

May 1, 2017 [View this email in your browser](#)



EXECUTIVE NOTE

Dear Colleagues,

This weekend's deal to avert a government shutdown and reach bipartisan agreement on a federal budget for the balance of fiscal year (FY) 2017 is good news for the country and for programs important to local governments and their citizens. The so-called "skinny budget" would have cut key government services and decimated local economic development, transit, housing, energy, public safety, and human services programs.

Advocacy for federal investment in local communities doesn't end with this agreement though. In future months, the strain on the budget will increase as Congress begins work on the FY 2018 budget, wrestles with an increase in the debt ceiling, and faces automatic spending cuts (or sequestration) slated for next year. Local leaders across the country will need to continue to highlight the value of federal investment while their legislators are home and in their visits to Washington. Federal funding for transit programs, housing, community development, economic development, clean water and energy, funding for U.S. Census programs, senior programs, rural health, the opioid addiction battle, and disaster preparedness build community prosperity and contribute to a strong national economy. Your voice matters and makes a difference. For details on the agreement and specific programs contained in the budget package, see [NARC's blogsite](#), [RegionsLead](#).

Last week also saw another local government victory with the passage of [S. 496](#) to overturn MPO Coordination Rules, which would have placed unreasonable burdens on local transportation planning efforts. Lawmakers in the House and Senate led the effort to repeal the rule that would have added red tape and interrupted the cooperative working relationships that MPOs have sought to establish in communities across the nation. We thank Senators Duckworth, Durbin, Caputo, and Young and Representatives Lipinski and Lewis for their leadership in stewarding the legislation through Congress.

See you in Monterey!
Leslie Wollack



REGISTER TODAY!

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Congress is in session.

Funding the Federal Government

After reaching a deal late last night on a \$1.1 trillion package, Congress is ready to finalize appropriations for the rest of FY 2017. The spending agreement would ensure that lawmakers can keep the government open after the current stopgap spending law expires on May 5. Under the deal, the White House won a \$15 billion boost for the Pentagon with \$2.5 billion of that money contingent on the administration delivering a new plan to fight the Islamic State. The president will also get \$1.5 billion for border security, but those funds cannot be used for the border wall or additional Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. The deal would provide a permanent, \$1.3 billion extension of healthcare benefits for coal miners to be offset by a boost in customs fees. The omnibus does not go along with President Trump's calls for energy and environment cuts with a reported one percent funding reduction and no staff cuts for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and budgetary increases for the departments of Interior and Energy. See [Neil Bomberg's latest blog](#) for specifics on the budget breakdown.

Overturning Obama Regulations

As the clock runs down, so does Congress's ability to continue overturning rules issued by the Obama administration under the statutory timetable for legislation action. Senate leadership may decide to pass a resolution ([H.J. Res. 36](#)) to eliminate a Bureau of Land Management rule designed to cut venting of methane from oil and gas wells on federal land. Last week, in a victory for MPOs and regional coordination, the House voted to overturn the Obama administration's [MPO Coordination Rule](#).

FY2018 Appropriations

Before Congress votes on the FY 2017 continuing resolution, appropriations subcommittees are gathering information to help them make decisions about FY 2018. The House Military Construction-VA panel will hear from Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin at a Veterans Affairs oversight hearing. Director of the U.S. Census Bureau John Thompson is scheduled to testify before the House Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee at an oversight hearing on the 2020 census.

This Week

President Trump announced Friday that he intends to nominate Pamela Patenaude as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) deputy secretary. Patenaude previously served as HUD assistant secretary for community planning and development under President George W. Bush and is currently president of the J. Ronald Terwilliger Foundation for Housing America's Families. And the Senate votes today on limiting debate on Wall Street lawyer Jay

Clayton's nomination to lead the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The House will consider three emergency management bills: **H.R. 1665** would require the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to give greater consideration to severe local impact when making disaster declaration recommendations to the president; **H.R. 1679** – as part of the FEMA's grant modernization strategy – would require FEMA to develop a website where grant applicants could access forms, submit materials, and track their application status; and **H.R. 1678** would require FEMA to initiate an effort to recover funds within three years of a grantee's submission of their final project completion report, instead of three years after their final expenditure report.

