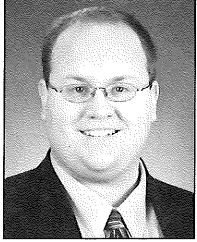


Standing up to Goliath

Schomacker's district on the frontline of keeping business

By LEE ANN SCHUTZ

Sioux Falls, S.D. stands like a Goliath over the southwest Minnesota district of Rep. Joe Schomacker (R-Luverne). He's up for the fight to streamline regulations and improve the business climate so more businesses will not jump over the state line.



Rep. Joe Schomacker

Take for instance in his hometown. The public relations consultant said there are businesses that retain the Luverne name but have moved to South Dakota because of the tax and regulatory climate.

Born and raised in Rock County, Schomacker is also well aware of the important role that agriculture plays in

that part of the state. He is concerned that regulations are putting farmers and processors at a competitive disadvantage, something he hopes to fix as member of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Policy and Finance Committee.

He cited an example of a farmer in his district who told him the Rock River is considered contaminated on the Minnesota side, and a few miles down, where it crosses into Iowa, it is not. "They rate it at such a different level. He wants to know how there can be different standards for what is considered contaminated," Schomacker said.

The state's trucking regulations are harming livestock producers and also need to be addressed, he said. "It is more cost-effective for producers to ship their livestock across the state line for processing then to keep it in the state."

But it is the issues faced by rural nursing

DISTRICT 22A
Population (2009 est.): 34,465
Largest City: Luverne
Counties: Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Rock
Top Concerns: Agriculture, water, regulatory issues

homes that top his priority list. Once again, Sioux Falls comes into the picture.

"Our nursing homes need to be staffed adequately, and employees need to be paid a decent wage," he said. "They can get \$3 to \$4 more an hour in Sioux Falls, so are we getting second-best?"

At 24 years old, Schomacker is the youngest House member, and for him there are a lot of firsts. This was his first run for public office; he purchased his first house last week; and he just completed his masters degree program.

He also serves on the House Health and Human Services Finance, and the House Judiciary Policy and Finance committees.