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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

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EXECUTIVEBRIEF

Colleagues,

Last week, I visited with the staff of the Triangle J Regional Councils of Government, while Shannon Baxevanis presented before the San Joaquin Council of Governments in Washington, DC.

We're fast approaching

Register Today!

Join your colleagues from around the country at the largest event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education - NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition. Click [HERE](#) to register or access the current draft agenda. Contact Lindsey Riley at lindsey@narc.org or 202.986.1032 x220 for more information. *If you are making travel arrangements, we recommend traveling on Sunday, June 12th and Thursday, June 16th. If you haven't already made your hotel arrangements, please do so as soon as possible. Hotel rooms are going fast!*

the 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition! Later this week, you'll see a Membership Release regarding our upcoming Annual Membership Meeting and Elections. I encourage you to join us in San Diego for engaging conference sessions and elect your new Association leadership.

Best,
Fred

NARCSTAFF

Fred Abousleman

Executive Director

Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director

Sylvia Bryant

Office Manager

Mia Colson

Program Analyst

Valerie Hermanson

Research Fellow

Jenee Kresge

Economic and

Community

Development Manager

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of

Communications

Erika Young

Transportation Director

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PROGRAMUPDATE

Senate Committee Approves EDA Reauthorization: On Thursday, April 14, 2011, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved by voice vote bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The Economic Development Revitalization Act of 2011 ([S. 782](#)) would reauthorize EDA at \$500 million per year from 2011 through 2015. The legislation was passed with one amendment, which would require a report on duplicative Federal programs within 90 days of its enactment. Additional information on the vote can be found [HERE](#).

See How Your Tax Dollars are Being Spent: The White House launched a website where taxpayers can enter in basic information into a web portal to see how various elements of taxes are being spend to support government functions and activities. Click [HERE](#) to access the website.

EPA Seeks Comments on Identifying and Protecting Healthy

Watersheds: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking comments on a recently released [draft technical document](#), "Identifying and Protecting Healthy Watersheds: Concepts, Assessments, and Management Approaches," which provides the basis for implementing the Agency's Healthy Watersheds Initiative. The document includes an overview of the key concepts behind the Healthy Watersheds approach, examples of assessments of healthy watershed components, an integrated assessment framework for identifying healthy watersheds, examples of management approaches, sources of national data and key assessment tools. The U.S. EPA is seeking comments on this draft document until June 3, 2011.

NARC Submits Comments to HHS on Emergency Coordination: NARC submitted comment to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) National Health Security Strategy. Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's comments.

Solar America Communities Webinar: Join NARC in a discussion about the Solar America Communities Outreach Program on May 3, 2011 at 3:00pm ET. NARC is working with the U.S. Department of Energy, ICMA, the American Planning Association and ICLEI to increase the use and integration of solar energy technologies in regions and communities across the country. As the nation's centers of electricity consumption, regions are uniquely positioned to reduce global climate change, strengthen American's energy independence and improve air quality, by adopting cleaner and renewable

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energy technologies, such as solar energy. The Solar America Communities program supports local governments and regional organizations committed to making solar a mainstream energy source. This webinar will provide an overview of the Solar America Communities project, the current state of the solar industry, common obstacles and myths associated with solar, and the potential for solar as an economic driver within regional communities. To register click [HERE](#).

POLICYUPDATE

The House and Senate are out of session on a two week recess.

FY11 Spending Signed into Law: Last week the President signed into law the fiscal year 2011 funding, which would fund the government until September 30, 2011 with \$1.049 trillion in spending and \$38.5 billion in FY11 cuts over FY10 levels. Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's summary of the fiscal year 2011 funding cuts.

House Adopts FY12 Budget Proposal: Last Friday, the House adopted the GOP-led FY12 budget resolution (H Con Res 34), which includes a variety of spending cuts and an overhaul of entitlement programs, and sets the baselines for legislation, including setting the levels of FY12 spending for the House Appropriations Committee. The \$1.019 trillion FY12 budget resolution would allocate less discretionary spending than the \$1.091 trillion provided for FY10, and requests \$1.121 trillion below President Obama's FY12 discretionary spending request. Senate Democrats are expected to unveil their plan upon return from the two-week Spring recess. Click [HERE](#) to access the budget proposal. Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's summary. Click [HERE](#) to read a letter the National Association of Counties (NACo) sent to the House Budget Committee.

