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## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Dear NARC Members,

Thank you for attending NARC's legislative conference last week! If you attended, check out photos and tweets [HERE](#), and presentations from the event [HERE](#). If you missed it, we've included short summaries of each session for your perusal.

Also, please let us know about your visits to Capitol Hill. Your feedback provides valuable information on Members of Congress interested in NARC's legislative issues.

Thanks,  
Joanna

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## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*Both House and Senate will resume session next week.*

**Permanent Internet Tax Prohibition Introduced in the Senate:** Last week, Senators John Thune (R-SD) and Ron Wyden (D-OR) reintroduced the *Internet Tax Freedom Forever Act*. The legislation would permanently extend the *Internet Tax Freedom Act* (ITFA), initially signed into law in 1998 to prevent any state or local taxation on broadband services. The current prohibition expires on September 30. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) introduced similar legislation, the *Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act* (H.R. 235), last month. The organizations that comprise the "Big 7" - associations representing state and local elected officials – oppose these prohibitions on state and local taxation of broadband services.

**Senate Confirms Carter as Defense Secretary:** The Senate confirmed Ashton Carter as the next U.S. Secretary of Defense in a 93-5 vote last week. Carter served as Deputy Secretary of Defense from 2011 to 2013. He will replace outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel.

**Upton Releases Framework for Comprehensive Energy Package:** House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) released *The Architecture of Abundance*, a framework that identifies four principles for long-term legislation: modernizing energy infrastructure, modernizing America's energy workforce, energy diplomacy, and energy efficiency and innovation. The Committee will debate and craft proposals on each principle individually, aiming to combine all proposals into a comprehensive energy package for floor consideration this summer. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chair Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) stated her intent to focus on energy infrastructure, supply, efficiency, and accountability in her comprehensive package.

**Foxx Testifies at T&I Hearing:** Last week, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx appeared before the House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee to discuss the surface transportation reauthorization bill. Foxx emphasized the need for a long-term funding solution, pleading for Congress to 'budget for results' and 'set the ceiling, not the floor' for transportation infrastructure investments. Though there was a clear consensus that long-term funding is necessary, there was clear disparity of opinion on the best mechanism for acquiring such funding. Suggestions ranged from raising the gas tax, repatriation, implementing road usage fees, and making research and development funds accessible. The full committee hearing is available for online viewing [HERE](#).

**Delaney Introduces Bill for Repatriation:** On January 30, Representative John Delaney (D-MD) introduced the *Infrastructure 2.0 Act*. The bill proposes to repatriate offshore earnings for investment in domestic infrastructure, sets an 18-month deadline for international tax reform, and offers fallback solutions for international tax reform. Click [HERE](#) to view the bill.

**Piecemeal Tax Reform:** Though the Administration and supporters are pushing hard to develop a passable comprehensive tax overhaul, some in the Senate including Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) have suggested addressing certain tax reforms separately. Such a move would allow Congress to resolve time-sensitive issues like a six-year revenue-generating tax plan to maintain the HTF, while putting off more contentious pieces. As the HTF expiration deadline nears, time may force the Administration to consider a repatriation tax separately.

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## PROGRAM UPDATE

**Homeland Security Appropriations In Limbo:** Congress left for recess without passing homeland security funding legislation, which will expire on February 27. The House passed a version of the bill ([HR 240](#)) that includes riders preventing enforcement of President Obama's immigration executive orders, but Senate Democrats have resisted attempts to pass that version, instead calling for a clean bill. When Congress returns, this will be the first order of business on the agenda, although how leadership will accomplish the task remains to be seen.

**NOAA Climate Science Strategy Open for Comments:** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a draft *Climate Science Strategy* for public comment. The purpose of the Strategy is to increase the production, delivery, and use of climate-related information. The Strategy is part of a proactive approach to collect and provide information on changing climate and ocean conditions to resource managers. Click [HERE](#) to read the Strategy and provide your comments. Comments are requested by March 31, 2015.

