NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Senate is in session; House returns March 16

DHS Funded through End of Fiscal Year

Last Wednesday, the House approved a bill (**HR 240**) to fund the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through September 2015 in a 257-167 vote. This "clean" bill was passed by the Senate, and does not contain any policy riders that would prevent implementation of the Administration's executive actions on immigration.

Amtrak Reauthorization Passed in House

Last week, the House passed the *Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act* (**HR 749**) in a 316-101 vote. The legislation reauthorizes Amtrak programs for four years, while cutting its authorized funding levels by 40 percent. Currently, there is no Senate companion legislation.

Senate Fails to Override President's Keystone XL Veto

On Wednesday, the Senate failed to override the President's veto of the *Keystone XL Pipeline Act* (**S 1**). The vote was 62-37, five votes shy of the two-thirds majority needed. Keystone supporters could attempt to attach the measure to an appropriations bill, MAP-21 reauthorization, or a broader energy package to keep the bill alive.

Obama Announces New Initiative to Fast-Track Tech Workforce

The TechHire program includes commitments from 300 employers—including Google, Microsoft, and Goldman Sachs—as well as local governments in 20 regions to encourage, train, and hire for new tech positions. The average salary in information technology is 50% higher than the average private-sector American job, and approximately 1/10 of all job openings are in software development, network administration, and cybersecurity.

OTHER NEWS

How the Most At-Risk Cities Are Preparing for More Power Outages

Facing a future where extreme weather events are more common, cities on the East Coast are building up their resiliency. At-risk cities are trying to improve their infrastructure and emergency plans to prevent power outages.

MEMBER REQUESTS

Engaging and Training Elected Officials

Mike McKeever, Chief Executive Officer of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), is looking for information from NARC members that administer regional elected official engagement programs. SACOG's Board of Directors is interested in learning about regional collaborative activities, which create interactive engagement between various levels of local governance including cities, counties, special districts, school districts, park districts, water districts, and air districts.

Specifically, SACOG would like to know:

- What methods does your Council of Governments use to engage City Council Members and County Supervisors who are NOT already on your Boards of Directors? Of those methods, which were most effective? And on what issues?
- Do you have regional programs that include public agency partners beyond your member local governments (special districts, school districts, park districts, air districts and other sub-regional districts)? What collaborative approaches have resulted from their interactions?
- Do you partner with economic development and/or business organizations? How are the partnership roles & responsibilities defined? What have been some of the most successful outcomes of those partnerships?
- Which outreach strategies have been most effective in drawing active participation from a representative group of regional leaders? Which have not been so effective?

FEATURED JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Transportation Planner II
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Toledo, OH

Active Transportation Planner
Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake City, UT

Transportation Planner/Engineer
Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake City, UT

Transportation Engineer/Planner
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

Planner/Research Analyst
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

EVENTS

Research Your Community Food Mapping Tool Webinar
March 10, 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET
Research Your Community is a new mapping tool available on the Healthy Food Access Portal that can help individuals and organizations better understand the communities in which they are working to improve access to healthy food. The tool can also be a valuable resource for your advocacy and fundraising efforts. The grocery landscape is ever changing, and data is one of many ways to paint a picture of a community's need for healthy food access interventions. This webinar will train users about how to effectively leverage this new tool.

"Bottom Line" on Investment Needs For Our Transportation System
March 10, 4:00 - 5:00 PM ET
The Environmental and Energy Study Institute and the American Public Transportation Association, in conjunction with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, invite you to a briefing on the investment requirements for America's multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

CONTACT US