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Rural legislators form group to ensure appropriate distribution of stimulus dollars

PHOENIX - Rep. Andy Tobin (R-Dist. 1), the only rural legislator in leadership at the House of Representatives and currently serving as the majority whip for the Republican Caucus, announced the formation of the Rural Caucus group organized specifically to ensure distribution of the federal stimulus funds are fair to rural communities.

According to Tobin, he asked Rep. Bill Konopnicki (R-Dist. 5) to chair the bipartisan Rural Caucus group in an effort to protect rural communities with regard to federal funding for infrastructure, water and other projects important to those communities.

"We simply need to make sure that the distribution of federal funds is fair to rural Arizona," Tobin explained as he addressed the Rural Caucus group during its first meeting.

Joining Konopnicki in his mission are representatives Russ Jones (R-Dist. 24), Lucy Mason (R-Dist. 1), Frank Pratt (R-Dist. 23), Doris Goodale (R-Dist. 3), Lynn Pancrazi (D-Dist. 24) and Nancy McClain (R-Dist. 3) and Sen. Manny Alvarez (D-Dist. 25).

Konopnicki feels this group is an important step in developing a communication process for rural members that transcends party lines.

"We need to effectively gather and share information so all rural lawmakers understand what is at stake with regard to the federal stimulus funding," he said.

For more information about the Rural Caucus group, contact them through the www.azleg.gov Web site under House Members.

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