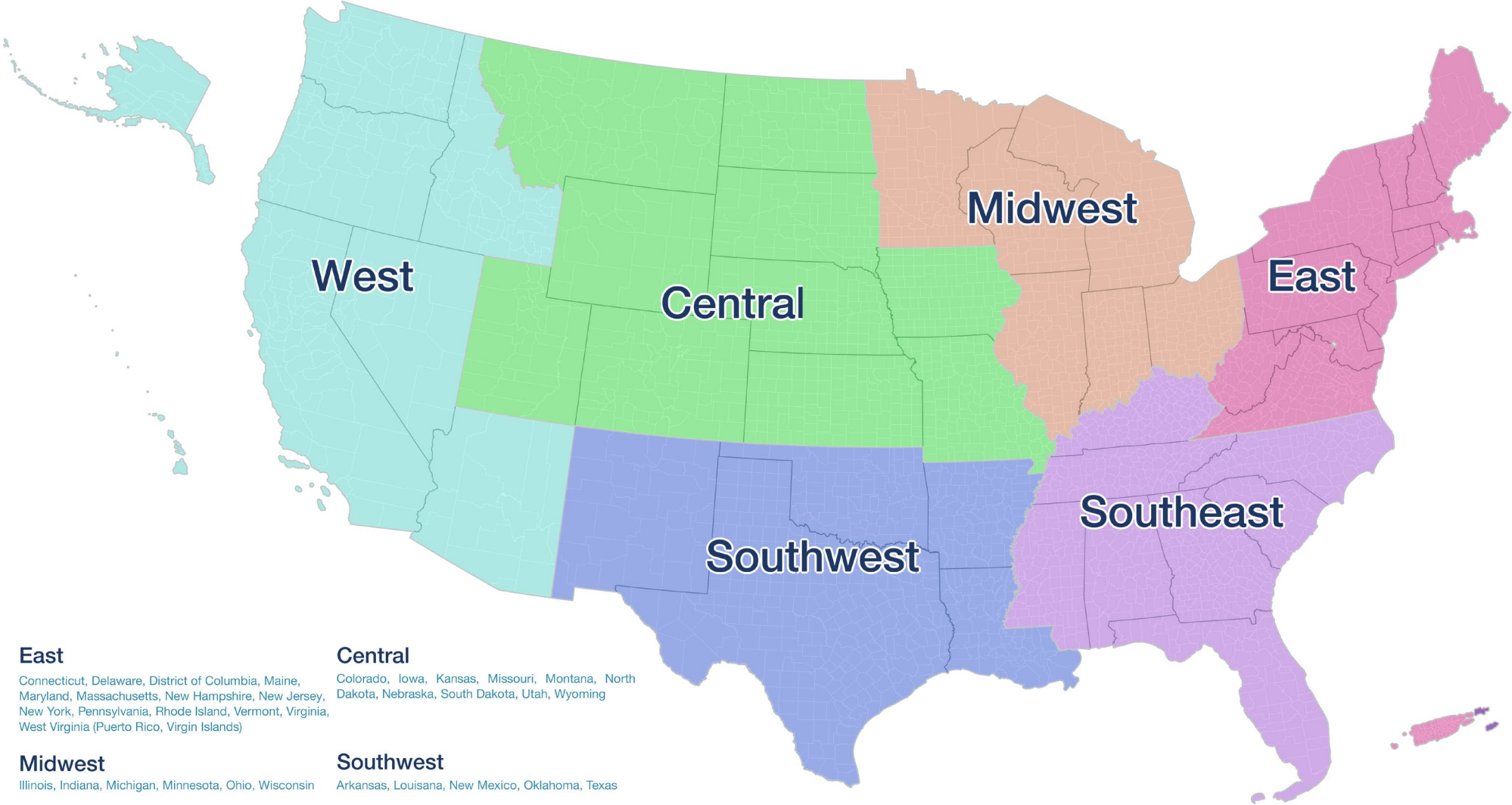
The NADO Research Foundation (NADO RF) is a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides technical assistance, education, research, and training to support and strengthen the national network of Regional Development Organizations (RDOs).

Established in 1988, the NADO RF provides thought leadership, conducts research, and produces publications focused on promising practices and innovative approaches to promote regional community development. NADO RF also works with RDOs and their partners to enhance their organizational and professional capacity.

# NADO Standard Members



# NADO Membership Chapter Regions



**East**

Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia (Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)

