

the EPA with other Federal, State, and local programs to restore and protect the Anacostia River and promote community risk reduction. EPA is to coordinate its efforts with other Federal partners, particularly the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to addressing a major local environmental concern, this model program will provide a framework for urban communities around the Nation to work towards sustainable community redevelopment and to meet national environmental goals.

Under the new program, EPA shall allocate a total of \$750,000 per year over the next 4 fiscal years to implement the provisions of the model program. EPA may authorize no less than \$400,000 per year in the form of grants, which are to be matched on a 75-25 basis with other Federal funds and State, local, and private contributions.

The Anacostia River has been my top environmental priority since coming to Congress in 1991. I realize that restoring a river requires a long-term commitment. I am committed to whatever time and effort it takes to restore the river that runs through our neighborhoods. I am particularly pleased that all of the regional Members of Congress whose districts encompass the Anacostia River, Representatives CONNIE MORELLA, STENY HOYER, and ALBERT WYNN, recognize the importance of this effort and have become original cosponsors of this legislation.

WELCOME DR. STEPHEN CHEN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 1997

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to join others in welcoming Dr. Stephen Chen to Washington, DC. He has recently assumed the position of Taiwan's top representative in Washington, replacing D. Jason Hu.

Representative Chen comes to Washington with impeccable diplomatic credentials. Prior to this appointment, he served as Deputy Secretary-General to President Lee Teng-hui of the Republic of China [ROC]. Dr. Chen is a distinguished career diplomat. He served at the Embassy of the ROC in Manila in 1953, and has held a number of diplomatic posts throughout the world. In the sixties, he was stationed in Brazil and in the early seventies he held various consular posts in the United States.

Representative Chen is married to Madam Rose Te Chen, has two sons and one daughter. I am told he speaks several languages fluently, and I know that he speaks and understands the English language and its nuances and idioms quite well.

Representative Chen will undoubtedly have a challenging job in Washington, but I believe he will strive hard to strengthen the good relations between Washington and Taipei.

I extend to Dr. Chen and his family the very best wishes for a productive and worthwhile experience during their Washington tenure.

RURAL INDIANA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, November 5, 1997, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

RURAL INDIANA COMMUNITIES

The Ninth Congressional District consists of 20 full counties and part of one other. It takes over 6 hours to drive from southwestern Spencer County to eastern Union County. With the exception of the counties in the Louisville metropolitan area, principally Clark and Floyd, it is among the most rural congressional districts in the country.

The Ninth District is made up of plowed fields, rolling hills, celebrated woodlands, and small to moderate-sized communities. Few people traverse the highways and byways of southern Indiana more frequently than I have in recent years. I feel quite at home among the farms, along the back roads, as well in the bustling towns. I get immense pleasure from the beauty of rural southern Indiana, and especially enjoy the variety of court house squares. Yet despite the attractiveness of the area, many worry about the future of our rural communities.

RURAL ECONOMIES

Some of our rural Indiana counties are growing rapidly, often with robust growth associated with recreation, new or expanding industries, tourism, and retirement. Other counties are not growing at all and are having difficulty generating new jobs. They confront the basic problem of keeping their young people at home. The people of southern Indiana are generally less affluent than the rest of the State. We have several of the poorest counties in the State.

Rural America tends to be comparatively poor. It has great natural resources but that does not show up in the personal income of rural Americans. No rural district today in the U.S. House of Representatives is ranked in the top 100 in terms of median family income; most are in the bottom 100.

APPROACH TO ISSUES

The population of southern Indiana tends to be white, older, and moderate to conservative, especially on the social issues. There is always a strong emphasis on values, particularly self-reliance, and a deep skepticism by rural Hoosiers of life in the urban areas. They tend to view urban areas as the center of crime and drug activity, and not a very good place to raise a family. They have very strong ties to family, church, and community, and a strong desire to strive for a better life. The quality of life in rural Indiana compares favorably with many other areas of the country, and rural Hoosiers seem to be aware of it. As one of them said to me, "I really do not know where I would rather live."

People in southern Indiana are fiscally prudent and want their representatives to be in the mainstream on economic and social issues. They are independent and often split their ballots. This unpredictability is one reason why public officials pay particular attention to rural Indiana.

At the same time it is clear that over the years political clout nationwide has shifted to the suburbs. Merely one in five Americans today lives in small towns or the countryside. Only 57 districts out of 435 in the U.S. House of Representatives could be considered rural—13 percent of the House. Most of these

rural districts are in the South or in the Midwest.

Public officials, of course, love to identify themselves with smalltown America. President Eisenhower identified with Abilene Kansas; Jimmy Carter with Plains Georgia; Ronald Reagan with Dixon Illinois; and President Clinton with a place called Hope.

JOBS

There is great economic diversity in southern Indiana. On the one hand there are energetic, growing rural areas, and on the other there are rural communities that are isolated and struggling. Some of them seem locked in time and there is little movement in or out of the communities. Even a modest change like the addition of a new restaurant or shopping area can cause excitement in the community.

The common concern in the rural areas of Indiana, in my experience, is jobs. Many have confronted chronically high rates of unemployment and underemployment and there is constant demand for more high-paying jobs. Rural Hoosiers worry about the disappearance of family farms, layoffs in some manufacturing plants, and the challenges facing schools and cultural institutions like the libraries.

Not nearly as many people in these rural communities live on farms as one might think. Most of the small communities have a light industry or two to supply the jobs, and manufacturing is the largest source of employment in southern Indiana. The counties tend to have a higher percentage of people over age 65, often more than double the national average.

In the future, the viability of rural Indiana may very well depend on the number of people who are fed up with the pace and stress of living in the city. Many of them will move out of the urban areas into the rural areas. Computers may have an impact on rural Indiana, increasing the ability of people to live where they want to, not where they have to. Also, as the number of retired Americans increases, rural Indiana could very well experience a comeback.

I have always found Hoosiers who live in urban areas wanting to support and help the rural communities of our state. There is, of course, a special appeal to communities which are attached closely to the land and which have a social cohesion and solid anchors of home and church. But it is also true that Indiana will prosper much more if the farm and small factory towns can do well. If they do not do well they will drag the rest of the state down.

CONCLUSION

Small towns have always played a very large part in Indiana's view of itself. They are communities where common goals can be reconciled with rugged individualism. They are nurturing places that produce state and national leaders. The problems of the communities seem more manageable than those in the urban areas, and in many ways the communities have a mythical appeal.

Rural communities may be less affluent and face problems of unemployment, but generally I find rural Hoosiers content with their way of life. They have a sense of place and self, of where they come from, who they are, and what they want for their family and community. I am not at all pessimistic about the future of rural southern Indiana. New growth in these communities may well sustain the vitality and the viability of rural Indiana.