

### NARC LEADERSHIP

**President Betty Knight,**

Platte County, MO

Commissioner

**Chair Jim Reed,**

Executive Directors Council

Executive Director, Central

Texas Council of Governments

### EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

I am honored to announce that NADO, AMPO, and NARC will be developing a joint statement on the importance and role of regions for the Presidential candidates, nominees, and next administration. I thank AMPO and NADO leadership for their commitment to working together to strengthen regions.

NARC will be releasing the first draft of our SAFETEA-LU authorization policies shortly. It will be reviewed by our transportation committee, Executive Director's Council, Board of Directors, and membership, before the policy is made public. We believe that after a year of meetings and work, our principles of simplicity, consistency, flexibility, and authority will be fully articulated.

NARC continues to work with our colleagues on EDA reauthorization. We feel strongly that significant strides in increasing funding and invigorating the EDA need to be made to reclaim an important program for our regions.

I was honored to be invited and attend the [Ohio Association of Regional Council's](#) (OARC) Board Meeting this past month. Discussions at the meeting included Ohio's transportation future, as well as what COG's and MPO's are doing at their regional levels.

Last weekend, I also attended the SouthEast Regional Directors Institute's (SERDI) Annual Professional Development Conference. This year's conference included sessions about management concerns, such as human resources.

I would also like to introduce you to a

TRANSPORTATION

DEVELOPMENT

HOMELAND SECURITY

ENVIRONMENT

### MENTOREXCHANGE

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### DESMOINES BRIEF

**Fantastic news!** Due to the high number of registrants, the Marriott® room block is full. For those of you who have not yet reserved your rooms, we've contracted with a the [Hotel Fort Des Moines](#), located within walking distance of the Marriott. Please contact the hotel by calling 800-532-1466 and tell them you are with the National Association of Regional Councils to receive the conference rate.

### **Not sure what to do once you get to Des Moines?**

[Visit the Des Moines Visitors Bureau's website](#) for information about dining, shopping, transportation options, and activities to do while you're in town.



**Workshop Update:** Integrating Transportation Planning and Air Quality Workshop #14, "Tighter Standards, Higher Expectations: Addressing the EPA's Revision of the 8-Hour NAAQS Standard." All members attending the conference and interested third parties are welcome to attend. Additional information and registration is available [on our website.](#)

**[Board Elections Information](#)** — The Board is elected by general membership and nominations are to be made from the floor.

### TRANSPORTATION BRIEF

**Federal Transit Administration's Joint Access Reverse Commute program:** NARC is assisting the Government Accountability Office conduct oversight of this program and has developed a brief survey of questions on this program, which can be accessed at [by clicking here](#). Both GAO and NARC appreciate your assistance

I would also like to introduce you to a new member of our team. Jenee Kresge has joined NARC as Program Analyst.

Our 42nd Annual Conference and Exhibition is just around the corner and is shaping up to be one of the best. I look forward to seeing you in Des Moines.

Fred

## **NARC STAFF**

**Fred Abousleman**

Executive Director, x216

**Erika Young**

Transportation Director, x212

**Shannon Menard**

Policy Manager, x217

**Lindsey Riley**

Member Services Manager, x220

**Jenee Kresge**

Program Analyst, x215

**Sylvia Bryant**

Office Manager, x218

To access past issues of eRegions, [visit our website](#).

program and has developed a brief survey of questions on this program, which can be accessed at [by clicking here](#). Both GAO and NARC appreciate your assistance and feedback on this important program.

**The Surface Transportation Policy Program** is currently formulating its reauthorization positions. NARC and the regional government perspective is well represented by four of its members who are addressing transportation issues related to; metro governance, with representation by [Capitol Region COG](#); purpose and outcomes of a proposed system, with representation by [SANDAG](#); program structure with representation by [DRCOG](#); planning and project development with representation by [MARC](#); and finance with representation by the [Maricopa Association of Governments](#).

“**Surface Transportation Reauthorization Working Group**” meeting was conducted by the National Conference of State Legislatures in Wilmington, DE, on May 16, to discuss localities, planning, and land use. NARC is proud to have Barry Seymour, Executive Director of [DVRPC](#), representing the regional government position on this important panel.

**Ohio’s 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force** is convening throughout the summer to formulate the future of transportation in Ohio. NARC is well represented on this important initiative with Chair of the Multi-Modal Transportation System Task Force Anthony Reams, President of the [Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments](#); Mark Policinski, Executive Director of the [OKI Council of Governments](#); and Chester Jourdan, Executive Director of the [Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission](#).

“**Rebuilding and Renewing America: Toward a 21st Century Infrastructure Investment Plan.**” NARC recently participated in this America 2050 forum. Roundtable discussions on the planning of infrastructure for transportation, energy, and water infrastructure were highlighted. Additional details about the forum can be found by [clicking here](#).

## **DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

**Congress Overrides Farm Bill Veto and Enacts 2008 Law.** Last week, President Bush veto the farm bill and signed into law a one-week stopgap extension measure keeping the 2002 farm bill running. Both chambers of Congress, however, easily overrode the President’s veto, enacting the \$289 billion farm bill as law. Click [here](#) to read an opinion piece supporting Congress’ work on the farm bill by Senate Agriculture Ranking Member Chambliss (R-GA). Click [here](#) to read a response from the White House. [Access NARC’s Farm Bill policy by clicking here](#).

**NARC Corporate Partner, Invest by Design:** Wisconsin Schools Stand to Lose Millions with Faulty OPEB Investments. [Click here for more information on OPEB Investments and a link to the complete article](#).