**Midwest**

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

**Southeast**

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee

**Central**

Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

**Southwest**

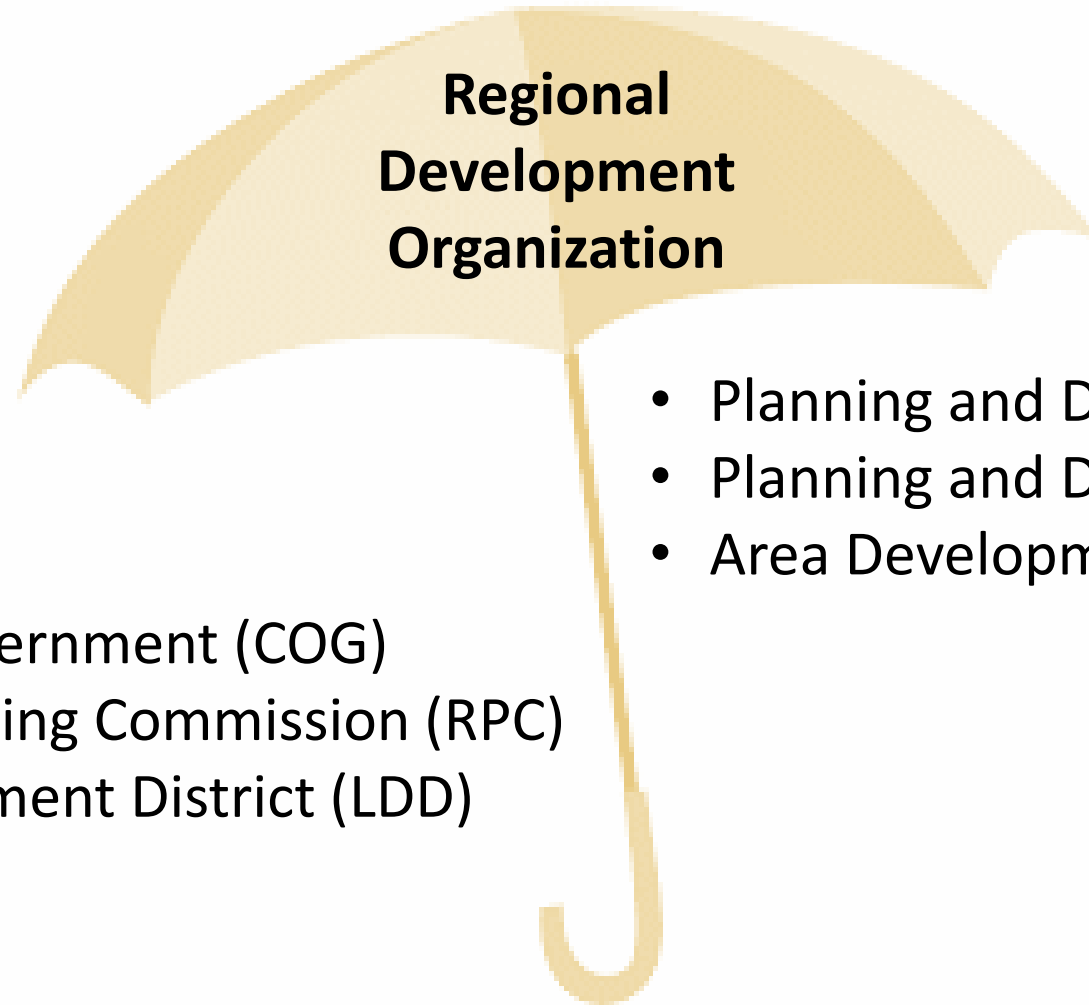
Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

**West**

Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Washington (Am. Samoa, North Am. Isl., Guam, Fed. St. of Micronesia, Rep. of Marshall Isl., Rep. of Palau)



# Regional Development Organization (RDO) is an “Umbrella Term” for:



- Council of Government (COG)
- Regional Planning Commission (RPC)
- Local Development District (LDD)

- Planning and Development District (PDD)
- Planning and Development Commission (PDC)
- Area Development District (ADD)

# Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) support and facilitate:

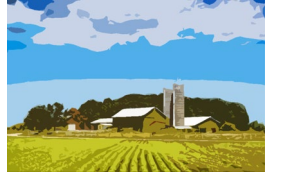
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**



**RURAL DEVELOPMENT**



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



**CONVENING LOCAL LEADERSHIP**



**PUBLIC HEALTH**



**GRANT WRITING**



**INFRASTRUCTURE**



**LENDING**



**URBAN AND RURAL PLANNING**



**HOUSING**



**BROADBAND**





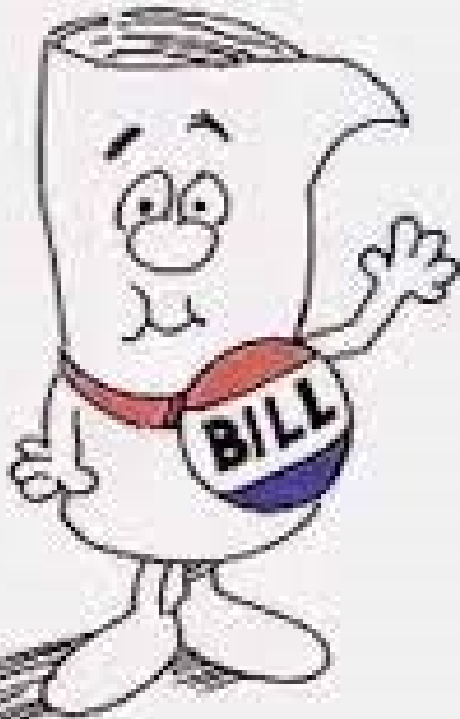
# What Do We Do?



# CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON TIKTOK



# AUTHORIZATION VERSUS APPROPRIATION



**AUTHORIZATION:**  
establishes federal programs

vs.

