



THE GREAT VALLEY CENTER AND THE
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR FEDERAL POLICY RESEARCH
invite you to attend a

Luncheon Briefing

Thursday, April 1, 2004 – 12 Noon - 1:30 p.m.
B-354 Rayburn House Office Building

**"Land of Opportunity or California's Appalachia? -
A Briefing on Change and Challenges in the Central Valley"**

The perception of California's riches – its Gold Rush history, the fifth largest economy in the world, world-class cities, top rated Universities, lush fields and orchards, vast and unforgettable scenery -- often omits another side of the story: the troubling economic, social and environmental situation in the state's Central Valley.

In many ways, the story of the Valley today resembles that of Appalachia. Its list of challenges includes schools in crisis, antiquated infrastructure, double-digit unemployment, some of the worst air quality in the country, burgeoning prisons and an inadequate water supply. These and a host of other issues face Congress and the new state administration.

You are invited to attend a discussion of this "other California," which will examine life in the Valley and how it differs from the rest of the state. The briefing will consider the region's future options, and may lead to further discussions on how to ensure the best possible outcomes for an overlooked part of California, as well as for the state as a whole.

Speakers:

Tim Ransdell, Executive Director of the California Institute, will brief attendees on the flow of federal funding to California's Central Valley counties.

Carol Whiteside, President of the Great Valley Center, will outline the economic, social and environmental challenges facing rural California, with a special focus on the economic engine that is the Central Valley. Ms. Whiteside was a member of Governor Pete Wilson's cabinet and was previously mayor of Modesto.

Carol Tomlinson-Keasey is the founding and first Chancellor of the University of California, Merced, the first major research University to be established in this country since 1964. Her remarks will focus on educational challenges facing the region. Prior to her service at UC Merced, Ms. Tomlinson-Keasey was a professor and Dean at the University of California, Irvine and the University of California, Davis.

Richard Cummings, Director of Research and Communications at the Great Valley Center, will give an overview of unprecedented population growth and demographic shifts and how these trends will transform the Central Valley.

The Great Valley Center is a nonprofit organization that supports organizations and activities working to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of California's Central Valley. Our thanks to John McCamman and Paul Sweet of Fleishman-Hillard Government Relations for their assistance in organizing the briefing.

Please reply (acceptances only, thank you) by Tuesday, March 30 to The California Institute at: 202-546-3700 or ransdell@calinst.org.