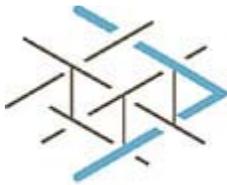


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIV, No. 4, January 27, 2014

eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

Congress is back in session and headed towards another debt ceiling showdown, despite the beating they took when the government shutdown last year. This is all happening while lawmakers are calling on colleagues to pass legislation.

We may have a Farm Bill compromise and movement on a surface transportation authorization - if members can focus on key programs. The Farm Bill has expired and transportation has a mere nine months left in its lifespan. In a letter from

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

A graphic for the 2014 National Conference of Regions. It features a 3D arrangement of blue and red cubes, with a globe in the center. The text reads: "2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS", "FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014 WASHINGTON, DC", and "REGISTER TODAY!". The NARC logo and tagline "Building Regional Communities" are also present.

2014 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

REGISTER TODAY!

 **NARC**
Building Regional Communities

DOE SunShot Initiative: On January 14, NARC participated in the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) SunShot Initiative Rooftop Solar Challenge In-Person Kick-off Meeting in Washington, D.C. NARC was joined by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) and Meister Consultants Group to represent the Solar Ready II project. At the meeting, NARC discussed their ongoing solar initiatives, networked with other national teams, and connected with individuals working in the same region as Solar Ready II partners. NARC looks forward to continuing its work with MARC and its nine other regional councils partners, to bolster solar energy on the local and regional level.

PROGRAM UPDATE

HUD Solicits Input for Online Best-Practices Portal: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is collecting

the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee Members to Committee Chairman Camp, they state "our transportation programs will begin to notice the drop in funding this summer, when the Highway Trust Fund's available cash on hand is likely to fall below \$4 billion, which is the minimum amount necessary to maintain a sufficient balance to meet week-to-week obligations." An amount below this level makes it difficult to meet project and program reimbursements and payments.

Best,
Fred

NARCLEADERSHIP

President

Hon. Penny Gross
Supervisor,
Fairfax County, VA

Chair Jim Hassinger,
Executive Directors
Council
Executive Director,
Southwestern
Pennsylvania Commission

NARCSTAFF

Fred Abousleman

submissions to feature on the agency's Innovation of the Day Portal. This online tool highlights exciting innovative housing, community development, and built environment practices from around the world. **The deadline to submit an innovation is Friday, February 7.** More information is available [HERE](#).

New Study Finds U.S. Solar Jobs Grew 20% Last Year: The Solar Foundation released its fourth annual *National Solar Jobs Census*, which found that the U.S. Solar Industry employed 142,698 Americans in 2013. The full report is available [HERE](#).

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

State of the Union Address: Tune into President Obama's State of the Union Address tomorrow, Tuesday, January 28 at 9:00PM EST. Some items expected to be covered in this speech include: economic fairness; healthcare; immigration; climate change; tax reform; infrastructure investment; and, education. NARC will provide a brief summary following its delivery.

Budget Update: The White House will release its fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget request on March 4, a week later than statutorily required due to the delayed completion of FY14 funding. This will propel Congressional activity on the FY15 budget. Also in the works is the next debt ceiling limit deadline, which expires on Friday, February 7. House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) has indicated that he wants to institute spending cuts or other debt reduction reforms in exchange for raising the \$17.3 trillion limit. It is expected that, at a minimum, a short-term deal will be struck to avoid default.

All Signs Point Toward Farm Bill Vote This Week: Conferees hammering out a compromise package for long-term Farm Bill reauthorization spent Sunday night and Monday morning discussing final details. A conference bill is expected by Monday evening, and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) reserved time on Wednesday's calendar to vote on final passage. The timeline is tight, but if lawmakers stick to the outlined schedule, consideration in both chambers is possible by the end of the month.

Workforce Discussions Gaining Traction in Senate: The issue of

Executive Director
Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director
Autumn Campbell

Director of Community
Programs
Mia Colson

Program Analyst
Nathan Devers

Intern

Marcy Fritter

Office Manager

Bridget Gribbin

Intern

Taylor Markwith

Program Associate

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of
Communications

Anna Rosenbaum

Communications

Associate

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Workforce Development reauthorization appears to be gaining more steam in the Senate as several legislators have pushed proposals that could be considered as amendments to the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization bill (S 1356) that is due for floor consideration. Earlier this month, Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) introduced the SKILLS Act (S. 1911), an identical bill to the measure that passed the House in March 2013. NARC and numerous Workforce industry colleagues oppose the SKILLS Act, but will continue to push the overdue reauthorization bill to the Senate floor.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

U.S. Department of Labor – Employment Training Administration

Deadline: January 27

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), has announced \$100 million in grant funds for the Youth CareerConnect grant program. The program is designed to provide high school students with education and training that combines rigorous academic and technical curricula focused on specific in-demand occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers as well as the related activities necessary to support such training to increase participants' employability in H-1B in-demand industries and occupations. More information is available **HERE.**