**APPROPRIATIONS:**  
provides funding for federal programs

# NADO ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

- **Reauthorize EDA**
  - EDA was last reauthorized in 2004 (19 years ago). Lapsed in 2008.
- **Increase funding and decrease match for EDDs**
  - Increase appropriated funding and decrease local match for EDA Partnership Planning Grants
- **Reauthorize the Farm Bill**
  - Within Farm Bill reauthorization, examine EDA reauthorization
  - Within Farm Bill reauthorization, reauthorize some Regional Commissions, including DRA, NBRC, SCRC, and SBRC
  - Within Farm Bill reauthorization, provide funding for the USDA Rural Partnership Program

# CHIPS ACT AUTHORIZED \$11 BILLION FOR EDA

- The [CHIPS Act](#) was signed into law in August 2022
- The bill contained \$52 billion to increase semiconductor manufacturing
- It also authorized a record **\$11 billion** for new programs to be administered through the EDA:
  - **\$10 billion** for the **Regional Technology Hubs Program**
  - **\$1 billion** for the **RECOMPETE Pilot Program**
- The CHIPS Act authorized – but did not appropriate – funding for these new EDA initiatives

# FY23 OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL PASSES

- In December 2022, Congressional leaders passed an [FY23 omnibus spending bill](#) to keep the government funded through the end of FY23
- Among many other provisions, the omnibus bill contained a total of \$1.6 billion in funding for EDA, including:
  - \$498 million for regular FY23 appropriations
  - \$500 million for disaster supplemental assistance
  - **\$618 million for new programs:**
    - \$459 million for Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs Program
    - \$159 million for the RECOMPETE pilot program

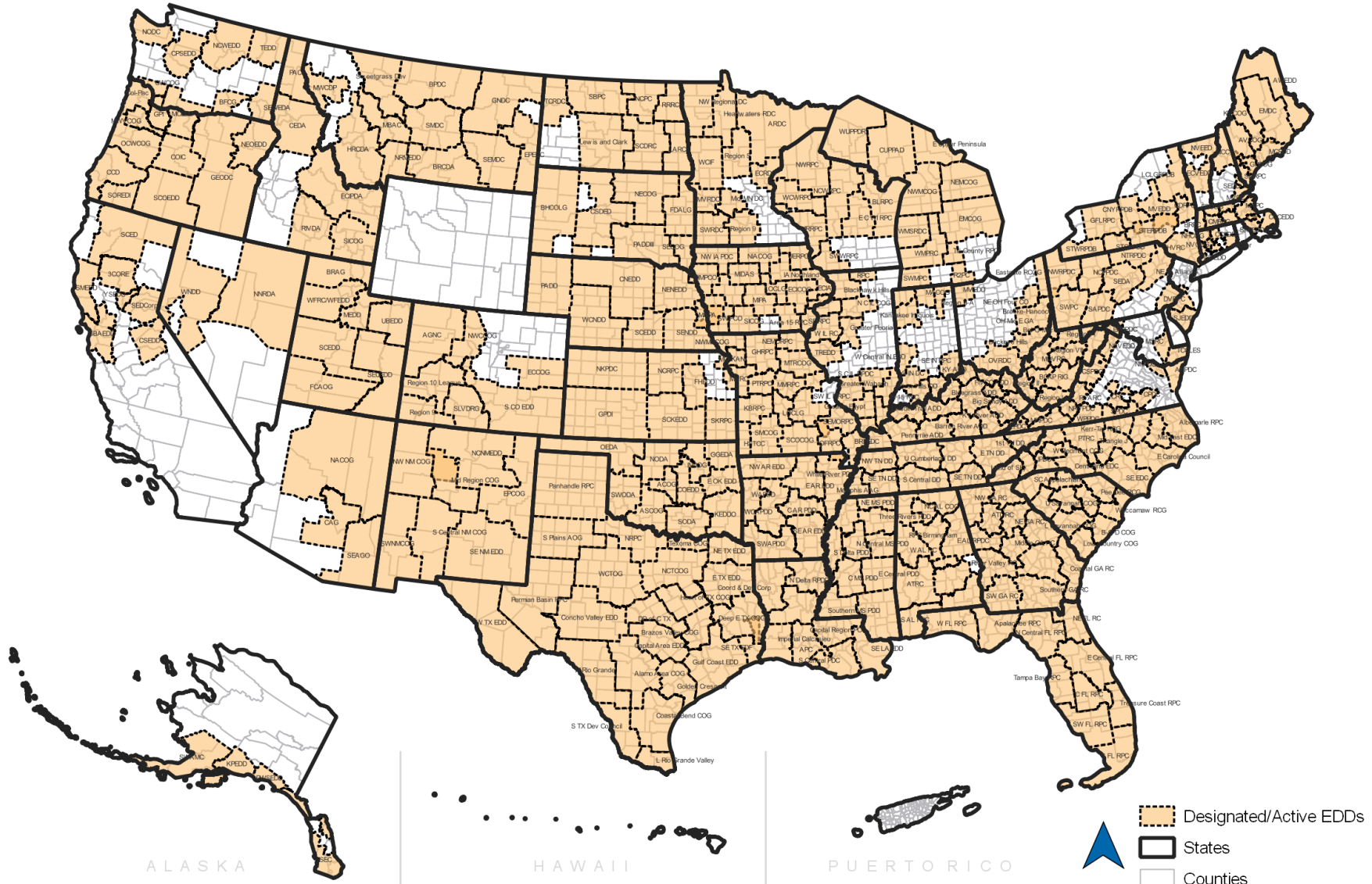
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION APPROPRIATIONS

