



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS
eREGIONS

Conference Note! It was great to see so many of you in Salt Lake City to kick off NARC's 50th Anniversary Celebration. Thank you to the participants, speakers, sponsors and host, the Wasatch Front Regional Council. The majority of presentations and videos from NARC's 50th Annual Conference and Exhibition are now available for download on our **conference webpage**. Please stay tuned for further updates.

Transportation/MPO Note! NARC continues to follow the notice of consequential proposed rulemaking jointly released by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, entitled *Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform*. We are working with local government colleagues on a request to extend the comment period from the current 60 days and will soon have an analysis on the proposal and next steps.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

House is in session. Senate reconvenes Wednesday.

Overview

Both chambers are working to move spending bills before Congress adjourns on July 15 for a seven week break. Lawmakers are now looking at the real possibility of implementing a continuing resolution to avoid government shutdown by the end of the fiscal year on September 30.

Only the Military Constructions and Veterans' Affairs appropriations bill has any possibility of passing both chambers, and it is currently paused by Democrats who oppose the Zika virus spending package. Most spending bills have yet to reach the House or Senate floor; the ones that have are deep in controversial issues that have stymied action. The House is scheduled to work on a Financial Services spending bill (**HR 5485**) and the Senate may debate the Defense spending bill (**S 3000**).

The House Rules Committee will meet Tuesday to develop a rule for floor debate on a bill (**HR 5611**) to curb gun sales to those suspected of having ties to terrorist organizations and create a new office at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security devoted to monitoring terrorism. The House Appropriations Committee will markup the Labor, Health, and Education Appropriations bill and may include a provision to block the recent controversial rule from the U.S. Department of Labor on overtime.

Water Resources Development Act

Senate and House committees have passed two-year *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) legislation (**S 2848** and **HR 5303**, respectively). The Senate bill passed the Environment and Public Works Committee by a vote of 19-1 and authorizes Army Corps of Engineers projects in the areas of navigation, flood management, and ecosystem restoration. It includes reforms to the *Clean Water Act*, which will ensure that clean water investments remain affordable to ratepayers and focus on the greater water quality gains at lower costs. The House bill was adopted unanimously by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and focuses on Army Corps of Engineers projects and does not include the *Clean Water Act* reforms.

Normally when bills get through committees with bipartisan support, it is often only a matter of

time before the full Senate and House consider the bills and, if they pass them, a conference committee takes place to resolve any differences. But this is an election year and both chambers will exit Washington at the end of next week for national conventions and August recess, returning after Labor Day. Congress will be in session for only a few weeks after Labor Day and then recess until after the November elections with not much time for legislating.

NARC has signed onto letters with multiple organizations (one signed by 78 organizations) to send to Majority Leader McConnell and House Speaker Ryan asking for WRDA to be brought up for vote. It is NARC's hope that if votes occur soon and both bills pass, staff can then begin the process of developing compromises even if Congress is on recess.

Traffic Deaths Up in 2015

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regulators reported a spike in traffic fatalities in 2015. After declines in 2013 and 2014, traffic deaths on the nation's roads rose almost eight percent last year, with nine out of ten regions seeing an increase in vehicle-related deaths. Pedestrian and bicycle-riders saw the most increase.

Proposed Updates from Census

The U.S. Census Bureau called for public comment on several updates to the **2020 Census Residence Criteria and Residence Situations**, with a focus on where people will be counted in the census. The proposed rules were posted to the Federal Register on June 30 and will be open for public comment through August 1.

Census proposes to continue to count incarcerated persons at the correctional facility where they are housed on Census Day and change the criteria for counting deployed military personnel to include them in the U.S. residence population counts (used for all purposes). Census also proposed a *2020 Census Redistricting Summary File* and a special dataset with additional information to be made available to states, giving them access to Group Quarters population data and supplemental information for states to use to create state-specific tabulations for their own use.

Census also identified plans for a **Federal Register notice** concerning the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program, which allows state, local, and tribal governments to review initial address lists and digital maps for their jurisdictions and submit corrections. The LUCA operation will run from January 2017 through June 2020. The comment period will end on August 29.

MEMBER REQUESTS

Please email responses to anna@narc.org.

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments Request for Information

At Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, a common issue for our members is blight and the lack of resources for addressing blight outside of US EPA brownfield grants and loans and the US Department of Treasury Hardest Hit Fund. Now that the Hardest Hit Fund is winding down and the demand for EPA's resources is greater than ever, how are other regional councils addressing blight? Eastgate is researching options, there are federal programs, state programs, and county land banks, but regional councils do not seem to be a large part of this mix. The Northeast-Midwest Institute recently released a report that further highlights the lack of federal resources. Please share any funding resources or information your COG has found to address blight.

FEATURED JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Public Safety Planner

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

Director of Aging Services

Capital Area Council of Governments, Austin, TX

Senior Data Analyst

Pima Association of Governments, Tucson, AZ

Planner I

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Pensacola, FL

Transportation Planner/Engineers

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Detroit, MI

FUNDING

View full list of grants!

POWER Awards Application Process Webinar

July 7, 3:00 pm – 4:00 PM ET

Learn about the 2016 Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Awards application process by EDA program coordinators. The POWER Initiative brings together various agencies to gather and invest federal economic and workforce development resources in communities and regions negatively impacted by changes in the coal economy. POWER grants aim to support the production of economic diversification, job creation, capital investment, and/or workforce development and reemployment opportunities. Priority for receiving federal resources is given 1) to projects that produce multiple economic and workforce development outcomes that aid displaced coal economy workers, and 2) to projects specifically noted in local and regional economic development plans that were collaboratively created by a diverse group of stakeholders. Details are available on the EDA [website](#).

USDA No-Interest Efficiency Loan Program for Rural Entities Webinar

Webinar: July 12th 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Application Deadline: Utilities should send to RUS by August 5

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) praises the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) upcoming Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP), which USDA announced recently in the [Federal Register](#). Under USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS), RESP will offer \$52 million in zero percent loans to rural electric cooperatives and rural energy providers who, in turn, can relend these funds at an interest rate of up to 3% to homes and small businesses interested in making cost-effective energy efficiency improvements. Home and small business owners can repay the utilities with a fixed charge on their monthly utility bills, and utilities can use the proceeds to help cover the utility's program costs and/or create a loan loss reserve. USDA and DOE will co-host this [webinar](#) to discuss the program. For more information, visit the [RESP Website](#) and see [EESI's On-Bill Financing Project](#).

EVENTS

View full list of events!

Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum

July 12, 9:20 AM – 4:30 PM ET

The [Sustainable Energy Coalition](#) is hosting the 2016 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum. This forum will include members of 48 businesses, trade associations, and government agencies featuring renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. You can view this via [livecast](#) for free and it is open to the public. More information about exhibitors, speakers, locations, and program can be found [here](#).

Save the Date! NARC's 2016 Executive Directors Conference and Board Retreat

September 18-21 – South Bend, IN

Please join NARC and the Michiana Area Council of Governments this September in South Bend, IN for the annual Executive Directors Conference that is designed by and for Executive Directors of Councils of Governments and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. This intimate conference brings executives together to discuss topics ranging from human resources and succession planning to what's new on the technological horizon. The conference also provides a great opportunity for networking and sharing of information on best practices. This year's conference will start with a reception on Sunday night and end with the Board of Directors Retreat on Wednesday. The Board Dinner will be Tuesday evening, time and location TBD. **Note:** *Please plan to arrive on Sunday, September 18 as we will not have hotel rooms available on Saturday night.*

CONTACT US

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