

March 21, 2016 [View this email in your browser](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

A graphic for the NARC Achievement & Leadership Awards. On the left is a 3D rendering of a crystal award. The award is octagonal with a white center containing the NARC logo and the text: "WALTER SCHEIBER LEADERSHIP AWARD", "Your Name", "Your Regional Council", and "2016". To the right of the award, the text reads: "Now Accepting Applications: NARC Achievement & Leadership Awards". Below this, it says: "NARC is excited to announce that submissions for the 2016 NARC Awards are now open." At the bottom right of the graphic is a smaller version of the NARC logo.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

House is in session. Senate is on a two-week recess.

Overview

President Barack Obama arrived in Havana, Cuba yesterday, the first visit by a sitting U.S. president in almost 90 years. After 15 months of steadily chipping away at the margins of U.S. sanctions against Cuba, he'll meet with Cuban President Raul Castro today. On Tuesday, President Obama will deliver remarks to the people of Cuba at the Gran Teatro de La Habana Alicia Alonso. Later, he will meet with members of Cuban civil society and the first family will attend a Major League Baseball exhibition game between the Tampa Bay Rays and the Cuban National Team at the Estadio Latinoamericano.

The Senate is on a two-week recess.

The House will consider six bills under suspension of the rules this week, including concurring on Senate amendments to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization (**HR 4721**), a bill (**S 2393**) on foreclosure relief for service members, and the *Older Americans Act* reauthorization bill (**S. 192**). The House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee hearing on Forest Service budget will meet tomorrow.

Appropriations

With opposition from within its own ranks, Republican leaders in the House are scrambling to figure out how to proceed in getting appropriations bills passed without a budget resolution in place to set top-line spending numbers. A potential path forward is to simply bypass the budget

resolution and proceed directly to the appropriations bills themselves. The *Congressional Budget Act* allows bills to come to the floor after May 15 without a resolution in place. It is unclear what fate these bills would suffer under such a process, but it would allow "Freedom Caucus" members to vote on bills to keep the government operating without being forced to vote on a budget resolution that increases discretionary spending by \$30 billion, as agreed to in last year's budget agreement.

If cuts are made to discretionary programs, they would result in major cuts to programs important to local governments, such as transit, public safety, and economic development.

House Passes OAA Reauthorization Bill by Voice Vote

After six months of negotiations between House majority and minority leaders on the House Education and Workforce Committee, the House's version of the Senate-passed *Older Americans Act* (OAA) reauthorization bill (S. 192) moved to the House floor. NARC sent a **letter endorsing S.192** to all House members on Friday. Today, S. 192 passed by a voice vote!

Movement on FAA Reauthorization

Last Thursday, the Senate passed an extension of FAA reauthorization, pushing off expiration until July 15. This sends the extension back to the House, which had previously extended the program for the same duration but extended the bill's tax provisions through March of next year. Both chambers have until March 31 to beat the current expiration of the program. The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation approved last week their long-term FAA reauthorization bill. The bill included 50 en bloc amendments and moved quickly to a final vote. The full Senate may take up the bill as early as April, when they return from recess.

NFIP Implements Rate Changes

Starting April 1, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is implementing several changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These changes are a result of continued implementation of the *Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012* and the *Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014* (HFIAA). Some of the changes include insurance policy premium increases, elimination of subsidies for certain pre-Flood Insurance Rate Map properties, and a revised PRP/Newly Mapped Application form showing premium calculations. More information and a summary of the rate changes are available [HERE](#).

Hands Off: The Future of Self-Driving Cars

Last Tuesday, representatives from Google, General Motors, Lyft, Delphi, and Duke University testified before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation about federal regulation of the self-driving car industry. The witnesses urged Congress to take the lead before a patchwork of state laws complicates innovation. Lyft and General Motors also discussed their plan to roll out autonomous vehicles in the ride-sharing app as a way to introduce and expose the public to the vehicles. Dr. Mary Cummings, Director of Duke Robotics and the Humans and Autonomy Laboratory, cautioned Congress that the technology is not yet ready for wide-spread use and cited cybersecurity and privacy concerns as major reasons we should not rush to deployment.