Economic Development Administration	FY 2018 Final	FY 2019 Final	FY 2020 Final	FY 2021 Final	FY 2022 Final	FY 2023 Final
<b>EDA Total Appropriation</b>	\$301.5 million	\$304 million	\$333 million	\$346 million	\$373.5 million	\$498 million
<b>Total – Economic Development Assistance Program</b>	\$262.5 million	\$265 million	\$292.5 million	\$305.5 million	\$330 million	\$430 million
<b>EDA Partnership Planning Grants</b>	\$33 million	\$33 million	\$33 million	\$33.5 million	\$34.5 million	\$36 million

# Growth/Expansion of EDDs

By the Numbers:

- **400** designated/active EDDs
- **6** cross-state EDDs
- **85%** of counties covered by an EDD

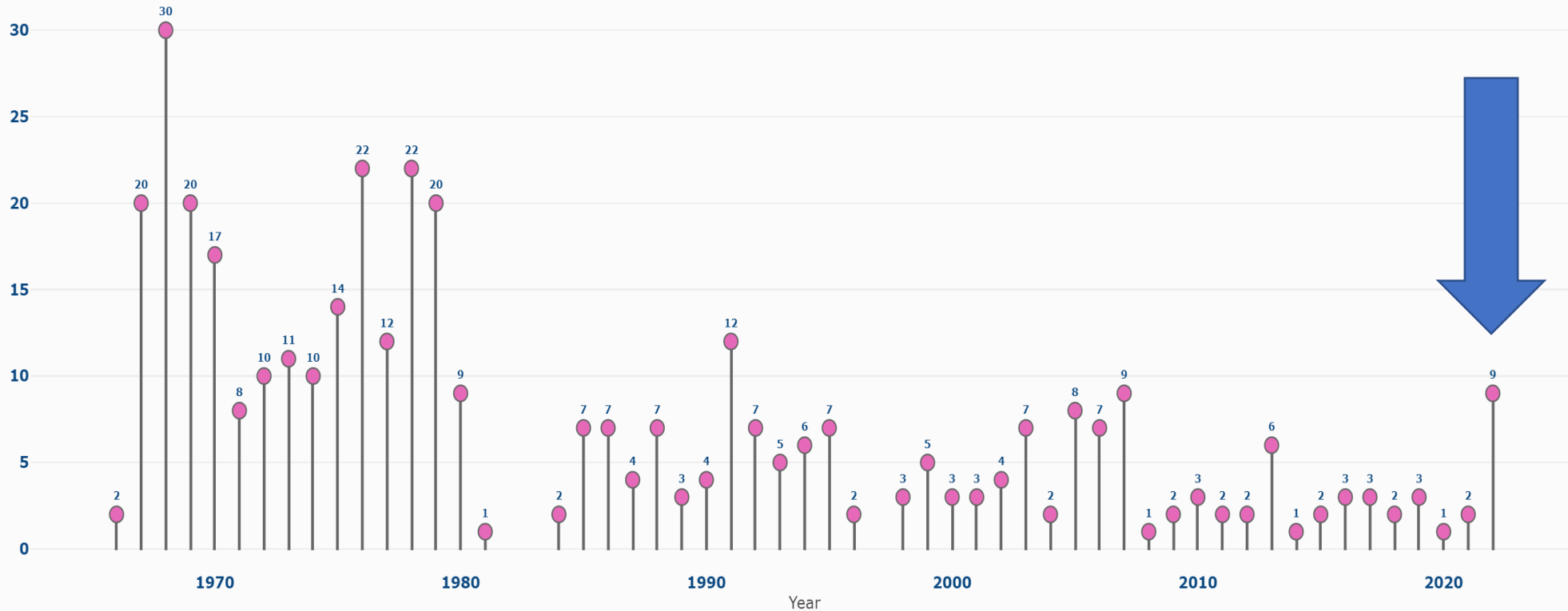




# Growth/Expansion of EDDs (contd.)

EDD Designation by Year

● Economic Development Districts



By the Numbers:

- **12**  
(approx.)  
“regions” in  
the EDD  
designation  
pipeline in  
2023



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# **Which members of Congress control decisions about EDA?**

## **And why?**

**There are 535 members of Congress in total.**

**But most decisions about EDA are made by only a handful of Congressional members.**



# Important Congressional Committees

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE (CJS)

Congressional subcommittee of jurisdiction for EDA appropriations (Senate). Has significant control over EDA funding.



