



Bills Creating Rural Export Research Center Introduced in Both Houses of Congress by ND and MN Delegations

On June 5th, Senators Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and John Hoeven of North Dakota introduced the [Promoting Rural Exports Act of 2018](#) into the US Senate. The bill would create a research center for rural companies interested in customized market research to begin exporting to foreign markets. Rural companies are often hesitant to begin exporting because of the large upfront cost, in addition to not knowing where to start marketing their product and finding reliable foreign partners. “I’ve met with businesses across Minnesota and seen firsthand how important exporting is to their success—businesses in rural areas shouldn’t be denied those opportunities just because of their zip codes,” Klobuchar said. “Our bipartisan Promoting Rural Exports Act will boost exports and advance innovation in our rural communities so they can continue to grow.” Once introduced into the Senate, the bill was referred to the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Senator Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota has also signed on as a cosponsor.

Representatives Kevin Cramer of North Dakota and Collin Peterson of Minnesota introduced a [companion bill in the US House of Representatives](#) and echoed Klobuchar and Hoeven’s interest in bringing quality data tools to rural American firms. “This legislation provides rural businesses with the resources they need to be successful in export markets,” said Cramer. “Our bill helps alleviate the barriers our constituents experience when exporting goods.” Peterson cited the importance of creating jobs and how the tools provided by the Research Center will contribute to market growth for rural businesses.

According to the bill, the research center must be located in a nonmetropolitan area, provide customized market research services to help rural businesses find new target markets, conduct strategic planning and export services for rural businesses, and requires data relating to its success to be available on its website. The bill has been endorsed by close to twenty North Dakota and Minnesota businesses with experience using the customized market research methods pioneered by the U.S. Commercial Service office in Fargo, North Dakota. The North Dakota District Export Council has been heavily involved in advocating for the program. If passed, the Rural Research Center will be under the direction of the US Commercial Service.



Sen. Amy Klobuchar



Sen. John Hoeven



Sen. Heidi Heitkamp

*ND and MN
Delegation
Members Who
Supported the
Promoting Rural
Exports Act*



Rep. Kevin Cramer



Rep. Collin Peterson