



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Congress is in session.

EDA Elimination Act Introduced in the House: Yesterday, Rep. Pompeo (R-KS) reintroduced the *EDA Elimination Act* (H.R. 661), which would eliminate all funding for the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Rep. Pompeo offered this bill in two prior congressional sessions as an amendment to the *Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations* bill (CJS). The amendment failed twice, due to pressure on Congressional members to vote no. NARC urges its members to explain the importance of EDA programs in regions to Members of Congress, and urge them to oppose this legislation whether it is brought to the floor as an amendment to CJS or a stand alone bill.

Bicameral Hearing on WOTUS: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) held a rare bicameral hearing on February 4, *The Impacts of the Proposed Waters of the United States Rule on State and Local Governments* (WOTUS). The hearing lasted over three hours, with the bulk of that time used by the Committees to pepper U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy with questions about the rule. The National Association of Counties (NACo) First Vice President Sallie Clark (El Paso County, CO Commissioner) testified, focusing her [testimony](#) on the importance of the local, state and federal partnership in crafting practical rules to ensure clean water without impeding counties' fundamental infrastructure and public safety functions. Click [HERE](#) for NARC's brief summary of the hearing. Click [HERE](#) for a coalition letter signed by NARC and NACo on the issue.

House Passes Unfunded Mandates Bill: Last week, the House passed the *Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2015* ([H.R. 50](#)) by a 250-173 vote. The bill requires independent agencies previously exempt from the *Unfunded Mandates Reform Act* to determine whether any proposed rules would impose unfunded mandates on local or state governments or the private sector. All such agency statements on regulatory actions would be required to include an analysis on the annual costs of a proposed final rule on state, local, and tribal governments or the private sector. The bill now goes to the Senate for their consideration. Additionally, the White House issued a veto threat on the bill, stating that it would introduce uncertainty in the Agency decision-making process. Click [HERE](#) for the White House press release.

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill Stalls in Senate: Last week, the Senate failed to overcome a procedural vote on the House-passed FY 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill ([H.R. 240](#)), getting only 51 of the 60 votes needed to keep it alive in the Senate. Senate Democrats oppose the bill because it prohibits implementation of the President's executive actions on immigration. The current funding bill for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) expires on February 27. Without Congressional action, DHS will be forced to close after that date.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Net Neutrality Proposal Circulated by FCC: Last week, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler circulated his highly anticipated net neutrality proposal to his FCC commissioners in advance of their public meeting, scheduled for February 26. Although the proposal was not publicly released, the FCC posted a [fact sheet](#) to its website. The fact sheet indicated that Wheeler recommends that FCC regulate Internet services like a public utility. The proposal would ban broadband providers from "blocking, throttling, or using paid prioritization" and extend those protections to mobile broadband. Last month, the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee released [draft legislation](#) that would prohibit the FCC from reclassifying broadband as a utility or use its authority to regulate broadband. Without such legislation, the FCC does have the authority to regulate broadband and to treat it as a utility.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants still open!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of events still open!

WORKSHOP: Facilitation

Multiple Locations and Dates

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) is offering a two-hour workshop to help you develop your meeting facilitation skills. *Facilitation: A Skill to Run a Meeting or a Platform for Leadership* is a skill building workshop that will help you improve the efficiency and productivity of your meetings. Starting with the steps necessary to facilitate, this workshop provides strategies for engagement, meeting preparation, event management, and more. Click [HERE](#) to find a workshop near you.