Majority (Democrats)	Minority (Republicans)
Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) Chair	Jerry Moran (R-KS) Ranking Member
Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)	Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
Jack Reed (D-RI)	Susan Collins (R-ME)
Chris Coons (D-DE)	Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)
Brian Schatz (D-HI)	<b>John Kennedy (R-LA)</b>
Joe Manchin (D-WV)	Bill Haggerty (R-TN)
Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)	Katie Britt (R-AL)
Jeff Merkley (D-OR)	Deb Fischer (R-NE)
Gary Peters (D-MI)	[Susan Collins (R-ME) full committee ranking]
[Patty Murray (D-WA) full committee chair]	

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE (T&I) SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Congressional subcommittee of jurisdiction for EDA oversight (House). Has significant oversight control over EDA reauthorization.

## Majority (Republicans)

Scott Perry (R-PA) – Subcommittee Chair

Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R-OR) – Vice Chair

**Garret Graves (R-LA)**

Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR)

Chuck Edwards (R-NC)

Anthony D’Esposito (R-NY)

Derrick Van Orden (R-WI)

Mike Ezell (R-MS)

[Sam Graves (R-MO) – ex officio: full committee chair]



## Minority (Democrats)

Dina Titus (D-NV) – Ranking Member

Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)

Sharice Davids (D-KS)

**Troy Carter (D-LA)**

Grace Napolitano (D-CA)

John Garamendi (D-CA)

Jared Huffman (D-CA)

[Rick Larsen (D-WA) ex officio: full committee ranking]



# SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Congressional committee of jurisdiction for the Farm Bill (Senate). This committee is currently working on Farm Bill reauthorization.

Majority (Democrats)	Minority (Republicans)
Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) – Chairwoman	John Boozman (R-AR) – Ranking Member
Sherrod Brown (D-OH)	Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)	John Hoeven (R-ND)
Michael Bennet (D-CO)	Joni Ernst (R-IA)
Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY)	Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS)
Tina Smith (D-MN)	Roger Marshall (R-KS)
Richard Durbin (D-IL)	Tommy Tuberville (R-AL)
Cory Booker (D-NJ)	Mike Braun (R-IN)
Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM)	Charles Grassley (R-IA)
Ralph Warnock (D-GA)	John Thune (R-SD)
Peter Welch (D-VT)	Deb Fischer (R-NE)
John Fetterman (D-PA)	

Debbie Stabenow



John Boozman



# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMODITY MARKETS, DIGITAL ASSETS, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Congressional subcommittee of jurisdiction for the Farm Bill (House) This committee is currently working on Farm Bill reauthorization.

Majority (Republicans)	Minority (Democrats)
Dusty Johnson (SD-At Large) – Subcommittee Chair	Yadira Caraveo (D-CO) – Ranking Member
<b>Frank Lucas (R-OK)</b>	Don Davis (D-NC)
Austin Scott (R-GA)	Jim Costa (D-CA)
David Rouzer (R-NC)	Andrea Salinas (D-OR)
Don Bacon (R-NE)	Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-WA)
Tracey Mann (R-KS)	Nikki Budzinski (D-IL)
John Rose (R-TN)	Jonathan Jackson (D-IL)
Marc Molinaro (R-NY)	<b>Greg Casar (D-TX)</b>
Nick Langworthy (R-NY)	<b>Jasmine Crockett (D-TX)</b>
Zach Nunn (R-IA)	Angie Craig (D-MN)
Lori Chavez-Dermer (R-OR)	[David Scott (D-GA) –ex officio: full committee ranking]
Max Miller (R-OH)	
[Glenn Thompson (R-PA) –ex officio: full committee chair]	

Dusty Johnson



Glenn Thompson



Chair of the House Agriculture Committee

Yadira Caraveo



David Scott



Ranking Member of the House Agriculture Committee

# NADO ADVOCACY MATERIALS

NADO advocacy materials to help support meetings with members of Congress are available here: <https://www.nado.org/advocacy-resources/>



## Increase EDA Partnership Planning Funding in FY 2024 Appropriations

Although appropriations for EDA's economic development assistance programs have increased by **62%** over the last five years, funds for local **EDA Partnership Planning Grants** have increased by **only 9%** within the same timeframe, placing an increasingly heavy administrative burden on the same stakeholders that EDA is designed to support. The American Rescue Plan Act also provided a record \$3 billion for EDA but did not provide any additional funding for administrative support for Economic Development Districts (EDDs).

Economic Development Administration (Budget figures are in millions)	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 NADO Request
EDA Overall Appropriation	\$304	\$333	\$346	\$373.5	\$498	
Total – Economic Development Assistance Programs	\$265	\$292.5	\$305.5	\$330	\$430	
Partnership Planning	\$33	\$33	\$33.5	\$34.5	\$36	\$55 million

**Action needed: Congress should increase FY24 Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriations funding for EDA Partnership Planning to \$55 million.**





## Program Areas



**Regional  
Development  
Resources**



**Transportation &  
Infrastructure**



**Organizational  
Capacity &  
Professional  
Development**



**Awards**

# NADO Research Foundation

## Resources and Publications

2023

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) provides advocacy, education, research, and training for the nation's regional planning and development organizations (RDOs). The association and its members promote regional strategies, partnerships, and solutions to strengthen the economic competitiveness and quality of life across America's local communities. The NADO Research Foundation (NADO RF) provides professional development, training, research, and peer networking services for NADO members and other practitioners. Visit the NADO Research Foundation Resource Center, <https://www.nado.org/resource-center>, to search for training and educational materials across a wider range of categories and topic areas.



### Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP)

In October 2022 with the support of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), NADO RF embarked on a five-year effort to build and nurture the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP). Through the EDD CoP, NADO RF and its partners will provide tools, resources, and networking opportunities for EDD staff to strengthen organizational capacity and better guide regions towards becoming more competitive, resilient, and equitable. Resources, case studies, webinar recordings, upcoming events, and more are available at <https://www.nado.org/eddcop>.

### EDDs in Action Case Study Series

Economic Development Districts' support for local communities is broad and comprehensive, yet this work often takes place out of the spotlight. However, EDDs' contributions to regional economic development are often crucial to ensuring projects get done and services are delivered, simultaneously improving the quality of life for residents and strengthening the local business community. Available at <https://www.nado.org/edds-in-action>.



### Peer Knowledge Exchange Series

This series helps readers learn from RDO Executive Directors as they share lessons learned and strategies for addressing the many challenges they've faced. Members of NADO's Executive Committee and current and retired Executive Directors are profiled in a series of *Letters to My Younger Self*, *Reflections from Retired Executive Directors*, and *Executive Director Profiles*. Learn more at <https://www.nado.org/peerknowledge>.



### Incorporating Equity at a Regional Level: Inspiration & Actions

Economic Development Districts (EDDs) and RDOs around the U.S. are incorporating principles of diversity, equity and inclusion into their work. This report is the result of interviews with staff at ten organizations, representing just a few of the 400+ EDDs and RDOs. They provide insight into why and how these organizations are doing this important work. Available at <https://www.nado.org/incorporating-equity-at-a-regional-level-inspiration-actions>.

### Economic Development Writing and Lecture Series

Ten issue briefs and short video lectures address practical elements of doing economic development and emerging topics in small metro and rural regions. This series will interest EDDs and other practitioners, funders, elected officials, or students. Available at <https://www.cedscentral.com/issue-briefs.html>.



### Rural Transportation Technical Assistance Reports

The NADO Research Foundation and our project partners at the Small Urban, Rural, and Tribal Center on Mobility (a consortium led by the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University) have conducted technical assistance related to rural transportation and rural development in several communities. Resources are available on a variety of mobility and community and economic development issues, ranging from transit development or expansion to bicycle and pedestrian access. This program is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development. Resources are available at <https://ruraltransportation.org/rural-transportation-technical-assistance-reports>.

### Rural and Regional Transportation Planning and Environmental Linkages Issue Briefs

Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) include a flexible set of practices that establish coordination early in the transportation planning process. PEL can help to accelerate delivery and avoid complications in the development and implementation of transportation projects and plans. These two issue briefs describe the relationships that regional and rural organizations establish, how interagency relationships are connected to transportation and environment planning policies and federal requirements, and opportunities for the public to participate and shape decision-making related to transportation projects and identifying their potential impacts. Available at <https://ruraltransportation.org/considering-environment-issue-briefs>.



### Rural and Small Metropolitan Intelligent Transportation Systems Case Studies

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) projects include a wide variety of applications where communication technologies are connected to transportation systems. Rural and small metropolitan areas can see benefits to transportation safety, mobility, and operations when using these technologies. But they may experience challenges due to long distances, smaller populations, telecommunications connectivity issues, and funding for transportation improvements. The report presents case studies highlighting the work of state, regional, local, and nonprofit agencies using ITS in rural, small metropolitan, and suburban or exurban places around the United States. Available at <https://ruraltransportation.org/rural-its-case-studies>.

New resources are posted regularly on [www.NADO.org](http://www.NADO.org) and our other websites.

## Rural Transportation.org

NADO Research Foundation maintains an online clearinghouse of resources related to rural and small metropolitan transportation issues and regional planning. Find models of state and regional planning partnerships, research, and information curated specifically for transportation and planning professionals.

Available at [www.RuralTransportation.org](http://www.RuralTransportation.org).

## CEDS CENTRAL

CEDS Central is home to materials developed by the NADO Research Foundation and funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The resources include case studies, best practices, reports, videos, webinars, and presentation materials on all aspects of planning, developing, and implementing the CEDS.

Available at [www.CEDSCentral.com](http://www.CEDSCentral.com).

# STRONGER DISTRICTS STRONGER REGIONS

A Professional Development Program for EDD Staff



## PEER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SERIES

### LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF: KEVIN BYRD

Dear younger self,

In 2009 you applied for a job you were beyond passionate about, spent countless hours preparing for the interview, and poured your heart and soul into the selection process. Well, it is safe to say, it is all worth it.

Many of the assumptions you made about the organization's ability to adapt for the members' needs while becoming more relevant were true. Engaging the staff team in a way that allowed them to own pieces of the organization have helped grow people professionally while attracting top-notch talent that is driving the region forward. With the board's support the organization is able to navigate some challenging headwinds on projects, implement a name change, update the logo, and take on several new lines of service. Getting the Executive Committee and full Board of Directors involved consistently on a monthly basis will be keys to agency impact in the region.

