

Untitled document

**Legislation unanimously passes Energy and Commerce Committee late yesterday**

April 6, 2011

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) introduced legislation earlier this week, which unanimously passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee late yesterday, that will protect taxpayers by terminating and rescinding American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for broadband projects that have been found to be wasteful, fraudulent, or insufficient. The rescinded funds would be returned to the U.S. Treasury. Current law does not stipulate that funding has to be rescinded if a project fails to meet the requirements of its grant or loan agreement.

Bass' legislation (H.R. 1343) passed the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology unanimously last week and now awaits a vote in the full House of Representatives.

Bass said:

"The legislation that passed yesterday is a taxpayer protection measure. According to the Inspectors General for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Rural Utilities Service, many of these stimulus-funded broadband programs face real risks of waste, fraud, and insufficient performance, and under current law, there is not a clear mechanism for taxpayers to get their hard-earned dollars back from these projects. Our efforts should be centered on ensuring taxpayer dollars are not spent on fraudulent or duplicative programs and on maximizing the potential for economic growth and job creation.

"I'm glad the Committee passed this bill unanimously yesterday, and I urge the House Leadership to bring this bill to the floor without delay."

-- 30 --