



**NARC**

*Building Regional Communities*

**National Association of Regional Councils**

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## FY11 CONTINUING RESOLUTION TALKING POINTS

### **Sustainable Communities**

*Please use to guide phone conversations or in-person meetings with Congressional Members and/or staff.*

**IMMEDIATE ACTION:** *Please support the inclusion of funding for **Sustainable Communities** within the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1) under development by Congress to ensure vital local and regional programs continue to boost the economy and create jobs. Currently H.R. 1 zeros out all unobligated funding.*

#### **GENERAL STATEMENTS:**

- Reforms to and consolidation of federal funding and programs should be looked to in order to save money and increase government efficiency, while decreasing the national debt.
- Domestic, discretionary programs, which are only 12 percent of the federal annual budget, are critical to the ability of local governments and regions to carry out their responsibilities as service providers for both the federal and state governments.
- Due to economic challenges, local governments have experienced reduced revenue streams due to decreased taxes (primarily property and sales) and major reductions in state financial assistance, while at the same time facing an increased demand for services. As a result, local governments of all sizes and in all parts of the nation have been forced to institute significant layoffs, furloughs and service reductions, which could continue for several years to come.
- Federal assistance to state and local governments and regions will help mitigate further layoffs. Current unemployment rates are already at 9.4 percent nationally.
- Federal investment in state, local and regional infrastructure produces jobs and promotes local economic development.
- Deficit reduction should not be accomplished by shifting costs to states and local governments, imposing unfunded mandates, or pre-empting local government programs or taxing authority.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Please consider the following when making **Sustainable Communities** funding determinations in H.R. 1:

- This funding is important to communities of all sizes and make ups to become better places to live, work and raise families. It is about fostering governmental partnerships that provide communities choices for comprehensive planning, investments and development that are cost effective and efficient, reduce congestion, generate good-paying jobs, meet environmental and energy goals, provide affordable housing, protect rural areas and green space, and revitalize Main Streets and urban centers.
- This funding is essential in providing new resources to communities to spur economic development, stimulate commercial and industrial growth, attract new businesses and jobs, and incentivize innovation in urban, suburban and rural areas.
- This funding is critical to encouraging local governments and regions to develop local business and innovation clusters that provide industry incentives; revitalize downtown and historic neighborhoods; increase community investment and expand tax and investment revenue; and, improve transportation options, access and choice.



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**RECOMMENDATIONS** *continued:*

- This funding would support projects that clean-up and redevelop brownfields, reinforce sustainable agricultural practices, preserve open space, rural areas and natural resources, and improve environmental quality and public health.
- This funding would leverage investment in community-level economic development for revitalization and support the local economy, and would assist local governments and regions in addressing population loss and vacant and abandoned properties and improving vital infrastructure.

**LOCAL/REGIONAL CONSTITUENT EXAMPLE:** In our region alone, continued investment in and support of the Sustainable Communities program is needed for: [INSERT PROJECT DETAILS]

***Project Name***

***Project Type and Description***

***Cost Estimate***

***Number of Jobs Created***

***Cost Efficiencies***

***Project Effectiveness/Improvements for community or region***

***Start/Finish Time (i.e. immediately, 3 months, 6 months)***

- **PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE:** Investment in **Sustainable Communities** must continually be promoted at all levels of government to ensure competitiveness, job creation, economic growth and the ability to address future challenges and opportunities.
- Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations and your commitment to sustained and strategic public investments. We offer our support and assistance to you and your colleagues on these important and timely efforts to stimulate jobs, reinvigorate local and national economies and possibly forestall deep problems within state and local governments.