The one thing that will keep you awake at night are not problems with projects, but rather when a team member has an issue. No doubt, these are the things that are best on your mind at night, the ones that wake you up when you're sleeping lightly at 3:00am, and the first thing on your mind when the alarm goes off each morning. Trust your instincts in that you approach each situation genuinely with an open mind.

When thinking about your day and your week, be intentional about where you are investing your time because it is a limited resource in this position. Investing time internally and externally is critical to the overall success of the agency, but not losing focus on work-life balance. The position can become all-consuming and there are limitless things you can do, so be strategic and try to remain focused.

Be sure to avail yourself to all the training and networking you can through NAPCO, SERDI and NADO. The industry professionals that comprise these organizations will help you climb the steep learning curve faster and navigate pathways when the going gets tough. These organizations will offer some unforgettable life experiences you won't want to miss!

Oh, and the people you'll meet along the way from all over the country in these organizations will contribute to your life in ways you didn't think possible. Hardly a week goes by without getting a message from a colleague that fits in the category of supportive, funny, or absurdly funny. These moments of levity and fellowship will provide strength when it is needed most.

It remains true, every day is different, and the challenge is beyond gratifying. Just remember, regional wins often take a long time to develop and when they do, lots of people get to benefit. So, be patient, hire great people and above all else have fun!

Kevin Byrd, Executive Director,  
New River Valley Regional Commission,  
Radford, VA



## PEER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SERIES

### REFLECTIONS FROM RETIRED EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

#### FUSS COWLEY

What is one thing that you really wished you knew when you first became an EDD executive director that you know by the time you retired?

The difference between common sense and politics. As a new executive director I came on board with the attitude that I was going to change the world at least God's country had had. I soon found out that the common sense ideas and views I had did not necessarily coincide with those I worked with. I remember sitting down with the Chair of my Board and having a heart-to-heart discussion about this quandary. He explained that it wasn't that my ideas and concepts were wrong, but that they were not political. I quickly learned and understood that to be successful, common sense ideas needed to be turned into politically motivated solutions driven by elected officials and not by me! By the end of my career, as an executive director, I realized that the understanding and respect for political correctness, which I had grown, was my greatest asset and reason for success.

Do you have 1 piece of advice you could share with someone newly started as an executive director, in training to become one, or even contemplating it as a career goal?

The one piece of advice I would give to someone wanted as an executive director would be to always remember their place in the political spectrum. Their job is to help the members of their Board to look good and stay out of trouble. This means a career of "organizing matter", giving up ownership of personal successful relatives to those who they serve, taking accountability for a failed endeavor that is not their fault, always dealing in facts – not feelings, and being at the back and not at elected officials.

Director of the Six County Economic Development District (SCEDD) under the umbrella of the Six County Association of Governments (SCAOG), Central Unit from 1988-1997. Executive Director of the SCAGCOEDD from 1997-2016.

#### JOE BRANNAN

What is one thing that you really wished you knew when you first became an EDD executive director that you know by the time you retired?

I did not enter the Executive Director position from an EDD staff position, though I had worked for a small single purpose (only economic development) EDD early in my career for a couple of years. I hit early on that so much of what I faced as a new EDD was challenges that were pertinent ONLY to the organization that I was directing. Next to no one locally spoke "Economic", understood our funding opportunities and challenges, or understood program challenges presented by being "in the middle" between funding agencies and our member entities.

Among the best things I learned was that there was very little of what I was doing that hadn't been done (either correctly or incorrectly) by another regional development organization before me. I found a huge base of knowledge among my peers in response to "did you ever?" questions. I just had to get up and admit that I might be well advised to listen to those who had gone before me. That said, some approaches that I heard were absolutely perfect for my local needs, some of the

<https://www.nado.org/peerknowledge/>



## PEER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SERIES

### MONIQUE BOULET

The Acadia Regional Development District (ARDD) led its Economic Development District (EDD) status in 2013, after reorganization of funding. With oversight of the US-SEA Acadia Regional Office, ARDD went bankrupt to receive the challenges caused by the previous Executive Director's misuse of funds and the SEA planning funds were given to the South-Central Planning & Development Commission (SCPD), headed by Kevin DeLonge, to help get the District reestablished. Monique Boulet was brought on to work with Kevin, and her salary was paid with SEA Planning grant funds to reestablish the District, which is now known as the Acadia Planning Commission (APC).

When reestablishing the district, there were a lot of critical decisions and meetings held to build connections with communities, and to determine what organizations in the APC would and could look like. A needs assessment was conducted with support from the Delta Regional Authority. Prior to the reorganization of county governments in Louisiana created with Monique and Kevin and together built a Board from 2014-2016. Mutual ideas had been negotiated, amounting to 10 cents per capita, and in 2016, local councils passed a joint resolution to join APC. Monique expressed that "there were challenges meeting the partnership and connections, and ensuring that our areas had a voice, which was crucial for the success of the District."

