



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

## NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

*Congress is in session.*

### Overview

The National Governors Association and National Association of Counties conferences are taking place this week and Congress is in session, so lots of legislators are in DC right now.

While the presidential election primaries and discussion over a successor to Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia are in full swing, Congress will begin hearings on the 2017 appropriations debate this week. Committees in both the House and Senate have scheduled hearings on individual spending bills with cabinet secretaries and agency heads to justify the Administration's budget request. Despite last year's budget agreement that kept spending at current levels for most programs important to NARC and local governments, the intense battle over the Supreme Court opening combined with the anger over Speaker Ryan's first budget negotiations with the White House should jettison any chance for a typical appropriations debate.

The Congressional Budget Office reported that the federal deficit will soar over the next decade if we keep pace with current spending levels without finding additional revenue. Then today, *Congressional Quarterly* reported that House Republicans reached agreement over the weekend on a budget resolution with deep spending cuts. All of these factors make another partisan battle over spending a very likely concern, potentially jeopardizing 2017 funding for local programs like community development block grants, transit, and public safety.

### Up In The Air

One of the major issues in the upcoming Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization is the regulation of drones. As part of the integration of drones into the system, Congress is looking to provide more of a framework for drones in the FAA authorization. Additionally, FAA will be releasing small-drone regulations this year. Still, there are many unanswered questions regarding public safety and personal rights in the use of drones. Drones are especially useful for inspection of infrastructure, monitoring crops, and transporting medical supplies but they are also used for recreation and potentially package delivery. This crossover of personal and commercial use creates a difficult regulation task. A framework of regulations will need to be developed intelligently and quickly to integrate unmanned aircrafts into the system starting with FAA's reauthorization.

## OTHER NEWS

### Member Forums Now Available on NARC's Website

NARC is pleased to announce the launch of the beta version of our member forum platform. NARC members will be now able to use our forums to discuss regional planning issues and initiatives, share resources, collaborate on programs and projects, and more. Create a topic and join the discussion today! To register, visit [www.narc.org/forums/register](http://www.narc.org/forums/register) or follow the link on the top right of NARC's homepage. For more information on how to register, log in, and start using the

forums, see our “**how to**” **guide**.

## **FEATURED JOBS**

***View full list of jobs!***

### **Communications Specialist**

Pima Association of Governments, Tucson, AZ

### **Planning Program Manager**

Rogue Valley Council of Governments, Central Point, OR

## **FUNDING**

***View full list of grants!***

## **EVENTS**

***View full list of events!***

### **NARC WEBINAR! America’s Model Energy Code Webinar**

March 2, 2:00 PM ET

We had great turn out for the first webinar so we're repeating it for those that couldn't make it. The International Code Council is updating America's Model Energy Code and this is your chance to weigh in. Local officials play a pivotal role in ensuring that energy codes remain efficient, saving governments and constituents money. NARC is working with six other national organizations on new building energy codes and NARC's role in the project is to inform regional councils and their member local governments about the upcoming November 2016 vote on the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code. This webinar will discuss what regional councils' member jurisdictions MUST do to be eligible to cast their votes. To participate, you must register to vote by March 18th, so tune in to learn more about this initiative and how your region can get involved, visit [www.narc.org/energy-codes](http://www.narc.org/energy-codes).

### **Census Toolkit Webinar**

March 2, 3:00 PM ET

The Census Project is teaming up with the Association of Public Data Users to unveil their new toolkit, *Supporting the Census & ACS: A Toolkit for Coalition Building*. This resource will help state and local organizations harness their influence in support of an accurate census and comprehensive ACS.

## **CONTACT US**

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