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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Angela Reynolds, Rural Development Manager 573-785-9679, extension 4

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS \$861,000 TO WAYNE COUNTY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION

In a Mock Check Ceremony, U.S. Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson joined Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, in presenting \$861,000 in loan and grant funds to the Wayne County Improvement Corporation. These funds are to be used to construct a new 9,120 square foot building to house the Wayne County Justice Center. This project will serve the residents of Wayne County.



Front row, left to right: US Representative Jo Ann Emerson, Eastern Dist. Commissioner. Bill Hovis, Western Dist. Commissioner. Bud Snyder, Pres. Commissioner. Brian Polk. Back row, left to right: Dr. Greg Batson, Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, President of Wayne County Improvement Corp. Eric Fuchs, Rick Billingsley, Sheriff Phillip Burden, Rural Development Manager Angela Reynolds, Rural Development State Director Greg Branum, Rural Development Area Director Pam Anglin, Shirley Hovis, and Rural Development Specialist Phyllis Minner.

"These loan and grant funds will play a prominent role in the construction of a new Justice Center in Wayne County, bringing

critical jobs and support for our law enforcement community. In rural America, we face many unique challenges, including the need to provide for public safety over large geographic areas. The new facility in Wayne County will help us achieve our goals of preserving our quality of life and providing strong law enforcement services to the entire area. I am glad USDA Rural Development has identified this project as a worthwhile use of resources, and I thank our U.S. Senators, Kit Bond and Jim Talent, for their unwavering support," said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson

"Funding important projects like this by Rural Development mirrors President Bush's initiatives for rural America and Rural Development's commitment to the future of rural communities," Branum said. He added, "Appreciation is also extended to U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent and U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents of providing essential services to rural Missourians. In addition, Branum expressed sincere appreciate for the efforts of the Wayne County Commission and the Ozark Foothills Planning Commission. Without their support and involvement a new justice center in Wayne County would not have occurred."

Wayne County Presiding Commissioner Brian Polk said, "I am very excited about receiving the Community Facility Grant for a new Justice Center for Wayne County. The new facility will eliminate several safety and economic problems within the county. The safety concerns will be dealt with by providing a safer working environment for the Sheriff's department employees and all citizens in the surrounding area. I would like to thank everyone involved with this project especially Dr. Greg

Batson and Felicity Brady of the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission for preparing our grant applications and processing all the necessary paperwork and I am very grateful to Rural Development for providing the grant and funding options that make projects like this possible in counties that don't have unlimited tax bases and large revenues. This project will benefit the citizens of Wayne County for many years to come and I look forward to starting construction," added Polk

Eastern District Commissioner Bill Hovis said, "The approval of this grant and loan from Rural Development has made possible a much needed Justice Center for Wayne County. Without this assistance the facility probably would not have been possible. I appreciate the assistance from Senator Talent and Congresswoman Emerson and their staff, also Greg Branum and everyone from Rural Development. Again thanks from Wayne County. This time government worked," added Hovis.

"USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo> or by contacting Angela Reynolds, Rural Development Manager, at the Poplar Bluff Local Office of USDA Rural Development at 4327 Hwy. 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO. 63901, or by calling 573-785-9679 (extension 4).

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