Many meetings were held, hosted in space provided by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and trust was built over time with local stakeholders and councils. The local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) became part of APC in 2015, which allowed for more collaboration and great integration of their work with the Commission. Monique spoke of the challenges of integrating staff from another organization and the need to value their experiences, while also encouraging growth and development. For example, Monique worked with the MPO staff planners to broaden their scope of work to include rural areas of the region.

Monique spoke highly of the EDA Acadia region and staff, who assisted her by asking questions like "how can we help you? how can we help develop you out," and emphasized how



**Acadia Planning Commission**  
Chief Executive Officer, 2014 - present  
Acadia Regional Administration, RFD/CA, 2014-2016

**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**

- Focus on deliverables and community impact to stay relevant
- Take the time to build connections and visit member communities
- Don't "need to meet", ensure meetings provide value
- A District can prepare and facilitate meetings but shouldn't make decisions before everyone comes to the table
- Use your local university as a partner and asset
- Understand your District's accounting and HR systems



## PEER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SERIES

### LAURA LEWIS MARCHINO

When Laura Lewis Marchino was hired as a Program Manager in 2008, she was under the direct supervision of Region II's Executive Director, Ed Moran. From the onset, he encouraged her to pursue professional development training and become engaged in national economic development organizations. His commitment to her professional growth and development included Region II paying for and encouraging her training as she successfully became a Certified Economic Development (CED) through the International Economic Development Council's (IEDC) Certified Economic Development program.

In 2007, Laura was elected to the NADO Board of Directors, a position she continues to hold today. Being part of NADO was great for making connections to local regions with similar programs, which was especially important when I became the Executive Director. Laura mentioned during a recent conversation about her transition to Executive Director, Laura spoke of the importance of always trying to meet someone new at each NADO event she attended, as well as at other organizations' events.

Laura was named the Executive Director in 2016, after nearly a decade of mentoring and support from Ed. When Ed retired, he was intending to stay on as a consultant and Laura was relying on having access to his experience and expertise. Unfortunately, Ed passed away soon after leaving Region II, which was a personal and professional challenge for Laura and the organization's staff. "I'd say it was about three years before I felt I had fully learned the position, while understanding the responsibilities of each position and department at Region II," reflected Laura.

Since becoming the Executive Director, funding to the organization has increased from \$0 to \$6 million and the staff has grown from five to twelve. Presently, Region II was the only area of Colorado with a separate EDD and Council of Governments. The EDD is advising the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG) that serves the same geographic area and the EDD will work to continue to align their priorities and programming.



**Region II Economic Development District of SW Colorado**  
Executive Director, 2016 - present  
Program Manager, 2008 - 2016

**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**

- Take the time to build trust with your Board Members and Community Leaders
- Always highlight the impact of your District to stakeholders
- Focus on your personal and professional development; there will always be competing priorities
- Take succession plans to the organization and individual
- The job of the Executive Director is to make everyone else successful

# Upcoming Events



## 4th National Summit on Rural Road Safety

September 12-14, 2023  
Oklahoma City



## 2023 NADO Annual Training Conference

November 6-9, 2023  
Cleveland, OH

# RANDOM THOUGHTS

- Importance of a solution to raising the debt ceiling
- The President as a Negotiator
- 2024 Elections
- Rapid Change in Economic Development Leadership Nationwide

# RAPID CHANGE TERRIFIES NADO

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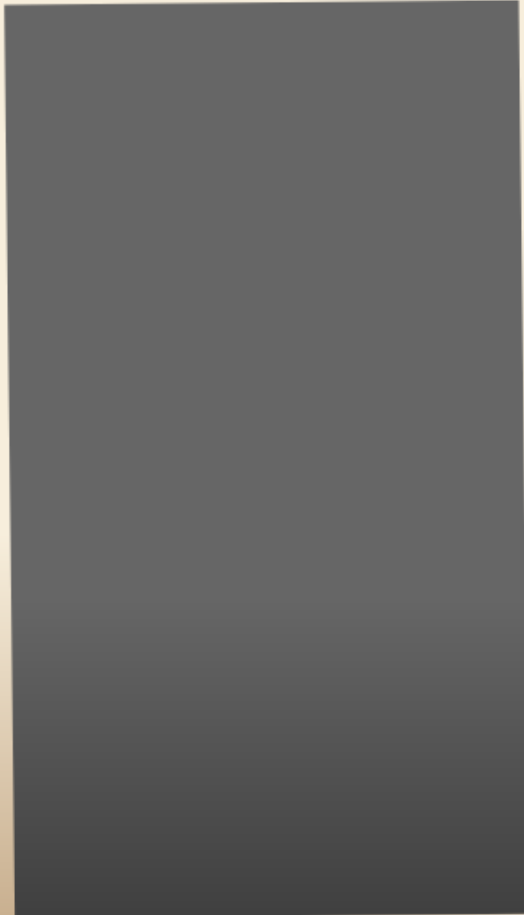


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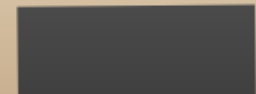
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# Questions?

**Joe McKinney**

**Executive Director, NADO**

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