President Obama Releases Deficit Reduction Plan: Last week President Obama released a long-term plan for reducing the national debt with a \$4 trillion reduction over twelve years. The approach borrows from the Bipartisan Fiscal Commission and builds on \$1 trillion in deficit reductions in the President's 2012 budget. The federal debt is anticipated to be more than \$1 trillion in FY11. The current debt limit is now set at \$14.3 trillion. The House and Senate are each working on their own debt reduction efforts. Click [HERE](#) to read more about the President's plan.

House Introduces Bill to Limit UASIs: Last week Reps. Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Steve Israel (D-NY) introduced H.R. 1555, which would amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to limit the number of Urban Area Security Initiatives (UASIs) around the country. According to Rep. Lowey's website, she is fighting "an expansion in the number of regions eligible for funding, which dilutes the amount that high-risk areas like New York may receive." The text of the bill is not yet available.

Bill Introduces to Address Clean Water Affordability: Rep. Robert Latta (R-OH) introduced H.R. 1189, "Clean Water Affordability Act of 2011," to address affordability issues related to compliance with Clean Water Act (CWA) requirement, including changes in financing and implementation schedules for communities determined to be suffering from financial hardship. Specifically, the bill proposes to: develop criteria to identify municipalities in economic hardship and amend the CWA to authorize financial assistance to address wastewater projects; extend the loan repayment period from 20 to 30 years or the design life of the project to be financed (whichever is less); allow implementation schedules to be extended from 20 to 30 years; require EPA to update the EPA publication, "CSO financial capability guidance"; require states to set aside 15% of Clean Water SRF funds for assistance to municipalities of fewer than 10,000 individuals that meet specified affordability criteria; and, allow states to use up to 30% of total amount of SRF capitalization grants received by the State beginning after September 30, 2012 as grant funds.

PARTNERUPDATE

NACo's 2011 Rail Conference: April 27-29, 2011. Sponsored by NACo, the National League of Cities (NLC) and NARC, this conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city and state governments and their citizens and businesses. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

Call for Speakers for the 97th ICMA Annual Conference: The International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) 97th Annual Conference, being held September 18-21, 2011 at the Frontier Airlines Convention Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is now accepting applications from speakers wishing to be part of the conference program. ICMA is looking for the best combination of panelists to share their experiences for each session within these educational tracks: Excellence in the New Normal;

Changing Demographics and Employee Relations; Lessons in Leadership; Personal Issues Facing Local Government Managers and Their Families; and Career Tracks: Assistant Managers, Senior Managers/ICMA Credential Managers and Small Community Managers. We encourage you to download and submit an application by Friday, May 6 to be considered for this event. All Session Speaker Application Forms must be completed electronically and submitted to callforspeakers@icma.org. Full details and application form are available online at icma.org/callforspeakers.

NEI Update: The Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) has developed a webpage with news and information following the earthquake in Japan. Click [HERE](#) to access this webpage. NEI has made themselves available to anyone who has questions; contact Christine Czimedia or Marshall Cohen at 202.739.8000 or NEIResponseCenter@nei.org.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program

Deadline: April 21, 2011

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced the release of \$500 million in grant funds for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. While applicants must be institutions of higher education eligible for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, Regional Councils and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) have proven to be key partners for similar work undertaken through NARC's *Pathways Out of Poverty* project, also funded by the U.S. DOL ETA. The full grant announcement is available [HERE](#), and a toolkit for potential applicants is available [HERE](#).

USDA RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

Deadline: April 25, 2011

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utility Service (RUS) recently announced the FY2011 Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) call for applications. DLT supports corporations or partnerships, state or local units of government, consortia and Tribes to provide telecommunications technologies that enhance learning and healthcare opportunities for rural populations through loans, grants or loan/grant combinations. Additional information on the funding opportunity is available [HERE](#).

