



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



Annual Conference Hotel: Note for Saturday Only

We are excited to announce that the hotel has increased the number of rooms available for Saturday night, June 3. If you were trying to book a reservation that started or included that night, but had been unable to complete the process OR if you still need to book a reservation that includes that night, please reserve your room by midnight, Monday, April 24. The additional rooms for Saturday night at \$189 are **ONLY** available through next Monday - after that, the Saturday night rate will increase to \$229.

- Please note that if your reservation does not include Saturday night, the group discount will continue to be available through the previously announced deadline of Friday, May 12.
- If you have previously confirmed Saturday night at a higher rate, we are working with the hotel to lower your rate, but please email Marcy (marcy@narc.org) to let her know your reservations have been impacted so she can confirm the change.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Congress is on recess and will return Monday, April 24. Please see NARC blogs (in the Regions Lead section below) for connecting with lawmakers while they are home.

Is a Government Shutdown in the Cards?

With Congress on recess for one more week and the April 28 government funding deadline looming, talk of a government shutdown escalated in the media this weekend.

Republican leaders want to show that they can adopt a funding bill that provides the government

with sufficient funding, while Democratic leaders pledge that they will not support any bill that includes so-called ‘poison pills.’ Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney said that for a bill to be signed, it must reflect Trump’s budget priorities:

- A provision to withhold ObamaCare payments to insurance companies for giving discounted deductibles to low-income ObamaCare enrollees. Democrats have said that they will not support any government funding bill until this proposal is taken off the table.
- A provision to withhold grant funds from cities that give “sanctuary” to undocumented immigrants. Democrats indicate that they will fight this provision – and this might be enough to end support for any appropriations bill.
- A provision to fund the Mexico Border Wall. Democrats say they will oppose any funding bill that includes funding for the wall. Meanwhile, Mulvaney has said that the president is not prepared to sign an appropriations bill that does not include funding for the wall. Democrats reportedly wrote to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell that Republicans will be responsible for “shutting down the government and delivering a severe blow to our economy” if they push an appropriations bill that includes funding for the wall.

And finally, there is the president’s requirement of increased funding for the military, which will need to be offset by non-defense discretionary programs like CDBG, the social services block grant, housing, workforce development, and other human services programs.

Traditionally, Congress finds a way to get around a shutdown. But the two week shutdown that occurred in October 2013 must be a cautionary reminder that when positions become deeply entrenched and contrary – a government shutdown may not be far behind.

National Community Development Week

National Community Development Week – April 17-22, 2017 – is a national observance that honors the work made possible by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding.

The CDBG program provides grants to over 1,200 state and local governments and funds activities such as housing rehabilitation, business assistance, senior services, and infrastructure – primarily targeted to low-income and moderate-income persons and households. Every \$1.00 of CDBG leverages another \$3.65 in other funding, bringing additional resources to communities that support jobs, businesses, and residents. Many communities will also recognize the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program during National Community Development Week. HOME provides grants to over 600 state and local governments to create safe, decent, and affordable housing for renters and owners.

Advocacy Tools for YOU to Use Right Now

Stand united to fight for federal investment during National Community Development Week by meeting with your representatives during the recess. Urge your representatives to pass a full FY 2017 THUD spending bill before the current CR expires while they are home in their districts and states through April 21.

NARC Senior Policy Advisor Neil Bomberg put together some **talking points for you to use during the recess**. Additionally, the American Planning Association has an updated suite of tools for planners to help you advocate on the programs that matter to you, like the FY2017 THUD spending bill before the current CR expires. Use these tools in the **Advocate's Toolbox** to get ready to speak up on behalf of planners everywhere:

- **Advocacy Classroom** comes with fast advocacy 101 videos on the most effective strategies you can use to impact policy, and how to best craft your overall message to your legislators.
- **THUD Subcommittee Members of Congress** lists the most important representatives to reach, since they are the ones who preside over the implementation of these community development programs.
- **Ready to share Twitter, Facebook, and letter to the editor posts, as well as a congressional call script** that are set up for you to fill in the blanks, and take action.
- **Communications Guide** that contains best practices for all of your outreach efforts, as well as a how-to on writing an effective letter to the editor.

EDA Sign-on Letter

NARC is developing a member sign on letter in support of full funding for EDA. We expect to complete the draft and have it to you by Wednesday of this week. We hope that many if not all of you will sign on to the letter on behalf of your regional council.

NARC Urges FCC to Preserve Local Authority

NARC filed **joint comments** with a number of national organizations, calling on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to avoid additional preemption of local government authority over rights-of-way as the FCC looks at ways to streamline broadband infrastructure. If you have had experience in your state on the siting of wireless facilities, please let us know.

