



## Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Rep. Shuler Votes to Restore and Increase PILT Funding for WNC Counties**

*Washington, D.C.* – Yesterday afternoon Representative Heath Shuler supported legislation that will restore vital payments to Western North Carolina counties with federally-owned land in the House Natural Resources Committee.

The Public Land Communities Transition Act, H.R. 3058, provides four years of payments to counties and schools by fully funding the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. H.R. 3058 also creates a new “transition payment” to counties with National Forest land. Many of these counties had previously received stable payments through the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, which has now expired.

Due to the Public Land Communities Transition Act, North Carolina's 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District will begin receiving nearly twice as much federal PILT funding – an increase from the current \$2,404,076 to \$4,524,944.

“Western North Carolina is blessed to have thousands of acres of National Park and National Forest land. It drives our economy through tourism and provides us with wonderful recreation opportunities. Having this federal land also means that our counties have a smaller base for property taxes to pay for schools and other important services. That is why I am so pleased to have been able to help pass this legislation out of committee to assist our local governments,” said Rep. Shuler.

Previously, the Bush Administration had proposed selling over 300,000 acres of National Forest land across the nation to fund payments to counties. Rep. Shuler strongly objected to those efforts.

“We must work hard to provide our local governments with the resources they need, while also protecting our national lands and heritage.”

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