

GOV. JUSTICE ANNOUNCES \$3.43 MILLION IN FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING FOR BROADBAND AND WASTEWATER UPGRADES IN MULTIPLE MCDOWELL COUNTY COMMUNITIES

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WELCH, WV (WOAY) - Gov. Jim Justice announced today that West Virginia has secured \$3.43 million in federal grant funding that will be used for multiple broadband and wastewater infrastructure improvement projects in several McDowell County communities.

"This is one of our biggest announcements yet," Gov. Justice said. "To get millions and millions of dollars for our people in this area of McDowell County, it's just incredible.

"Our rural areas have been neglected for too long, mainly because we never had any money before," Gov. Justice said. "But since I walked in the door, we've been able to do things like getting you these grants that are going to make everyday life here in southern West Virginia better in so many ways it's unbelievable."

These funds are all part of the \$13.1 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)



dollars that have been dedicated for various water, wastewater and broadband improvement projects throughout West Virginia this year by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The \$3.43 million that will be distributed within McDowell County is the combined total of three separate grants awarded in the county.

Of that total, \$1.5 million has been awarded to the Town of Bradshaw to improve wastewater sanitation services for 109 homes, 18 businesses and two school facilities. This project also includes work rehabilitating the existing town wastewater treatment plant.

Another \$1.3 million grant has been awarded to the Town of Iaeger. Currently, there is no municipal sanitary service system in the area, but this funding will allow the town to install 12,000 linear feet of wastewater lines, 4 pumping stations and thousands of other pieces of equipment necessary to provide sanitary wastewater service to comply with Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Standards. This project will benefit 112 homes, several businesses, and an elementary school.

The remaining \$630,000 has been awarded in a grant to the McDowell County Commission to improve high-speed internet connectivity in the Bull Creek and Isaban areas of the county. This project includes the installation of about 20 miles of aerial fiber lines that will improve internet speeds and reliability to over 300 households and several businesses. The project will also facilitate improve connectivity for telemedicine platforms, as there are no medical facilities in the project area.

"We understand that it's so, so important that we all have connectivity for so many reasons," Gov. Justice said. "You can run a powerhouse of a business from your basement, but you have to be connected."

In total, these three grants will benefit over 500 homes and thousands of people across McDowell County.

"We've still got a long way to go, but this is a big start," Gov. Justice said. "And I'm going to keep on fighting for southern West Virginians and make sure that your voices are heard and that you have every opportunity imaginable."

Gov. Justice will announce more of West Virginia's 19 total CDBG awardees over the coming weeks.