The National League of Cities (NLC) **also filed joint comments with all 49 state municipal leagues** to focus on the cooperative process among cities and state leagues to demonstrate the value of working together on wireless deployment.

NARC Issues Statement in Support of Brownfields

Last month, two House panels heard from local officials how important the program has been to protecting cities and counties from liability concerns as these sites are rehabilitated and made available for redevelopment. NLC President and Cleveland Councilmember Matt Zone told the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee that successes in Cleveland depended on federal support to reduce the risks to cities and developers from working with contaminated real estate. Leon County, Florida Commissioner John Dailey, testifying on behalf of the National Association of Counties (NACo), highlighted the pivotal role counties play in brownfields redevelopment projects, as counties are often responsible for local land use planning, zoning, environmental enforcement and monitoring, and economic development.

NARC provided examples of the value of the program to regional councils in a **statement**. Since its creation, the program has provided crucial assistance to local governments for reclaiming hazardous, polluted, and underutilized properties. For additional information on our advocacy efforts, please see **NARC's Statement to the Record** and a **joint letter requesting specific improvements to the program** put out by NARC, NLC, NACo, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors in late March. See also, **House T&I Committee hearing** and **House Energy Commerce hearing** on reauthorization of the programs.

NARC is also hosting a webinar on Technical Assistance for Brownfield programs on April 20 (see the Events section for details).

Environment Update

An appeals court in Washington, D.C. has set aside the controversial 2015 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ozone rules establishing stricter limits on ozone from 75 parts per billion to 70 ppb as requested by President Trump. **Past NARC President Gary Moore testified** for NARC and the National Association of Counties opposing the rules. Putting the case on hold, the court asked the government to provide regular updates on its review of federal environmental rules. EPA's request to the court is a sign that the administration will not defend the rule and look to weaken or eliminate the standards.

EPA also has sought to reverse the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan and other greenhouse gas regulations, setting up further litigation from environmental groups.

Bipartisan Senate Bill Limits Opioid Prescriptions

On April 7, Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced the *Opioid Addiction Prevention Act of 2017* (**S. 892**). The legislation would require medical professionals to certify, as part of their registration with the Drug Enforcement Administration, that they will not prescribe an opioid as an initial treatment for acute pain in an amount that exceeds a seven-day supply, and will not provide a refill. The bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for consideration.

FDA User Fees

To avoid thousands of U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) employee layoffs, House and Senate committees on Friday released a draft bill to reauthorize the user fee programs for

pharmaceuticals, generic drugs, medical devices, and biosimilars from 2018 to 2022. It's a critical step in maintaining a program to provide FDA with staff to review new drugs, devices, generics, and biosimilars. FDA has said that without reauthorization, they will have to start preparations for laying off approx. 5,000 employees, including 70 percent of drug review staff.

OTHER NEWS

AAPCA Releases New Report on Air Quality Progress

Today, the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA) released a new report, ***The Greatest Story Seldom Told: Profiles and Success Stories in Air Pollution Control***. Through the Clean Air Act's framework of cooperative federalism, state and local air quality agencies have made tremendous progress in virtually every measure of air pollution control.

Released ahead of Earth Day (April 22) and Air Quality Awareness Week (May 1-5), this **publication catalogues these trends** through publicly available data from the EPA and other agencies. It includes key metrics from concentrations of criteria pollutants like ground-level ozone and air releases of toxic chemicals to compliance/enforcement activity and operating permit renewals.

County Health Day

As part of National County Government Month, County Health Day will showcase how counties build healthier communities and emphasize the county role in supporting health and human services. Throughout the day, NACo will post links and examples of county accomplishments and share health tools and resources. Join NACo by posting on **NACo's Facebook page** or on Twitter **@NACoTweets** (using **#CountyHealth**) your links to your county's health projects, resources and innovative efforts to improve health for all.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

SLOCOG Funds \$350,000 in Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Improvements

On April 5, the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) approved \$350,000 in discretionary funding as part of its Active Transportation Partnership Plan's Short Term Investment Strategy. Regional State Highway Account (RSHA) funds were awarded to member jurisdictions for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure improvements. In San Luis Obispo (SLO) County, there are ten school districts with 74 schools educating nearly 23,000 elementary and middle school students. Each of these students interact with the transportation system every day. SLOCOG's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) emphasizes the importance of SRTS programs that aim to increase the safety and convenience of walking and cycling to school in achieving its goal to "provide safe and efficient connections for biking and walking between transportation modes such as Park & Ride lots, transit facilities, and other destinations for vehicles (shopping, schools, employment); as well as providing recreational activities such as walking and biking."

The SLO Regional Rideshare program provides safe walking and cycling education and encouragement for schools around the county through its non-infrastructure program. Additionally, SLOCOG's programming staff maintains a SRTS Prioritization Tool, a quantitative decision-making tool that ranks schools on their need for SRTS capital investments and works with member jurisdictions to fund projects.