EDA Announces i6 Green Challenge Competition

Letter of Intent Due: May 2, 2011

The i6 Green Challenge Competition provides \$12 million in funding focused on the nexus between economic development and environmental quality. At least six applicants will be selected for up to \$1 million for a two-year project, with the potential for supplemental awards from several participating federal agencies. Economic Development Districts, Tribes, nonprofits, state and local governments are all qualified applicants. Additional information on the competition is available at www.eda.gov/i6.

EPA Accepting Applications for Environmental Education Grant Funding

Deadline: May 2, 2011

The U.S. EPA is accepting [grant applications](#) for \$1.9 million in funding for the Environmental Education Grant Program to promote environmental stewardship and help develop knowledgeable and responsible students, teachers and citizens. EPA expects to award at least 20 grants nationwide ranging from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 and will accept applications until May 2, 2011. Eligible entities include: local education agencies, state education or environmental agencies, colleges or universities, not-for-profit organizations, noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, and tribal education agencies. EPA will be hosting two conference calls for potential applicants interested in additional information about the application process. The conference calls will take place on March 21, 2011 at 11:00 am ET and April 6 at 2:00 pm ET. To participate in the conference calls, dial: 1-866-379-5082, and use conference ID number: 48699133 for the call on March 21. Use conference ID number: 48696117 for the call on April 6.

USDA Community Connect Grant Program

Deadline: May 3, 2011

The USDA announced the availability of Community-Oriented Connectivity Broadband Grant Program (Community Connect), for projects that (1) deploy broadband transmission service to critical community facilities, rural residents and businesses, (2) construct, acquire or expand a community center, or (3) equip and operate a community center providing free access to broadband services for communities with populations of 20,000 or fewer. Application instructions are available [HERE](#), and additional program information can be found [HERE](#).

RE-Powering America

Deadline: May 20, 2011

Through its RE-Powering America's Land: Siting Renewable Energy on Potentially Contaminated Land and Mine Sites initiative, the U.S. EPA is soliciting applications from states, tribes, regional governments, and communities that want to evaluate the potential development of renewable energy on potentially or formerly contaminated properties. The Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will evaluate and provide technical assistance for up to 20 selected sites in 2011. Additional information is available here. Click [HERE](#) or contact [Lura Matthews](#) at EPA for additional information.

The Kodak American Greenways Grant Program

Deadline: June 15, 2011

The Eastman Kodak Company, The Conservation Fund and the National Geographic Society have announced the release of their 2011 Greenways Awards. Each year a Greenway Award is presented to land trusts, local governments, and other organizations that are growing our nation's networks of greenways, blueways, trails and natural areas. These projects connect Americans to the outdoors and their heritage. Funded projects typically advance one or more of the program goals, including catalyzing new greenway projects; assisting grassroots greenway organizations; leveraging additional money for conservation and greenway development; and promoting use and enjoyment of greenways. Award amounts range from \$500 to \$2,500. The full grant announcement is available [HERE](#).

EDA University Center Competition

Deadline: June 30, 2011

The U.S. EDA announced its FY 2011 University Center Economic Development Program competition to promote bottom-up regional strategies that help foster business expansion and job creation in EDA's Chicago and Philadelphia regions. Accredited institutions or consortium of higher education, including community colleges, are eligible to apply for funding. EDA will award \$1.1 million in the Chicago region and \$1.4 million in the Philadelphia region. Additional information is available [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

2011 Rail Conference: Moving Freight and Passengers in the 21st Century

April 27-29, 2011, Naperville, IL: Sponsored by NACo, NLC and NARC, this

conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city, and state governments and their citizens and businesses. It will look at the movement of freight in the urban, suburban and rural communities of the U.S. and discuss who will pay to modernize and expand passenger and freight rail systems. This conference is for you if you have ever asked why the freight industry operates the way it does, had questions about economic growth and the availability and affordability of freight rail, wanted to have commuter rail in your region or wondered about the future of high-speed rail. Participants will get to meet and hear from experts in the field, including representatives of the rail industry, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the shippers who use the system, commuter rail experts, Amtrak and proponents of high-speed rail. The conference will conclude with a half-day discussion on where we go from here; how city, county, regional, and state governments can work together with the freight and passenger industry to influence federal legislation and policy; and both reduce the negative impacts from freight rail movement and improve passenger rail service in America. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