**Learn More In Des Moines:** NARC participated in a stakeholder briefing on Friday, May 16 at the Department of Commerce to discuss the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008. EDA will be attending the NARC Annual Conference in Des Moines and will be speaking at the EDA Reauthorization roundtable discussion during the Economic & Community Development Committee meeting. [Click here to access NARC’s EDA Reauthorization policy](#).

## **HOMELAND SECURITY BRIEF**

**Department of Homeland Security Announced FY08 Infrastructure Grants.** Last week, the Department of Homeland Security announced it is awarding \$844 million for FY08 aimed at preventing improvised explosive device attacks, enhancing communications and improving information and analysis in the nation’s ports, ground transportation sector and critical infrastructure. This reflects an increase of almost \$189 million over last year in grant programs including Port Security, Transit Security, Intercity Bus Security, Trucking Security and a Buffer Zone Protection. A [report](#) the department issued Friday details the fiscal 2008 breakdown, and its [website](#) contains information about the 2007 awards.

**FEMA Grants:** DHS and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have also released \$291 million for states and localities to use in evacuation planning, resource management and recovery planning in case of a catastrophe like 2005’s hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Click [HERE](#) to read FEMA’s announcement.

## **ENVIRONMENT BRIEF**

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**Learn More In Des Moines:** “Wind Can Supply 20% of U.S. Electricity, Report Says.” The US Department of Energy said yesterday that the United States has the ability to meet 20 percent of its electricity-generation needs with wind by 2030, enough to displace 50 percent of natural gas consumption and 18 percent of coal consumption. Click [HERE](#) to read the article from *The Washington Post*.

**The Size of the U.S. Energy Efficiency Market: Generating a More Complete Picture":** The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy released this 60-page report, finding that "Given the right choices and investments in the many cost-effective but underutilized energy efficiency technologies, the United States can cost-effectively reduce energy consumption by an additional 25-30 percent or more over the course of the next 20-25 years." ACEEE's report says, "Cost-effective energy efficiency is known as a 'no-regrets' climate policy, because it makes economic sense regardless of its climate mitigation impacts." Click [HERE](#) for more information about the report.

## **IMMIGRATIONBRIEF**

*Information provided by Rajan Eapen of [Eapen Law Firm](#), Washington, DC.*

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Announces New Rule Allowing Extension of Optional Training Program for Qualified Students. [Click here for additional details.](#)

USCIS Reaches FY 2009 H-1B Cap. [Click here for more information.](#)

USCIS To Extend F-1 Status for H-1B Beneficiaries (H-1B CAP Gap Regulation). [Additional information about the extension is available by clicking here.](#)

USCIS Announces a Proposal to Increase Periods of Stay for TN Professional Workers From Canada or Mexico. [Click here for details about the proposal.](#)

## **REGIONS360°**

The Union Leader: Executive Director, David Preece, of Southern New Hampshire Regional Commission, "Manchester's public transit is essential to economy." [Click here to access the article.](#)

[Buckeye Hills - Hocking Valley Regional Development District](#) Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Charlotte Observer: Summit to help guide 'environmental cabinet', Centralina and Catawba Regional Councils of Government. [Click here to access the article.](#)

Denver Business Journal: "Atlanta leaders learn lessons on regionalism in Denver", Atlantic Regional Commission and Director, Chick Krautler organizes trip. [Click here for additional information.](#)

President Elect Steve Cassano Participates in CALCOG's 15th Annual Regional Issues Forum. [Click here for more information.](#)

## **PUBLICCOMMENTS**

***Please send NARC any public comments your organization intends to submit.***

EPA Seeks Public Comments on Water Strategy to Respond to Climate Change: [For additional information, click here.](#) The last day to submit comments is Tuesday, May 27th.

Request for Public Comment: Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies requests recommendations. [For additional information, click here.](#) Last day to submit comments is June 5th.

EPA Seeks Public Comments on Renewable Fuel Standard Waiver Request. Click [HERE](#) for more information on EPA's Renewable Fuels Standard Program.

## **UPCOMINGEVENTS**

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**June 4-6, Iowa City, IA:** Iowa Department of Transportation and [Johnson County Council of Governments](#) will host 2008 Midwest Transportation Planning Conference. Registration information is available by [visiting Iowa DOT's website](#).

**June 11-12, Washington, DC:** Brookings will host The Summit for American Prosperity: Washington and Metro Areas Working Together. This topic will also be discussed at NARC's upcoming 2008 Annual Conference and Exhibition. For additional details or to register for this event, [visit Brookings website](#).

**June 15-17, Des Moines, IA:** NARC and [Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization](#) will host the 2008 Annual Conference and Exhibition. For additional information or to register for the conference, [visit NARC's website](#).

**June 25-26, Ann Arbor, MI:** Regional Economic Models, Inc. will host a Research Conference on Transportation and Economic Development. For additional details, or to register for this free event, [visit REMI's website](#).

**July 29-30, Pittsburgh, PA:** The Alliance for Regional Stewardship will host the Regional Strategies Forum 2008. Included in this event will be a celebration of Civic Leader John Parr's life and accomplishments. Registration and details are available by [visiting ARS's website](#).

**September 15-17, Toledo, OH:** Mark your calendars! [Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments](#) will be hosting the 2008 Transportation Summit and Ohio Conference on Freight. Additional information is available on [TMACOG's website](#).

**January 22-24, Albuquerque, NM:** 8th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference is now seeking proposals for sessions. For additional information on submitting a proposal, [visit the New Partners website by clicking here](#).

BUILDING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES – LARGE, SMALL, URBAN AND RURAL – THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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