

FEATURE - BIDEN, VILSACK ANNOUNCE RURAL RECOVERY FUNDS

INTRO: The Vice President and Agriculture Secretary went to rural America to highlight the start of recovery funds for housing and other projects. The USDA's Patrick O'Leary has more on the leaders' recent (4/01/09) visit to North Carolina.

TAG: For more on Recovery Act projects visit: www.usda.gov/recovery

THE PIKEVILLE PLEASANT GROVE VOLUNTEER FIRE STATION IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA IS EXPANDING, THANKS TO FEDERAL STIMULUS MONEY. THEIR NEW BUILDING COULD HELP SERVE PEOPLE IN NEW HOMES ALSO FUNDED BY THE RECOVERY ACT. VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN TOLD THIS COMMUNITY, THEY ARE ONE EXAMPLE OF WHAT THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE RURAL AMERICA ARE ALL ABOUT.

Joe Biden, Vice President: We don't view the money for the new firehouse as just spending to help us get out of the troubles we're in now, although it will create jobs, it will put people to work, it will stimulate the economy in this small community, we think that it is also an investment in the future. We're investing in places like this all across the country to demonstrate the vital role these towns of your size play in this recovery.

THE \$787 BILLION DOLLAR FEDERAL STIMULUS PACKAGE INCLUDES \$10 BILLION FOR RURAL HOUSING PROJECTS, FUNDED THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. AT THE GOSHEN MEDICAL CENTER IN NEARBY FAISON, USDA SECRETARY TOM VILSACK DELIVERED MONEY FOR NEW STAFF AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture: This clinic provides an opportunity for this community to market itself as a place where economic development can take place, because you have access to quality health care. Everything we're doing in the stimulus package has that ripple effect. Because, at its core, it recognizes that when one if us is helped, all of us are helped.

A THEME OF THIS SMALL TOWN TOUR WAS GIVING...AND GETTING SOMETHING BACK.

Biden: This is kind of backwards, I know, but I want to thank you for giving me renewed confidence that we're going to get this done.

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M PAT O'LEARY.