OTHER NEWS

NARC's New Program: Advancing Fuel and Vehicle Technology

This week, NARC launched the **Aggregated Alternative Technology Alliance** (AATA) initiative as part of a national effort to reduce petroleum consumption by 2.5 billion gallons per year by 2020 through the acquisition of alternative fuel and/or advanced technology vehicles and related technology (AFATVs). This initiative is funded by the **U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy** under the Alternative Fuel and Advanced Vehicle Procurement Aggregating Initiative. NARC will be working with five regional councils, nine Clean Cities coalitions, and five AFATV technical partners to positively impact the AFATV market in a 24-month period. AATA will create and deploy replicable fuel-neutral best practices and cooperative procurement templates that will enable competitive pricing and lower the up-front cost for AFATV acquisition in local, regional, and state jurisdictions, as well as for private fleets through five large regional procurement initiatives and one national scale initiative. For more information about AATA and ways your region can participate, please contact Taylor Markwith at taylor@narc.org.

MEMBER REQUESTS

Please email your responses to anna@narc.org.

Organizational IT Strategic Plan with GIS

The North Central RTPO in Ridgway, PA is looking for sample documents or RFPs for developing an Organizational IT Strategic Plan that includes GIS. North Central is both a Rural Transportation Planning Organization and an Economic Development District. Staff is interested in developing a strategic IT and GIS plan and would like to see what other regional councils have created. Does your organization have any RFPs or Strategic Plans? If so, please share it with us as a best practice.

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Senior or Associate Transportation Planner

Lane Council of Governments, Eugene, OR

Services Coordination Mentor

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

Smart City Challenge Announces Finalists

Secretary Foxx recently announced seven Smart City Challenge finalists at the South by Southwest conference in Austin, TX. The finalists, chosen from 78 applicants, are Austin, TX; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Kansas City, MO; Pittsburgh, PA; Portland, OR; and San Francisco, CA. **Each finalist** will receive \$100,000 to dive deeper into their proposal and the winning city will be announced in June.

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning

March 22, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, and Reality developed the *Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning* to help state DOTs, MPOs, and local transportation agencies incorporate health considerations into their corridor planning processes. The framework offers a step-by-step process for agencies to follow that encourages them to think holistically about health impacts made by corridor planning decisions. Attend this webinar to learn more about this framework.

NACo Webinar: Bureau of Land Management "Planning 2.0" Rule

March 23, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Are you up to speed on the new Bureau of Land Management (BLM) "Planning 2.0" rule? In this proposal the BLM is seeking to make changes to many aspects of its land use planning regulations, which could have far-reaching impacts for public lands counties. Join the National Association of Counties (NACo) and BLM officials for an in-depth discussion of the proposed rule and how you can provide input to shape the final regulation.

Surgeon General's Call to Action - Walking as a Practice

April 14, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

April's America Walks webinar will take a closer look at the **Walking as a Practice** report released in January. The report outlines four categories that identify how individuals and

organizations are engaging in the practice of walking.

NARC Awards! Application Period is Open

Deadline: April 15

NARC is accepting nominations for its 2016 Achievement and Leadership Awards, which will be presented at the Awards Gala Dinner during the 50th Annual Conference and Exhibition, June 26-29, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The awards provide an excellent opportunity for winners to promote their successes to a larger audience, as well as share best practices with their partners and peers. See **[nomination guidelines](#)** for details.

Ohio Conference on Freight

August 22-24, Cleveland, OH

The high-profile conference annually attracts over 300 professionals from the private and public sectors and from numerous states and provinces in the U.S. and Canada who are deeply involved in freight and the economy.

CONTACT US

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