The House will also examine the *Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017* (**H.R. 1180**), which would allow private-sector employers to provide compensatory time to their hourly employees instead of overtime pay. Under current law, hourly employees are paid time and a half as overtime compensation.

House subcommittee hearing highlights include:

- The House Energy and Commerce Committee will discuss legislation to modernize pipeline and hydropower infrastructure.
- The House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee will discuss medical technology regulations. The panel's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee plans a hearing the same day on combating waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicaid personal care services program.

Senate subcommittee hearing highlights include:

- The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will look at the threat posed by an electromagnetic pulse and policy options to protect energy infrastructure and to improve capabilities for adequate system restoration.
- The Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee will look at reauthorizing the national flood insurance program.

Hopes Fading for Using Tax Reform on Infrastructure?

The administration released a **one-page tax reform proposal** last week that does not specify money for infrastructure. The plan includes repatriation of overseas earnings, but does not state how the revenue will be used. This raises concerns that the revenue will be used to offset rate changes and other provisions, and not as a source for funding infrastructure. Congressional transportation leaders previously indicated that they did not expect to see infrastructure in the plan, but in recent days optimism grew that it would be included. Trump's proposal is just the starting point for introducing a comprehensive tax reform package later this year, so changes are likely.

OTHER NEWS

Community Resilience Building Workshop Guide

Community Resilience Building is a tried and tested approach that is now trusted by over forty-five communities. The guide and other materials are available at **CommunityResilienceBuilding.com**. The Community Resilience Building Workshop is a unique, "anywhere at any scale", community-driven process, rich with information, experience, and dialogue, where participants identify top hazards, current challenges, strengths, and priority actions to improve community resilience to all natural and climate-related hazards today, and in the future.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

East Central Florida RPC Assists with Emergency Training Exercise

In April, a full-scale emergency training exercise was conducted in Central Florida. Over 80 agencies participated in four counties, including 26 hospitals, 16 law enforcement agencies, 16 fire department, four health departments, two ambulance services, five emergency management offices, the District Nine Medical Examiner's Office, the University of Central Florida, Orange County Public Schools, Lynx, the Central Florida Healthcare Coalition, and many others.

The exercise simulated a complex coordinated terrorist attack taking place in Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties. A pizza delivery car in front of each county courthouse exploded

(simulated) and dispersed radiological materials. There were approximately 1200 live volunteer victims and many other volunteer managers, controllers, and evaluators. These live volunteer victims were moulaged (wearing make-up and movie props to simulate various injuries). Many of the response capabilities practiced and evaluated during this exercise were areas identified as critical after the Pulse Nightclub shooting. These areas include mutual aid, response to mass casualty incidents, and patient tracking. The exercise was funded through the State Homeland Security Grant Program and coordinated through the East Central Florida RPC.

MVRPC Celebrates National Air Quality Awareness Week

The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) is celebrating *National Air Quality Awareness Week*, May 1-5, with daily posts on social media about the steps residents can take to reduce air pollution. This year's theme, selected by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), is *Be Air Aware*. This focus is about the impact that air quality has on your health. "The social media posts will highlight simple actions you can take to help reduce air pollution. We will be tagging the actions with #BeAirAware on MVRPC's **Facebook** and **Twitter** pages each day, so be sure to like and follow MVRPC to learn more," said MVRPC's Executive Director Brian Martin. MVRPC partners with the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency on air quality issues. More information can be found at www.miamivalleyair.org.

Senior Games in the Park

For several years, the Green River Area Development District (GRADD) has hosted the Masters Athletic Challenge, offering sporting events such as tennis, golf, bowling, and billiards. This year, GRADD hopes to include more of the area's senior population. While the format and venue have changed, this annual event continues to promote physical fitness and healthy competition among area residents age 50 and above. Events available this year include: basketball hot shot, bocce ball, corn hole, football throw, softball throw, washers, and bingo. Participants are asked to pay a \$5 registration fee, which includes lunch.

