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## Rural Opioid Abuse Prevention Act

The Rural Opioid Abuse Prevention Act provides resources to help rural communities combat opioid overdoses.

- The legislation codifies a DOJ program, the [Rural Responses to the Opioid Epidemic Initiative](#), which provides grants to rural communities help them combat opioid overdoses. The goal of the program is to reduce opioid overdose deaths in high-risk rural communities and provide alternatives to incarceration.
- This program is currently funded by [DOJ's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program](#) (COSSAP), an umbrella program that funds a range of opioid abuse programs.
  - The bill does not cost additional funds. Rather, it enshrines the program in law, which ensures the program's continuity and that funds from COSSAP will continue to be dedicated specifically to rural communities.
- The Rural Responses to the Opioid Epidemic Program currently supports 21 sites in rural communities, helping them to: (1) undertake a six-month planning phase, during which the site will identify current gaps in prevention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals who interact with the criminal justice system within the target rural service area, and (2) undertake an 18-month implementation phase, during which the site will undertake new efforts to address the opioid crisis in that community.
  - Once a site completes both phases, it essentially graduates out of the program, and DOJ is able to accept another site into the program.
- Applicants eligible to participate in the program include (1) local governments, and (2) non-profit and for-profit organizations with a documented history of providing services to rural communities or regions highly impacted by substance use disorder.