Solar America Communities Webinar

May 3, 2011, 3:00 pm ET: Join NARC in a discussion about the Solar America Communities Outreach Program on May 3, 2011 at 3:00pm EST. NARC is working with the U.S. Department of Energy, ICMA, the American Planning Association and ICLEI to increase the use and integration of solar energy technologies in regions and communities across the country. As the nation's centers of electricity consumption, regions are uniquely positioned to reduce global climate change, strengthen American's energy independence and improve air quality, by adopting cleaner and renewable energy technologies, such as solar energy. The Solar America Communities program supports local governments and regional organizations committed to making solar a mainstream energy source. This webinar will provide an overview of the Solar America Communities project, the current state of the solar industry, common obstacles and myths associated with solar, and the potential for solar as an economic driver within regional communities. To register click [HERE](#).

H-GAC Eco-Logical Webinar

May 12, 2011, 2:00 pm ET: Join the Houston-Galveston Area Council for an exciting and informative webinar to learn about H-GAC's interactive GIS-based Eco-Logical tool on May 12, 2011 at 2:00pm ET. The webinar will provide information on the development process for the Eco-Logical Geographic Information System (GIS) tool including the data development, mapping and metric models of the project. Learn how the data was

developed, how the application works, and what tools are available. The Eco-Logical GIS tool gives planners an opportunity to identify valuable environmental resources in the region. Roadway designers can save time and money by using this free decision-making tool to identify potential environmental concerns early in the project development process. Conservation groups can use Eco-Logical to help identify and focus efforts on protecting high-priority environmental resources in the region. To register click [HERE](#); registration closes May 9th.

National Solar Conference

May 17-21, 2011, Raleigh, NC: Save the date. More information will be released as it becomes available.

Transforming Local Government Conference

June 1-3, 2011, Clearwater, FL: Making Magic: How BOLD Can Local Government Be? The Alliance for Innovation's Transforming Local Government (TLG) Conference is different from any other conference you'll attend. At TLG, you'll learn about some of the most innovative programs in the country directly from the teams that created them. This year, TLG takes place in conjunction with the Florida City/County Management Association Annual Conference. The joint event will attract participation from local governments that seek new and innovative ways to connect people, information, and ideas to become some of the best places to live, grow, work, play, and prosper. Recognized for its dynamic content, the TLG format encourages team building and free thinking and fosters the generation of unprecedented ideas, all within a relaxed and professional networking and learning environment. Visit the conference website by clicking [HERE](#); a full program, registration and hotel information is available.

NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 13-15, 2011, San Diego, CA: Join us for the the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. NARC's annual conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

Freight Community to Share Best Practices on Advocating for Infrastructure Investment

June 21-23, 2011, Savannah, GA: Members of various freight-related organizations will gather to share information and best practices on how to effectively communicate the value of transportation infrastructure investment to policymakers, influencers and the public. The American Association of

Port Authorities is sponsoring this seminar on *Communicating the Importance of Infrastructure Investment*. Featured key note speakers will include Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, representing the Building America's Future coalition, who will address the topic of *Successfully Promoting the Infrastructure Investment Agenda*; as well as Former U.S. Senator Mack Francis Mattingly (R-GA 1981-87) who will address *Effectively Communicating with Key Legislators*. More information is available by clicking [HERE](#).

NLC's 19th Annual Leadership Summit

September 15 - 17, 2011, Minneapolis, MN: Join renowned leadership scholars and authors Dan Buettner, Lindsay Strand, John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and John Luthy as you engage in a unique, reflective program that will help guide your work and leadership in local government. Insightful learning experiences will provide you the opportunity to reflect, recognize and discover what you can do to enhance your success as a local leader. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

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777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 305
Washington, DC 20002

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