



NASCOE

Legislative Update

Legislative Update on USDA Equity Commission Proceedings

November 28, 2022

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In January 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order designed to advance racial equity and support underserved communities through the federal government. This order committed to establishing an Equity Commission to help close the racial wealth gap and address longstanding inequities in agriculture. In March of 2021, American Rescue Plan legislation directed USDA to create this Equity Commission and provide necessary funding.

The Agriculture Subcommittee was formed concurrently with the Equity Commission and will report back to the Equity Commission to provide recommendations on issues of concern related to agriculture.

The newly formed Commission's appointed members and its agriculture subcommittee held their first meeting on February 28, 2022, with subsequent meetings held May 10-11 and September 21-22, 2022. The Commission's goal is to submit a final report of recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture by 2023. Some of the anticipated recommendations may require Congressional Action and some, if determined practical and sound, are expected to be promptly implemented by USDA.

NASCOE has been following these proceedings and feel it is necessary to inform our membership about some of the conversations that have resulted during these meetings. There are many hours of discussions available on the Equity Commission website.

<https://www.usda.gov/equity-commission>

Commission members discuss their thoughts concerning the County Committee (COC) system at various times throughout their meetings, but a key timeframe begins at the **2:42:30 mark** during the final day of meetings on September 22nd. This discussion proceeds for roughly 40 minutes and we feel that it is imperative that membership be informed about the information shared during this specific timeframe. Please access a recording of this meeting here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jHyx3vTEsk>

We ask that all members take time to listen to the proceedings and utilize the Commission's website to learn more. NASCOE will continue to closely monitor the Commission's actions and provide a follow up News Release soon.



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