

5/01/2009 Brownback, Roberts, and Moran Announce Grant Extension for Greensburg Rebuilding Process

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Department of Labor Extends Grant to Fill Local Positions

GREENSBURG - Congressman Jerry Moran, along with Senators Sam Brownback and Pat Roberts today announced the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) extended the time period for the City of Greensburg, Kansas, to continue to use funds already appropriated through a DOL grant that will employ critical public sector employees to continue the rebuilding of Greensburg after the tornados and severe storms on May 4, 2007. The grant, scheduled to expire on Monday, May 14, will fund professional service positions through December 26, 2009.

"I am pleased to see that DOL has agreed to this grant extension that will provide employment and benefits for many individuals in Greensburg and the surrounding areas," Moran said. "The use of this grant will ensure that administrative, economic development and emergency management services continue to be available six months after the grant was set to expire. Funding these positions will be vital to the county's long-term recovery effort."

"It is great news that the Department of Labor is invested in Greensburg's continued efforts to rebuild and recover from its devastating tornado," Senator Brownback said. "The extension granted by the Labor Department will ensure that the Greensburg community has access to the funds it needs to rebuild."

"Although the Senate passed our bill to extend the time limit on the funds, I am pleased the Administration has determined that it can instead address the problem without legislation. This is great news for Greensburg as we approach the two year mark since the tornado. These funds are critical to continue the significant recovery efforts still underway in the town," Senator Roberts said. "Due to the complete devastation and the small, rural nature of the community, public sector employees are especially essential to continue the progress we see today."

In December 2007, Congressman Moran and Senators Brownback and Roberts were successful in passing legislation to free up funds from the Department of Labor to be used in Greensburg and the surrounding area. Greensburg was awarded the grant to hire workers for local jobs, but congressional approval was needed to fix a provision to allow for the hiring of civil servants.

The following positions will be fully funded by the recent DOL grant extension:

Kiowa County staff positions include:

- County Administrator/Emergency Management Director and Deputy Emergency Management Director: primary contacts for County buildings, facilities and services impacted by the tornado.
- Finance Recovery Director: primary contact for FEMA, USDA, insurance and other funds coming to the County for rebuilding
- Project Logistics (two positions): Contracting, oversight, and record keeping of County rebuilding projects
- Housing Coordinator: information and liaison between existing resources and citizens
- Assistant County Attorney (part-time): Assists County Attorney with increased workload as a result of tornado

City of Greensburg staff, 19 positions are tasked with assisting the recovery:

- Assistant City Administrator/Recovery Coordinator: assists City administrator and City Council during the recovery.
- Recovery Financial Manager: Assists the City Treasurer with financial record keeping associated with the recovery
- Community Development Official: responsible for planning, zoning, development policies, building codes and permits

- Community Planner: works for Com. Dev. Official with zoning and comprehensive plan.
- Inspector (2 positions): inspect zoning, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, fire and other codes and regulations.
- Assistant Utilities Director: support to the Utilities Director and City Management
- Economic Development Director: liaison to Kiowa County Business Group, City Council, and County Commissioners.
- Community Development Assistant: support/clerical for building permits, zoning applications, etc.
- Public Works (4 positions): construction/reconstruction of City utilities, streets, parks and sanitation infrastructure.
- Firefighters (4 positions): Staff County-wide fire/EMS service
- Administrative Assistant (2 positions)

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