

## **VOTER UPDATE**

**8/5/2008**

### **2008 National Rural Assembly drives rural policy agenda**

Imagine having a real discussion about the state of rural America with Barack Obama and John McCain. What would you want them to know? What would you want the new president to do once elected?

That was the thinking behind the Second National Rural Assembly held in Washington, D.C. in early June. The two-day meeting focused on federal policies that begin to address the four core issues identified by the Rural Assembly at its inaugural meeting in 2006: quality in education, stewardship of natural resources, health of our people and investment in our communities.

These issues are outlined in the Rural Compact, a statement of principles for building healthy rural communities that was developed as part of a national organizing campaign.

This year's Assembly, sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, brought over 300 policy advocates and grassroots leaders together to dig deeper into those issues and to create a policy agenda that will move rural America forward.

As part of the Rural Assembly's steering committee, the League of Rural Voters is actively lobbying members of Congress to sign on in support of the Rural Compact. We're also helping to create and carry out regional organizing campaigns to build broad support for the policy agenda and to encourage people to challenge the candidates to address our concerns.

We know there will be a change in administration next January. Our job between now and then we need to build as large a coalition as possible to support this new direction in rural policy. Join us.