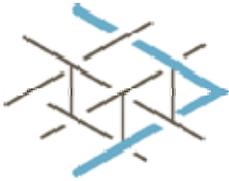


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XI, No. 40, November 14, 2011

eRegions

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Regional Council of

Governments

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

You will see in-depth analysis of Congressional action on the budget, program authorizations and debt reduction soon. Of particular note is action by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee that effectively eliminates (pending a review

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)
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[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

PROGRAM UPDATE

NARC Transportation Committee Webinar Tomorrow: The next Transportation Committee webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2011 from 12:00-2:00pm ET. The webinar will focus on *Regional Aviation Systems Planning: Introductions and Perspectives* and will feature the case studies we've recently created. While the agenda is yet to be released, you can Click [HERE](#) to register early.

DOI and DOE Prepare Draft Solar Energy Development PEIS: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Energy (DOE) have started preparing the Draft Solar Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft Solar PEIS), and are accepting public comment through Jan 27, 2012. This guidance will facilitate environmentally responsible utility-scale solar energy development by establishing environmental policies and design features in six western states—Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada and Utah. For more information, click [HERE](#).

The Solar Foundation Releases Report: Solar Industry Growth Soars: Numbers of U.S. jobs in the solar energy field continue to rise,

process) MPOs under 200,000 in population.

Why is this a concern?
For reasons that may not be that obvious (the elimination of long-standing regional planning organizations and access to federal funding), which include review and elimination of every other regional planning program (WIB's, EDD's, LDD's, AAA's, MPO's over 200k, as examples), puts into question the push for sustainable communities, regional collaboration, the linking of planning processes, and the need and reason for local governments to work regionally at all – ever!
While I may be ringing the warning bell here, we need to think about the long term and what implications this and other actions have on our work.

Best,
Fred

NARCSTAFF

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Program Analyst

according to a report by the Solar Foundation, a nonprofit solar education and research organization, which released its second annual review of the solar workforce in the U.S. More than 100,000 workers are now employed in the U.S. solar industry, according to the **National Solar Jobs Census 2011**. The survey calculated a 6.8% growth rate in the industry, which is growth ten times faster than the overall economy.

New Solar Reports: *Solar Goes to School and State Grades on Grid Connection*: A new DOE report titled **Solar Schools Assessment and Implementation Project** details best practices for financing and installing photovoltaic (PV) systems on school buildings. In addition, the 2011 **Freeing the Grid** report from the Network for New Energy Choices gives each U.S. state its annual grade on net metering policies and interconnection procedures. Be sure to check out the valuable lessons in both of these publications.

POLICYUPDATE

The House and Senate are in session.

NARC Sends Letters Supporting EDA: Last week, NARC sent letters to Rep. Pompeo (R-OK), as well as all cosponsors and relevant subcommittee chairs and ranking members, for **HR 3090** – The EDA Elimination Act of 2011, regarding the importance of the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to the economic viability and success of regions across the country. Access a copy of the letter **HERE**, and please submit any EDA success stories, including specific funding amounts and project impacts to **Jenee Kresge**.

Debt Committee Update: The Debt Committee has until November 23 to pass a deal that determines how to create \$1.2 trillion in deficit savings over the next decade in addition to an estimated \$917 billion already achieved by caps on discretionary appropriations. The next step in the process is for the House and Senate to vote on the plan by December 23 and to be ready for the president's signature by January 15, 2012. If the deadlines are not met, or if the Committee's plan doesn't meet the requirements, automatic, across-the-board spending cuts would be triggered to take effect over nine years to meet the overall goal; these cuts would be equally split amongst defense and non-defense accounts. To date, members of the Committee remain at differences

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over both revenue and entitlement spending issues. The Committee is currently examining options to determine the amount of new revenue to be raised via taxes but allow the House and Senate tax writing committees to fill in details next year. Last week, President Obama publicly stated that he would reject any proposal that includes a block to the automatic cuts.

FY12 Appropriations Update: The current funding stopgap bill expires on November 18 and Congress has yet to pass the 12 appropriations bills. This week, the Senate is expected to vote on its second combined appropriations bill, which would provide \$129.5 billion and roll together Energy-Water (HR 2354), Financial Services (S 1573) and State-Foreign Operations (S 1601) spending bills. Several amendments are expected to be tacked onto the bill focused on both funding levels and policy provisions, which could hold up the process. The first minibus bill (HR 2112), which combined Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science, and Transportation-HUD, is expected to have a filed conference report finalized today, preparing it for approval by Congress. It is anticipated that this bill will also carry a continuing resolution that extends current funding to keep the government operating past November 18.

