LYONS, NEBRASKA. POPULATION 851.
WHAT IS RURAL?

A place under 50,000 in population

...........under 15,000

...........under 2,500

A place smaller than where I live
OUR MISSION:

Create Vibrant Rural Communities
THEORY OF CHANGE

Win Policy That Supports Local Efforts

Leaders Working Locally

Band Together Across Communities

Work for Policy Change

CENTER for RURAL AFFAIRS
POLICY ADVOCACY. WHAT’S THAT?

1. Analyze
2. Propose solutions
3. Organize & engage
4. Foster relationships
5. Win & implement
Rural Energy Efficiency

STATE POLICY

- Defensive stance on Iowa policy since 2016

- SF 2311 passed in 2017 rolling back standards
  - Li-HEAP funds drastically cut
  - Spending caps for energy efficiency programs

- RECs participate in join EE studies with G&Ts on four tests:
  - Participant cost, utility cost, ratepayer impact, societal
  - Next study scheduled this year (2019)
Rural Energy Efficiency

LOCAL EFFORTS

Highlighting 3 local programs:

1. Energy Districts from Northeast Iowa
2. PAYS Programs in Iowa
3. Highlight Rural RECs - NIPCO
Rural Energy Efficiency

THE ENERGY DISTRICT MODEL

- Modeled after Soil and Water Conservation Districts created in the 1930s under FDR as response to the Dust Bowl
  - National issue, local focus at the county level
- First started in Decorah with **Winneshiek Energy District**
  - Home efficiency program
  - Farm energy planning
  - Local carbon offset program to drive investment
  - Funded through memberships, Green Iowa Americorps, NRCS and other grants
- Other counties: Howard, Allamakee, Chickasaw, Fayette, Clayton and Dubuque
Rural Energy Efficiency

Counties with local Energy Districts
Rural Energy Efficiency

PAYS PROGRAMS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Of 150 municipal utilities in Iowa, 3 have created PAYS programs for energy efficiency upgrades.
  - 2 loan based - Cedar Falls (population 41,570) and Woodbine (population 1,407)
  - First tariff based program being developed in Bloomfield (population 2,676)
    - Bloomfield has set the goal of being 100% energy independence by 2030
    - PAYS program would only be residential
      - Half of city is low to moderate income, many elderly
      - Affordable housing is an issue for many rural communities
Rural Energy Efficiency

RURAL RECs – NIPCO, LeMars, Iowa

- Working to expand broadband access in rural western Iowa
- Offer rebate and incentive programs for Energy Star appliances, heat pumps, water heaters, insulation and other upgrades
  - Has offered a “Switch Makes Sense” since 1984
    - Have installed over 18,000 switches through this program
    - The program offers rebates and special rates to member-owners who would allow specified heating and cooling equipment to be controlled during peak conditions.
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