



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 12, 2010

[www.house.gov/shuster](http://www.house.gov/shuster)

Contact: Jeff Urbanchuk, Press Secretary  
(202) 225-2431  
(202) 593-1040 cell  
(202) 225-2486 fax  
[jg.urbanchuk@mail.house.gov](mailto:jg.urbanchuk@mail.house.gov)

## **Shuster Congratulates ABCD Corporation on Critical USDA Loans to Micro-Enterprises in Blair County**

*Washington, DC* – **Congressman Bill Shuster** is pleased to announce that the Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation has been loaned a total of \$800,000 through two USDA programs, the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) and the Rural Micro-entrepreneurial Assistance Program (RMAP) that will be used to assist small entrepreneurs and expand existing and emerging businesses in Blair County.

“The announcement of this funding is welcome news to many in the Blair County business community because it means ABCD can now target micro-enterprises that are in need of seed capital and low-dollar loans that are critical to business investment, hiring and the overall sustainability of their enterprises,” said **Congressman Bill Shuster**.

“This approval represents the fourth round of IRP funding that ABCD Corp. has received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture”, said **Martin J. Marasco, President and CEO of ABCD Corp.** “ABCD Corp. has been able to leverage our previous USDA IRP funds with other private and public sector financing to help companies throughout Blair County. By working in collaboration with the US Department of Agriculture, ABCD Corp. now has nearly \$3 million in IRP funds available for county businesses.”

Under the newly created Rural Micro-entrepreneurial Assistance (RMAP) Program, ABCD Corp. will now have access to a pool of funds dedicated to helping new and existing rural micro-entrepreneurs and microenterprises (10 or less employees) in obtaining loans up to \$50,000.

“Typically, smaller firms like those that meet the RMAP criteria are the very types of businesses most in need of financing,” added **Marasco**. “The RMAP program can be one more tool available to help established and emerging firms grow and prosper here in Blair County.”

Marasco also expressed his appreciation for USDA officials in their guidance throughout the application process for both sources of USDA Funding as he stated, “On behalf of everyone at ABCD Corp. I want to thank USDA officials for their assistance; especially

Loan Specialist Susan O'Donnell who has worked extensively with ABCD Corp. on each of the IRP approvals we have secured to date.”

Marasco also acknowledged Congressman Shuster and his staff for their continued support and commitment to advancing ABCD Corp.'s economic development initiatives and his assistance in securing the USDA's funding approval.

###