House to Vote on Balanced Budget Amendment: The House is set to vote this week on **HJ Res 2**, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. This amendment would require that the government operate under a balanced budget and not run any deficits on an annual basis unless otherwise allowed by Congressional authorization.

PARTNERUPDATE

ICMA Event: Finding Your True North: Leading with Purpose: ICMA, in partnership with the Authentic Leadership Institute, is offering a new, one-and-a-half-day program that will set you on the path toward discovering the authentic leader within you. Through stories, guided exercises, and feedback, **Finding Your True North** will help you gain perspective about your identity and true purpose and how best to apply your authentic leadership talents. By understanding at a deep level your motivations, passions, strengths and weaknesses, you'll clarify your leadership "sweet spot." Most importantly, you'll become part of a group of like-minded leaders, who will help you create and implement an action plan for leading an authentic, purposeful life. Join us for this powerful,

life-changing program and learn how to lead authentically and with purpose. For more information, visit icma.org/TrueNorth.

Solar Survey: ICMA is conducting a solar survey of local governments to collect data on what local governments are doing related to the adoption of solar energy. The survey was sent to the Chief Elected or Appointed Official of all city- and county- type local governments with a population of 2,500 or above and can also be completed online (the URL and your jurisdiction's unique 6-digit identifier are provided on the paper survey). If you need to obtain your identifier or have questions, please email solar@icma.org.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

NIFA Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program Accepting Applications

Applications Due: November 17, 2011

The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is accepting applications for its Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, which includes funds for nonprofit organizations engaging in Community Food Projects, Planning Projects of Capacity Building Projects. Anticipated funding for the full program is \$5 million. More information is available [HERE](#).

2012 NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program

January 2012

Preliminary information regarding the 2012 National Spatial Data Information (NSDI) Cooperative Agreements Program has been released. A full grant announcement will be posted by the end of October. Click [HERE](#) to access the information that is available now.

UPCOMING EVENTS

White House State Specific Conference Call

November 14: Please join White House officials for our next round of State specific Conference Call. White House officials will provide a series of updates, including the American Jobs Act, the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget, and President Obama's "We Can't Wait" series of Executive actions. Please RSVP to OPERSVP@who.eop.gov with your name, organization, and city, state. Click [HERE](#) for specific times for VA, TX,

OH, PA, NJ, CA, MT and OR.

2012 National Spatial Data Infrastructure Cooperative Agreements Program Webinar

November 14, 1:00-2:00 pm ET: The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) invites you to participate in a free webinar that will provide information about the 2012 National Spatial Data Infrastructure Cooperative Agreements Program (NSDI CAP). The purpose of NSDI CAP is to fund innovative projects in the geospatial data community to build the infrastructure necessary to effectively discover, access, share, manage and use digital geospatial data. Participants will learn what the NSDI CAP is and how to apply for this federally funded program. Click [**HERE**](#) to register.

EDA Webinar: How Incubators Lead to Successful New Ventures

November 17, 2:00pm ET: The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) with its partners will present a 30-minute webinar covering best practices and related findings from the EDA-funded [**Incubating Success**](#) study. Click [**here**](#) to register and get more information.

2012 National Spatial Data Infrastructure Cooperative Agreements Program Webinar

December 1, 1:00-2:00 pm ET: The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) invites you to participate in a free webinar that will provide information about the 2012 National Spatial Data Infrastructure Cooperative Agreements Program (NSDI CAP). The purpose of NSDI CAP is to fund innovative projects in the geospatial data community to build the infrastructure necessary to effectively discover, access, share, manage and use digital geospatial data. Participants will learn what the NSDI CAP is and how to apply for this federally funded program. Click [**HERE**](#) to register.

2012 National Conference of Regions

February 12-14, 2012, Washington, DC: Save the Date! NARC will host its 2012 National Conference of Regions, which will focus on Obama Administration's priorities, Congressional activities, and critical policy issues and pending federal legislation that will impact regions. Registration and additional information will be available soon.

46th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 10-14, 2012, St. Petersburg, FL: Save the Date! 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. Registration and additional information will be available in early 2012.

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