REGIONS LEAD

Visit www.regionslead.org to read up on the latest NARC blogs. We invite members to submit blogs to the site too.

Hearing on Job Training Shows Congressional Support

by Neil Bomberg

On April 4, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held a hearing, *Examining Federal Support for Job Training Programs*. Witnesses included University of Maryland School of Public Policy Professor and Atlantic Council Senior Fellow Douglas J. Besharov, Urban Institute Fellow Dr. Demetra Smith Nightingale, and Markle Foundation CEO and President Zoe Baird. What may have been most striking...

Budget Facts and Talking Points to Share with Congressional Leaders

by Neil Bomberg

These budget facts and talking points will help you talk to your senators and representatives during this congressional recess, which ends April 23.

Take Action! Tell Congress: Don't Cut Non-Defense Discretionary Programs

by Neil Bomberg

Your senators and representatives are back home in their state and home districts until Sunday, April 23. This two week recess affords us a great opportunity to educate our federal elected officials on the impacts that the budget and appropriations recommendations from the White House will have on many of the programs important to regions.

FEATURED JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Director of Planning

Southern California Association of Governments, Los Angeles, CA

Senior Budget Program Analyst

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Bexar Area Agency on Aging Benefits Counselor

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

Transportation Planner

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Kelso, WA

Web Specialist II

Maricopa Association of Governments, Phoenix, AZ

FUNDING

View full list of grants!

EVENTS

View full list of events!

Leading Economically Competitive and Resilient Communities Training Program

See full list of locations and dates

The Delta Regional Authority presents a series of intensive two-day courses focused on economic development and disaster resiliency strategies to enhance the effectiveness of local elected officials, economic development practitioners, and other community leaders in the Delta region. The workshops are held in partnership with the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Each workshop will consist of a two-day training that covers one of the following courses – Module A: Basic Economic Development Strategies, Module B: Economic Resilience and Disaster Recovery, or Module C: Advanced Economic Development Strategies. The courses require no prerequisites, and participants are encouraged to attend any of the training workshops offered.

Live Stream: National Forum on Public Safety and Community Development

April 18, 8:30 AM - 3:45 PM ET

Over the course of several months, experts from an array of interested and invested organizations have discussed the confluences between 21st century policing and community development. Out of these conversations came the idea to open up a facilitated dialogue regarding the role of technology in advancing solutions, and to better understand the issues and opportunities, while working together to create positive outcomes through the venue of a National Forum on Public Safety and Community Development. See the **event schedule** for more information.

Strategies for Broadband Adoption and Digital Inclusion in Rural Communities

April 19, 2:00 PM ET

This webinar will focus on strategies to promote broadband adoption and digital inclusion in rural communities highlighting the role of libraries and university extension programs. Speakers will discuss research findings on the effect of broadband adoption on rural economic development, as well as program strategies to facilitate digital inclusion, such as mobile-hotspot lending programs, community outreach, and digital skills training.

Transportation at the Ballot Box: Tracking and Explaining Success

April 20, 2:00 PM ET

In an era of declining infrastructure coupled with limited resources for transportation spending, local and state governments are turning to the ballot box to fund transportation measures. The ballot box can be an effective way to increase funding to create more livable communities through transportation. In 2016, with over \$250 billion at stake, voters approved approximately 70% of measures. While it is easy to describe anecdotes to illustrate success stories of local ballot measures, tracking success across the country is challenging.

The Center for Transportation Excellence has been tracking transit measures across the country since 2000. The Eno Center for Transportation released a comprehensive **Transportation Ballot Measures database** covering all types of transportation across the country for the 2016 election. The Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon recently built a comprehensive database of transportation ballot measures in California, Oregon, and Washington covering 2005-2015. These organizations will team up for a webinar to discuss lessons learned from building databases to track transportation ballot measures and describe characteristics of successful measures.

NARC Webinar! Tapping into the Technical Assistance to Brownfield Communities Program

April 20, 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET

Are you facing challenges related to brownfields? Would you be interested in learning how you can receive free assistance from brownfield experts? Through funds provided by EPA, the Technical Assistance to Brownfield (TAB) communities program **provides free assistance** to local, county, regional, state, and tribal governments, as well as not-for-profit entities. The TAB program provides a range of assistance, including: guidance on developing grant proposals, prioritizing brownfield sites, interpreting site characterization results, explaining clean-up technologies, navigating regulatory programs and requirements, layering funding and financing options, engaging the community stakeholders, and much more. Join NARC and the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) to learn how your community can access this benefit. The webinar will provide examples of how NJIT has assisted hundreds of communities, and will give you information on how you can tap into the TAB program.

Draft Agenda Available! 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.

CONTACT US

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