

STATEMENT BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE

CONSOLIDATED FARM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT

ROOM 412, OLD SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

JULY 7, 1971

201 - 1409

THE TITLE OF THE BILL WE ARE INTRODUCING TODAY IS  
THE CONSOLIDATED FARM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT. BUT  
IT IS MORE THAN A BILL FOR RURAL AMERICA.

IT IS A BILL FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. IT IS A BILL  
NOT ONLY FOR AMERICA'S FARMERS, BUT AMERICA'S SMALL TOWNS,  
VILLAGES AND GROWING COMMUNITIES.

IT RECOGNIZES THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AMERICA'S  
FARMS AND THE COMMUNITY TRADE AND CULTURAL CENTERS SO  
VITAL TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE OF OUR NATION.

IT IS A BILL TO PROMOTE BALANCED RURAL-URBAN GROWTH  
IN OUR NATION AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE EXPERIENCING ONE OF  
THE GREATEST CONTINUING MASS MIGRATIONS TO OUR CITIES  
SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

IT IS A BILL FOR FREEDOM OF RESIDENCE.

THE RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION HAS PRODUCED THESE ALARMING STATISTICS: SEVENTY-THREE PER CENT OF OUR POPULATION NOW LIVE ON JUST TWO PER CENT OF OUR LAND.

WITHIN 30 YEARS, IF THE TREND SHOULD CONTINUE, MORE THAN HALF OF OUR PEOPLE WILL BE LIVING IN THREE HUGE METROPOLITAN REGIONS -- ONE ALONG THE UPPER ATLANTIC SEACOAST, ONE AROUND THE GREAT LAKES, AND THE THIRD ALONG OUR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTLINE.

THIS MIGRATION HAS COMPOUNDED THE PROBLEMS OF BOTH OUR URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

IT HAS PUT ENORMOUS PRESSURES ON OUR CITIES. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO MEET THE DEMAND FOR QUALITY SERVICES FOR THEIR RAPIDLY GROWING POPULATIONS.

WE HAVE NOT MET THE NEED FOR METROPOLITAN HOUSING;  
WE HAVE FALLEN BEHIND. WE HAVE NOT MADE PROGRESS ON AIR  
AND WATER POLLUTION; WE HAVE FALLEN BEHIND. URBAN SLUM  
CONDITIONS FESTER. CRIME INCREASES. QUALITY EDUCATION  
SUFFERS. METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IN MOST URBAN  
AREAS IS A SNARLED SHAMBLES. GREENBELTS AND OPEN SPACES  
HAVE BEEN GOBBLED UP IN THE RUSH TO BUILD FOR MORE AND  
MORE PEOPLE. WE EXPERIENCE POWER SHORTAGES.

AND URBAN GOVERNMENTS ARE NEAR FISCAL COLLAPSE AS  
THEY TRY VAINLY TO COPE WITH THE RELENTLESS PRESSURES OF  
POPULATION.

MEANWHILE OUR RURAL AREAS ARE IN DECAY.

AS WE FOCUS ON THE MASSIVE PROBLEMS OF URBAN AMERICA,  
WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT RURAL POVERTY REMAINS  
DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH. ONLY PART OF THE REASON IS THE  
DEPRESSED FARM ECONOMY. THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF RURAL  
POVERTY ARE AMONG THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT IN FARMING.

TWO THIRDS OF OUR SUBSTANDARD HOUSING IS IN RURAL  
AMERICA. NEARLY 20 MILLION RURAL HOUSES LACK PLUMBING.

INFANT MORTALITY IN RURAL AREAS IS HIGHER THAN  
THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. EDUCATION IS OF A LOWER QUALITY.  
HEALTH CARE IS TRAGICALLY INADEQUATE. IN RURAL SOUTH  
DAKOTA, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE 16 COUNTIES WITH NO DOCTORS --  
NONE AT ALL.

MOST TRAGIC OF ALL, THE MIGRATION TO THE CITIES IS  
ROBBING SMALL COMMUNITIES OF THEIR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE --  
PEOPLE -- TO REBUILD AND REVITALIZE THEIR COMMUNITIES,  
THE MOST ENERGETIC AND AMBITIOUS, THE FINEST MINDS ARE  
LEAVING FOR THE CITY BECAUSE OF DEPRESSED WAGES, LACK OF  
DEVELOPMENT, AND LACK OF OPPORTUNITY.

OUR BILL IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY  
FINANCING TO REVITALIZE OUR RURAL AREAS -- FINANCING FOR  
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NEW PAYROLLS  
AND NEW JOBS . . . FOR BETTER SCHOOLS . . . FOR MEDICAL  
CENTERS AND HOSPITALS CLOSE TO THE PEOPLE . . . FOR PARKS  
AND RECREATION AREAS . . . FOR IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEMS . . . FOR DAY CARE FACILITIES . . . MUSEUMS  
AND CULTURAL CENTERS . . . FOR DESPERATELY NEEDED HOUSING.

AND MUCH MORE: INDUSTRIAL PARKS . . . WATER AND  
SEWER SYSTEMS . . . WASTE DISPOSAL PLANTS . . . COMMUNITY  
COLLEGES . . . RURAL SLUM CLEARANCE . . . STREETS AND  
HIGHWAYS . . . POLICE AND FIRE STATIONS . . . LIBRARIES.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN FEATURES OF THE BILL:

FIRST, IT REORGANIZES THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
TO ENSURE A MAJOR EMPHASIS ON FINANCING FARM CREDIT AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS.

SECOND, IT EXPANDS RURAL CREDIT BY MAKING IT AVAILABLE  
TO PRIVATE AND PUBLIC BORROWERS, UNABLE TO GET CREDIT FROM  
COMMERCIAL SOURCES, FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES.

THE INITIAL SUBSCRIPTION BY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE  
\$2 BILLION, IN TEN ANNUAL PAYMENTS AVERAGING \$200 MILLION.

THIS WOULD ENABLE THE SYSTEM TO ISSUE ABOUT \$2-\$3 BILLION  
A YEAR IN DEBENTURES AND BONDS IN ITS EARLY YEARS,  
INCREASING TO A POTENTIAL OF \$10-20 BILLION A YEAR AFTER  
FULL OPERATION WHEN FULL OR PARTIAL BORROWER-OWNED STATUS  
IS ACHIEVED.

THE CONSOLIDATED FARM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT HAS  
THE POTENTIAL TO REVITALIZE RURAL AMERICA AND TO REBUILD  
RURAL OPPORTUNITY.

THUS WE CAN MAKE OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES THE VITAL,  
ATTRACTIVE, PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES THEY CAN AND SHOULD  
BE.

WE CAN MAKE A REALITY OF A NEW FREEDOM -- FREEDOM  
OF RESIDENCE -- BY PROVIDING THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH ALL  
OUR PEOPLE CAN MAKE A REALISTIC CHOICE ABOUT WHERE THEY  
WILL LIVE AND WORK.

# # # # #



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)