How to Better Serve the Voting System Needs of Rural Communities

What about me?
Fun Facts about Wyoming

• Least populated state (~584,153)
• 10\textsuperscript{th} largest state (97,093.14 sq/mile)
• 5.8 people per sq/mile – National Avg. 87.4
• Niobrara County – 2,628 sq/Miles; Pop. 2,484
  State of Delaware – 2,489 sq/Miles; Pop. 935,614
• Average commute to work: 18.3 minutes
Questions to Consider:

• Why do our rural communities struggle?

• If they are, are we aware of it?

• Do we care?

• If we care, what are we willing to do about it?
What is Rural?

Census Bureau
2 Categories:

- Urbanized Areas = 50,000 People or more
- Urban Clusters = 2,500 – 49,999 people
- Rural is not specifically defined.
- Definition does not consider city or county boundaries.
What is Rural?

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

2 Categories:

- Metropolitan = 50,000 people or more
- Micropolitan = 10,000 – 49,999 people
- Rural is not specifically defined.
- Definition does not consider city or county boundaries.
What is Rural?

Merriam Webster:
of or relating to the country and the people who live there instead of the city.
3 Keys to “Help” Even the Scales

1. Relationship
2. Commitment
3. Strategic funding
Relationship

• Engage
• Seek input
• Discover their needs
Commitment

- Determine what you can and are willing to sacrifice
- Keep informed
- Give Kudos
Strategic Funding

• Where’s the Money?
  – Property Taxes
  – PILT
  – Various Title Fees
  – Legislature appropriations

• Education
  – County Commissioners
  – State Legislature

• 4 year plan
  – 2.5 million/yr

I WAS CURSED WITH EXPENSIVE TASTE AND A LOW BUDGET.
Let’s Even the Scales