REGIONS LEAD

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

At Long Last... A FY 2017 Omnibus Appropriations Bill

by Neil Bomberg

After weeks of negotiations that at times seemed as if they would breakdown, the House and Senate early Monday morning reached an agreement on an appropriations bill that would increase military spending by \$15 billion, maintain non-defense discretionary funding, and increase border security funding by \$1.5 billion, but would prohibit any border security funds from being used to build the proposed border wall. The compromise bill seems more in keeping with Obama-era priorities than Trump-era priorities.

President's Tax Plan Leaves Out Infrastructure

by Erich Zimmermann

As you have no doubt heard by now, the Trump administration released a tax reform "plan" that filled just one side of a single sheet of paper. Which is to say, the plan is light on details... Aside from the elimination of some tax deductions, the only other offset mentioned is a one-time tax on overseas earnings, or repatriation. This is notable if you care about infrastructure. Repatriation funding has long been considered the primary way to pay for a significant infrastructure investment.

Want America to Be 'Great' Again? Pay For It

by Pat Jones, IBTTA

This article was originally published in the April 18 issue of *Time* magazine. Pat Jones is the CEO of the International Bridge, Tunnel, and Turnpike Association (IBTTA), an organization that represents tolling agencies from around the nation and world. His organization has been at the forefront of advocating for increased resources to maintain our roads, bridges and tunnels, and other infrastructure. This blog argues for a coherent, thoughtful transportation policy that provides the necessary funds to ensure that America's roads and bridges, and other infrastructure, are properly maintained. Most recently, Mr. Jones was a general session speaker at NARC's 2017 National Conference of Regions.

FEATURED JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Director of Planning

Southern California Association of Governments, Los Angeles, CA

Director, Department of Financial Affairs

Mid-America Regional Council, Kansas City, MO

Emergency Services Planner

Mid-America Regional Council, Kansas City, MO

RFP: Electronic Transportation Improvement Program (eTIP) System

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, Oklahoma City, OK

Grants Administrator

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

FUNDING

View full list of grants!

USDA: Food Safety Outreach Program

Application Due: June 6

USDA is offering funding through the Food Safety Outreach Program. This program will build upon the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program national infrastructure, with a sustained focus on delivery of customized training to members of the target audiences. Awardees will develop and implement food safety training, education, extension, outreach and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities - to include those from community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, extension, and other local groups.

Kendal Charitable Funds: Aging Programs

Letter of Interest Due: May 19

Invited Proposals Due: August 4

Kendal Charitable Funds is offering Promising Innovations grants to nonprofit organizations that work to meet the needs of a burgeoning population of elders. In 2017, the program is seeking proposals that support aging in place and combat isolation of older adults through engagement in purposeful and meaningful ways within the greater community, designed to affirm their value and connectedness. The program hopes to identify factors that lead to isolation and to address them before and/or after they occur, especially utilizing new, replicable models. Grants will range up to \$50,000 for a two-year period.

EVENTS

View full list of events!

NASMHPD Webinar: National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

May 10, 2:00-3:30 PM ET

In recognition of Older Americans Month and Mental Health Awareness Month in May, the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) is hosting an informational webinar sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration on: Building Relationships between Mental Health and Aging Services.

The population 65 and older will dramatically increase in the upcoming years. The U.S. Census projects that adults 65 and over will represent 56.4 million of the nation's population by 2020. With the mental health needs of many older adults often going undiagnosed and untreated, this webinar will focus on strategies to integrate mental health into aging service settings. Ms. Williams will discuss New York's statewide approach to engage and build relationships between

mental health and aging service agencies.

NARC RFI! NARC Seeks Cooperative Procurement Partner for AFVs in the Private Sector

Submission Deadline: June 2

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to facilitate a process to gauge interest from trade associations or other agencies that have a national membership base or the capacity to reach a national target audience to create a cooperative procurement program that includes alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). The target audience is private sector fleets or the commercial market. The **Fleets for the Future** (F4F) project, led by NARC, currently includes a national-scale public sector procurement initiative for AFVs along with fleet services, parts, and equipment.

Updated 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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