



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



NARC Needs Your Help with the MPO Coordination Rule!

Has a member of your congressional delegation (or their staff) offered to help rescind the MPO Coordination Rule or otherwise expressed their opposition to the rule? If so, please let NARC know as soon as possible. There are matching stand-alone bills ready to be dropped in the House and Senate, but we need co-sponsors before that can happen. Please contact Erich Zimmermann, erich@narc.org, immediately with details of which members we should contact, the level of their opposition, and other details that will be helpful. Thanks!

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Congress is back for a six-week work session.

Overview

On Tuesday night, President Trump will address a joint session of Congress. The speech, similar to a State of the Union, traditionally provides the president an opportunity to discuss legislative priorities.

President Trump is expected to unveil a 2018 budget outline Monday that increases defense spending and spares big entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare, which Trump has promised not to cut. The budget is expected to include a \$54 billion cut in non-defense spending. He will, however, reduce spending on domestic programs that impact local governments in order to keep spending totals in line. Although specific agency budgets have not been released, the president will call for billions in cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency and State Department according to reports.

President Trump presented the budget outlines at a meeting of the National Governors' Association. At the meeting, he announced priorities of cutting taxes, streamlining regulations to move infrastructure projects more quickly, and deporting violent criminals who are not in the

country legally.

In comments to the National Governors' Association meeting in DC, the new Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao told the governors that the White House is seeking consensus on how to pay for the infrastructure plan promised by President Trump during the presidential campaign. Mr. Trump promised to spend \$1 trillion over 10 years rebuilding the nation's infrastructure but offered few specifics. Other administration officials have mentioned private sector dollars and repatriation of corporate profits but there is concern among many that private deals will not solve the infrastructure investment gap in rural areas and other projects that don't offer a revenue stream. Tomorrow's presidential address to Congress might offer additional details on the infrastructure plan, which will be pushed back while Congress works on the budget and tax reform.

Housing Coalition Seeks to Defend Existing Program to Assist Households at Risk

A coalition of national, state, and local organizations has come together under the umbrella of the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the National Low Income Housing Coalition to address proposals to cut homeless programs and those designed to support affordable housing. The coalition, of which NARC is a part, is made up of education, housing, government, anti-poverty programs. It received a planning grant from the Melville Charitable Trust, a foundation whose sole purpose is to eliminate homelessness, to draft a long-term plan to educate the general public and move state and federal legislators to move legislation that addresses homelessness and the lack of affordable housing. It is likely that these efforts will begin in late spring or early summer of 2017. More information will follow as plans become firmer.

Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce Issues Letter in Support of Maintaining WIOA Funding

The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW), of which NARC is a founding member, forwarded today a letter to Senate and House Appropriations Committee chairs and ranking members urging them to fund, at current levels, key education and workforce programs that will contribute to successful workforce development and job growth efforts. Among the programs emphasized in the letter were the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Carl D. Perkins Act, Higher Education Act, Older Americans Act, and other programs that help Americans gain family-supporting jobs. The letter points out that "Investments in America's workers' skills and education are critical to businesses, workers, and the economy," and that it is only in this way that we can ensure that our nation remains competitive in the world economy. A copy of the letter is attached.

Environmental Concerns

In the midst of the new administration's plans to reshape the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), supporters rallied in Atlanta on Friday, to back the agency, staff, and work. Last Thursday, House Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and the New Jersey Sierra Club made a presence outside the EPA Region 2 Laboratory and Environment Center in Edison, NJ to fight expected moves by Administrator Scott Pruitt to cut programs within the agency dedicated to clean air, safe drinking water, and climate change.

Infrastructure Plan Delays?

An extremely busy 2017 legislative calendar combined with electoral realities have some Republicans assuming a significant delay – to 2018 – for a Trump infrastructure package. With elections in late 2018, the thinking goes that Democrats will be more willing to cut a deal with the administration on a major spending bill to boost their own chances of electoral success. Separately, there is also growing recognition that a tax bill will need to be worked out before an infrastructure package can really take shape. The timing of a tax overhaul bill is uncertain, but is likely to be measured in months, not years. Once that is known, an infrastructure bill can be developed.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

FEMA Seeks Applicants for National Youth Preparedness Council

Deadline: March 31, 11:59 PST

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is seeking applicants for its Youth Preparedness Council. FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council was formed in 2012 to bring together

teens from across the country who are interested and engaged in advocating for preparedness. Council members are selected based on their dedication to public service, efforts in making a difference in their communities, and potential to expand their impact as national advocates for preparedness. Students in 8th through 11th grade are eligible to apply.

The Youth Preparedness Council offers an opportunity for youth leaders to serve on a distinguished national council and participate in the Youth Preparedness Council Summit in Washington, D.C. During their two-year term, the leaders will complete both a local and national-level project and share their ideas regarding youth disaster preparedness with national organizations and FEMA leadership.

Youth interested in applying to the Council must submit a completed application form, two letters of recommendation, and copies of their academic records. Information about completing and submitting the application and attachments can be found in the application instructions. New Youth Preparedness Council members will be announced in May 2017.

February is Black History Month

Did your region do anything to mark the occasion? If so, please let us know at anna@narc.org. We'd love to get the word out!

MEMBER REQUEST

Please send responses to anna@narc.org.

Emergency Planning and Evacuation

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is exploring opportunities in the areas of emergency planning and evacuation. They seek feedback from other NARC members that are currently working in these areas. They are especially interested in speaking with COGs or other regional councils who have received federal grant funding for these activities.

Please provide us with a general overview of what you are doing, and indicate if you are willing to speak with SACOG about these efforts.

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Public Involvement Specialist—Transportation Planning

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

Planner III

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Pensacola, FL

Senior Grant Specialist

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Newark, NJ

Office Manager

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Newark, NJ

Principal Planner – Mobility Programs

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Newark, NJ

Field Data Collection Intern

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Executive Director

Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Salem, OR

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

Save the date! 51st Annual Conference & Exhibition

June 4-7 - Monterey, CA

Join NARC and the California Association of Councils of Governments for NARC's 51st Annual Conference and Exhibition, which focuses on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education.

CONTACT US

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