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## REGIONS 360

**Atlanta's Projected Population Boom:** The Atlanta region is expecting three million more people by the year 2040. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is presenting a plan to meet the needs of a modern mid-Century Georgia, in order to upgrade roads, infrastructure, and water supply systems to meet the needs for this projected population boom. ARC Transportation Director John Ooor explains that "we are on the cusp of some major technological change." Their report represents a future society in which eighty percent of cars have driverless options, commute times are quicker because more people will telecommute, and roadways will likely have solar technology. Click [HERE](#) for the full article.

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## MEMBERSHIP REQUEST

Please send responses to Anna Rosenbaum, [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org).

**YVCOG - Annual Retreat for Elected Officials:** Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) in Yakima, WA is interested in holding an annual retreat for their elected officials. Does your organization hold a yearly retreat for its elected officials, to educate them on services/programs offered by your regional council? If yes, how do you structure your retreat? How long does the retreat last? Do you pay for all expenses (hotel, food, etc)? How do you encourage attendance? Are you willing to share your agendas/handouts as an example?

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

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

### DOE Announces \$13 Million to Help Communities Go Solar

*Deadline for Concept Papers: March 5*

On February 6, the U.S. Department of Energy Department (DOE) announced \$13 million in funding to help communities reduce market and policy barriers to solar energy deployment. The Solar Powering America by Recognizing Communities (SPARC) funding opportunity will establish a national recognition and technical assistance program for local governments. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

### WEBINAR: ACTrees – The Power of Regional Action

*February 19, 1:00–2:00 PM ET*

Regional entities within states are growing to support and advance local interest in community trees. Regional councils provide unique support and leadership to diverse stakeholders across county boundaries, addressing watershed, forest health, and sustainable development concerns. Equipped with a broad perspective on trends affecting community trees in metropolitan areas, regional urban forest councils strengthen local capacity to advocate, care for, and plant trees. Join this webinar hosted by Alliance for Community Trees (ACTrees) for more information on their efforts. Click [HERE](#) to register.

### WEBINAR: Measuring America: An Overview on Computer and Internet Use and Related Statistics

*February 19, 2:00–3:00 PM ET*

This topical webinar will help you in the search and navigation of the U.S. Census website, and in locating data on Computer and Internet Use. It will include visual examples and actual tools to locate and access data, as well as demonstrate how these data can be used. Some familiarity with Census Bureau data would be helpful before viewing this webinar. Click [HERE](#) to login. Dial-in info: 1-866-524-2659 Passcode: 6287837.

**WEBINAR: EDA Budget**

*Date Change – New Date: February 24, 3:00 PM ET*

On February 2, President Obama released the details of his Fiscal Year 2016 budget request to Congress. This request includes \$273 million for the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Join EDA for a webinar to learn more about the specifics of EDA's request and priorities for the next fiscal year. Click [HERE](#) for details regarding EDA's FY2016 Budget Request. Join the event directly [HERE](#).

**WEBINAR: Supreme Court and local Governments Mid-Term Review**

*March 5, 1:00–2:30 PM ET*

Since the State and Local Legal Center's Supreme Court Preview webinar in October, the Court has accepted a number of cases affecting state and local government on topics ranging from Fourth Amendment searches to regulating power plant emissions to limiting messages on license plates. Discuss these cases and the Affordable Care Act case and the same-sex marriage cases with Jeff Wall, Sullivan & Cromwell, Lori Alvino McGill, Quinn Emanuel, and Richard Wolf, USA Today. Click [HERE](#) to register for the free webinar.

**2 DAY PROGRAM: ICMA – Emerging Professionals Leadership Institute**

*Multiple Locations and Dates*

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) is offering a two-day program to give early career professionals the skills and understanding of what it takes to be an effective supervisor. The Emerging Professionals Leadership Institute (EPLI) includes a 3.5 hour ICMA University Workshop, *Foundational Skills: Moving from Employee to Supervisor and Leadership*, as well as a work session presented by ICMA-RC on making saving a top priority for \$99. Click [HERE](#) to find an EPLI event near you.