National Science Foundation (NSF) - Cyber-Physical Systems

Deadline: January 29

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have a shared interest in advancing basic and applied research in Cyber Physical Systems (CPS), which are systems in which physical processes are tightly intertwined with networked computing. For transportation, CPS will provide the foundation necessary for a safe, efficient highway transportation system connecting vehicles, infrastructure, people, and goods in a vibrant, competitive economy. More information is available **HERE.**

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Deadline: January 30

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$181 million to develop commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit existing facilities with appropriate technology to develop advanced biofuels. Funding is available through the Biorefinery Assistance Program provides loan guarantees to viable commercial-

scale facilities to develop new and emerging technologies for advanced biofuels. The announcement is available [HERE](#), more information about the program is available [HERE](#) and the full text of the Federal Register notice is available [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: January 31

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has announced funding for the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program, which will support projects that reduce communities' vulnerability to the growing risks from coastal storms, sea level rise, flooding, erosion, and associated threats through strengthening natural ecosystems that also benefit fish and wildlife. The program will award more than \$100 million in grants to states officially declared a natural disaster as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Details available [HERE](#).

Health Impact Project

Funding Announced in February

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is planning to launch a call for proposals for funding in February 2014. Grants will support health impact assessment (HIA) demonstration projects as well as development of HIA programs to integrate health in decision-making. More information on this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Housing

Deadline: February 3

Funding is available for FY 2013 and FY 2014 Continuum of Care Program Competition (CoC) to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness. Full text of the notice of funding availability (NOFA) is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering

Deadline: February 4

The Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering (CyberSEES) program aims to advance interdisciplinary research in

which the science and engineering of sustainability are enabled by new advances in computing, and where computational innovation is grounded in the context of sustainability problems. Read more [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: February 5

The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program seeks to develop nation-wide-community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. Projects seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: February 18

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for eligible applicants for projects that address local environmental and public health issues within an affected community. The CPS Program is designed to help communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

Energy for Sustainability

Deadline: February 20

This program supports fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources. Current interest areas in sustainable energy technologies are: Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy, Photovoltaic Solar Energy, Wind Energy, and Advanced Batteries for Transportation. Learn more about this program [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Value-Added Producer Grant Program

Deadline: February 24

The USDA announced \$10.5 million in carry-over funding from 2013 to help U.S. agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Awards may be made for either economic planning or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of valued- added

agricultural products. More information is available [HERE](#).

New! Regional Centers of Excellence

Application Due: February 28

NARC, with support from the U.S. Forest Service, is seeking applications for the distribution of grants to regional organizations promoting the use of green infrastructure. Click [HERE](#) for details.

U.S. Department of Energy

Deadline: Final applications due March 13; Concept Papers were due January 13

As part of a new \$19 million investment in solar energy, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced funding available under the SunShot Incubator 9 program. This program will focus on early-stage support for small companies, encouraging private-sector investment and seeking app and web developers from both inside and outside of the energy industry to zero in on reducing soft costs of solar adoption. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration

Deadlines: March 14 for funding cycle 3 of FY 2014;

June 13 for funding cycle 4 of FY 2014

EDA is soliciting applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides competitive, merit-based investments that support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. The full announcement is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Environmental Sustainability

Deadline: March 20

The Environmental Sustainability program supports engineering research that seeks to balance society's need to provide ecological protection and maintain stable economic conditions. Research in Environmental Sustainability typically considers long time horizons and

may incorporate contributions from the social sciences and ethics. There are four principal general research areas which are supported: Industrial Ecology, Green Engineering, Ecological Engineering, Earth Systems Engineering. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Climate Solutions University Accepting Applications

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Model Forest Policy Program is offering a special funding opportunity for qualifying U.S. urban and rural communities working together addressing ecosystem services. Urban decision makers need to plan for climate impacts that result from land changes beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. To find out more about the Climate Solutions University, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions

February 9-11, Washington, DC

The National Conference of Regions is the forum that NARC uses to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda on topics of relevance and importance to executive directors and local elected officials representing regional organizations and boards. Registration, hotel information and a draft agenda are available on the conference website [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Solar Maps as Tools for Advancing Solar Energy

February 13, 2013 3:00-4:00 PM EST

Hosted by Clean Energy States Alliance, this webinar will highlight cutting-edge map-based tools developed in the District of Columbia, New York, and Ohio – and focus primarily on maps that show the potential suitability of installing solar on particular buildings within a community. These maps serve as good models for other states and communities. More information and registration is available [HERE](#).

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference: “Are Your Building and Land Use Codes Ready for the Changing Climate?”

February 13-15, Denver, CO

The New Partners for Smart Growth Conference fosters discussion on building safe, healthy, equitable and prosperous communities. The conference will feature a session that explores code changes that communities can make to better prepare themselves for climate change in addition to providing other benefits. Register [HERE](#).

NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 6-11, Louisville, KY

The Annual Conference and Exhibition is the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. Held annually in June, NARC's Annual Conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Additional information will be available in early 2014.

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