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**HUD AWARDS ACCION TEXAS \$800,000 TO BOOST JOB GROWTH  
AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ALONG U.S. – MEXICO BORDER**

Grants part of White House effort to increase access to capital in underserved rural areas

**SAN ANTONIO** – Accion Texas Inc. – the nation’s largest microlender – has been awarded \$800,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of a \$2 million grant package to stimulate job growth and business opportunities in chronically underserved rural areas along the U.S. - Mexico border.

Accion Texas received the grant – provided through HUD’s Border Community Capital Initiative (“Border Initiative”) – in partnership with Accion New Mexico · Arizona · Colorado. Although both are members of the Accion U.S. Network, it’s the first time that the two Accion organizations have partnered to apply for a grant. Accion Texas will focus its lending efforts in five border counties in South Texas: Hidalgo, Cameron, Webb, Starr, and El Paso, with 49 colonias targeted in those counties. Accion New Mexico will focus on 38 targeted colonias in Arizona and New Mexico.

Border Initiative grantees expect to leverage an additional \$5.5 million from other public and private sources to increase investment in “colonias,” or rural communities in the U.S.- Mexico border region where there are few opportunities for businesses to access private capital, and minimal conditions related to housing and other infrastructure.

HUD’s Border Initiative is a partnership among three federal agencies – HUD, the Department of the Treasury’s Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) and the Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD). The grant funding announced today is part of the White House Rural Council. The Council was launched by President Obama in 2012 to help create jobs and expand opportunities in rural communities.

The Border Initiative focuses on improving colonias communities and creating asset-building opportunities for residents by helping local financial institutions raise capital, to lend and invest in their communities. Strengthening local community development lenders and investors also will widen the channels through which larger private institutions and federal agencies can reach potential home owners, renters, business owners, facilities operators and service providers who need their support.



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HUD, USDA-RD and the CDFI Fund all have identified lack of capacity among organizations serving the colonias and similar persistent poverty communities as a limiting factor in the effectiveness of federal programs. Inconsistent availability of limited public funding in any one region or community plays a role in this, because organizations specializing in affordable housing, small business support and community facilities cannot sustain themselves and grow. All of the agencies recognize that the targeted border communities and populations receive insufficient services because they lack organizations with the capacity to effectively respond to community needs. Conversely, higher-capacity organizations working along the border consistently cite lack of access to capital as a major barrier to expansion.

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#### **About Accion Texas Inc.**

Established in 1994 in San Antonio, Accion Texas Inc.'s financial and business-support services help entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, stabilize and increase their incomes, create employment and contribute to the economic revitalization of their communities.

Accion Texas manages the nation's largest microloan portfolio and is committed to providing capital to entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources. Since its inception, Accion has made more than 14,000 loans totaling nearly \$160 million. Accion operates in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. For more information, visit [www.acciontexas.org](http://www.acciontexas.org).

#### **About Accion New Mexico · Arizona · Colorado**

Founded in 1994, Accion New Mexico · Arizona · Colorado has served entrepreneurs in 333 communities, financing the start-up and/or growth of 4,293 businesses through 6,716 loans totaling more than \$51.1 million. These businesses report creating or sustaining an estimated 7,383 jobs in the three-state region. The organization's loans range from \$200 to \$300,000.

#### **About HUD**

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes: utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and <http://espanol.hud.gov>. You can also follow HUD on twitter [@HUDnews](https://twitter.com/HUDnews), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HUD](http://www.facebook.com/HUD), or sign up for news alerts on [HUD's Email List](#).