

U.S. Rep. Kind: Kind, Booker, Scott, Kelly introduce bipartisan, bicameral bill improving opportunity zones

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Washington, DC – Today, **Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)**, **Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)**, **Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC)**, and **Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA)** introduced a bipartisan, bicameral bill improving Opportunity Zones, a program that creates an incentive for individuals who reinvest unrealized capital gains into high-impact projects in rural and underserved communities. As communities across the country have begun to see investments take hold, Kind, Booker, Scott, and Kelly are proposing a series of improvements to the program.

Additionally, Senators Mark Warner (D-VA), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Todd Young (R-IN) and Representatives Terri Sewell (D-AL-07), Dan Kildee (D-MI-05), and Jackie Walorski (R-IN-02) co-sponsored the legislation, called the *Opportunity Zones Transparency, Extension, and Improvement Act*.

“Opportunity Zones are bringing capital to communities in rural and underserved areas and investing in our local economies,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “In order to ensure this program is used as it was intended, we need strong transparency and accountability measures in place. I’m proud to help introduce this bipartisan, bicameral legislation to maximize the potential of Opportunity Zones, improve safeguards, and drive economic growth across the country.”

“The Opportunity Zone incentive has the potential to unleash much-needed economic growth in high poverty communities across the country – communities that investors too often overlook. But without robust guardrails in place, the incentive could be undermined or abused by those who aren’t committed to uplifting rural and urban communities across the country,” said **Senator Booker**. “I

am proud to introduce this legislation with Senator Scott to help restore the original promise of opportunity zones by steering private capital to reinvest in underserved communities that have been historically left behind and working to level the economic playing field.”

“The Opportunity Zone program represents the good that leaders can do for communities across the country when we work together toward common sense solutions,” said **Senator Scott**. “Independent reporting shows that investments in Opportunity Zones are making a huge impact across the country, with billions of dollars flowing into impoverished neighborhoods. I am glad to build on that success with this legislation to make the program stronger, so that we can ensure this incentive is benefitting the Americans who need it most.”

“Opportunity Zones have brought new life to America’s Main Streets and communities that have not seen this type of investment in decades,” **Representative Kelly** said. “Nationally, one of the best-known Opportunity Zones is in my congressional district in Erie, Pennsylvania. Due to great community partners and private investment, local leaders have been able to leverage the revitalization of downtown Erie. Our new legislation will help ensure that Opportunity Zones can continue to revitalize communities like Erie for years and decades to come along with giving taxpayer’s the peace of mind that the government is working for them locally.”

“The original Opportunity Zones program, while well intentioned, needs improvements in order to truly help the communities I represent. Our bipartisan bill, supported by Republicans and Democrats, will enhance and reform the Opportunity Zone program to ensure that Michigan communities have access to the economic development tools they need to thrive. I am pleased this legislation includes my Rust to Revitalization Act, which will help invest in older, industrial areas like Buick City in my hometown of Flint,” said **Congressman Dan Kildee**.

“Investing in the workforce and uplifting communities are proven to deliver clear results for Americans in Indiana and across the country. Created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the Opportunity Zones program already has demonstrated great success in Indiana by revitalizing underserved communities and incentivizing investment in Hoosier workers and families,” said **Rep. Walorski**. “I’m grateful to help introduce the bipartisan Opportunity Zones Transparency, Extension, and Improvement Act which makes improvements to an already-successful program and takes important steps to ensure the program will be effective and transparent in the

years to come.”

“Bringing resources and opportunity to every corner of Alabama’s 7th Congressional District continues to be one of my top priorities in Congress. That is why I have fought so hard to make Opportunity Zone legislation work for areas like the Black Belt, where communities will most benefit from increased economic investment,” said **Rep. Terri Sewell**.

“Locally, Opportunity Zones have brought in new investment and helped increase critically-needed local housing supply. This bipartisan legislation will strengthen and improve the Opportunity Zones program so its benefits can be more fully realized and we thank Rep. Kind for championing this important initiative,” said **Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce Vice President Governmental Affairs Scott Rogers**.

This bipartisan legislation would improve Opportunity Zones by:

- **Reinstating and expanding the reporting requirements** that were present in the Investing in Opportunity Act (IIOA), the original stand-alone legislation that created Opportunity Zones, but were stripped out in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act due to procedural rules.
- **Ending Opportunity Zones that are not impoverished.** While the vast majority of Opportunity Zones are truly impoverished areas, the legislation would sunset a small percentage of Opportunity Zone designations for tracts with a median family income at or above 130 percent of the national median family income. States would be able to designate a new tract in high-need communities for every tract sunsetted under this provision.
- **Creating pathways for smaller-dollar impact investments** by allowing Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs) to be organized as a “fund of funds” that may invest in other QOFs, providing smaller communities and projects with the financing they need.
- **Providing operating support and technical assistance to high-poverty and underserved communities through a State and Community Dynamism Fund.** Flexible grants will help states drive private and public capital to underserved businesses and communities.
- **Extending the tax incentive for two years in order to facilitate continued investment.** It took the Treasury Department nearly two years to issue final regulations governing Opportunity Zones, during which time many investors and stakeholders stayed on the sidelines awaiting clear rules for the

policy. Extending the policy by an equal amount of time will help investors and communities fully use the tool as Congress intended — which is especially important now with the economy in recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read the bipartisan bill [here](#).