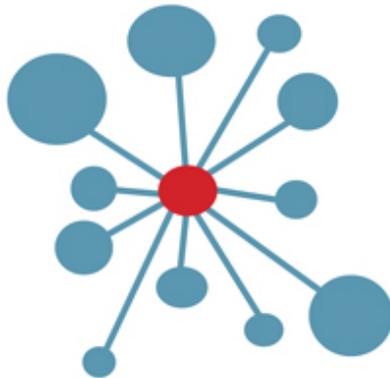




NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



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## NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

*Congress returns September 5th.*

### Overview

Now that the president has returned from his working vacation, pressure will increase on the administration to develop a set of legislative goals for the month of September. With only 12 legislative days scheduled for the entire month of September, Congress and the administration will have to move quickly to avoid a series of fiscal cliffs, including passage of a debt ceiling bill, adoption of a budget and 12 appropriations bills, and the initial stages of tax reform.

In addition, Congress must also adopt legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Children's Health Insurance Program (which helps states pay for health care for children not eligible for Medicaid), and the National Flood Insurance Program – all of which are scheduled to expire on September 30.

Word from the Hill is that while majority staff have been working on legislative packages they hope Congress will adopt and the president will sign by September 30, the kind of bipartisan work that usually ensures successful passage of these bills has not yet occurred. Obstacles include the Republican proposals to privatize FAA's air traffic control system and to expand the role of private insurers in federal flood insurance programs, as well as a Democratic proposal to add \$1 billion to the flood insurance program for mitigation.

### Trump Disbands Two Economic Councils

In a tweet sent last Wednesday, the president publicly disbanded his Manufacturing Advisory Council and the Strategic and Policy Forum. This followed the exit of eight CEOs that resigned because of his controversial comments on the violent events in Charlottesville, Virginia. This will cause further strain on his relationship with the business community, which he will have to rely on to push his infrastructure plan and tax reform promises he intends to pursue this fall.

### Executive Order Pushes Back Environmental Rules for Flood-Prone Areas

In an executive order signed last Tuesday, Trump rolled back an Obama-era order that mandated federal agencies to consider future sea-level rise when building infrastructure. The **current rule**

orders federal agencies to consider the best available science when designing new buildings and to elevate infrastructure by two feet above the height water may rise to in flood-prone areas. The administration says that rescinding this order will streamline the processes for infrastructure permits. Experts are concerned that this will lead to more federal money being spent on disaster relief and infrastructure-related repairs as sea-levels continue to rise.

### **NARC Advocates for Workforce Program Funding**

Last Thursday, NARC went to the Hill with the Campaign for Investment in America's Workforce (CIAW) Coalition to meet with the staff of Republican members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. While there, the coalition advocated for increased funding for workforce programs (particularly the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*) and adult education, both of which were drastically cut in the House Labor, Health, and Human Services appropriations bill. NARC presented some innovative member programs and highlighted the importance of sustained funding in the final appropriations bill. The committee expects to begin markup the week that lawmakers return from recess.

### **EPA Releases Annual Air Trends Report**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released their annual air trends report, *Our Nation's Air: Status and Trends Through 2016*. Between 1970 and 2016, the combined emissions of the six common pollutants in the air have decreased by 73% overall. These carbon emissions declined even as **the following changes occurred over the 46-year period**: the American GDP increased 253% overall (despite periods of recession like in 2008); vehicles miles traveled increased by about 200%; and energy use increased approximately 25%.

Despite increased activities known to cause greenhouse gas emissions (more business, driving longer distances, using more energy, etc.), the U.S. was still able to make significant improvements in air quality. EPA concluded that the *Clean Air Act* and technological innovations played pivotal roles in reducing hazardous air pollution. These advances have led to cleaner air, less unhealthy air quality days, downward-trending air toxicity levels, more scenic area visibility, and increased public health benefits.

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **Using GIS to Prepare for the Solar Eclipse**

Happy Solar Eclipse Day! States and local governments on the line of totality for the solar eclipse have been preparing for the transportation and operational challenges of eclipse-seekers. Some cities, like Casper, Wyoming, used GIS to heighten situational awareness during the event today. The City of Casper added information to its GeoSMART webpage to map and communicate real-time information about traffic restrictions, parking, events, viewing sites, parks and trails, and hospitals with waiting times. This innovative project helped local decisionmakers and stakeholders manage their resources for the influx of visitors during this special event.

Did your office take a step outside to view the eclipse? If so, we'd like to see pictures. Please reply to this email with pictures from the event today!

## **REGION SPOTLIGHT**

### **California and San Francisco Sue DOJ Over Sanctuary Cities**

The State of California and the City of San Francisco have filed separate lawsuits against the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) over the Trump administration's plans to withhold federal public safety grant funding from cities and counties that do not comply with new sanctuary city policies. They join the City of Chicago, who **filed a lawsuit** against DOJ last week for the same reason. In a statement to *The New York Times*, the state attorney general Xavier Becerra said that it isn't fair for the federal government to reduce local funding for crime-fighting resources and use that as a tactic to force cooperation with federal immigration agents. He said that states and local governments are "in the best position to determine how best to enforce the law and keep our people safe."

### **Opportunity for Cities to Issue First Public Environmental Impact Bonds**

Interested in Environmental Impact Bonds (EIB)? Quantified Ventures and Neighborly are looking for Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for two cities to be the first to issue publicly marketed EIBs this fall. Supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, Neighborly and Quantified Ventures will

offer their services pro bono to help the selected cities structure, market, and underwrite the EIBs. These bonds will be used to finance resilience projects such as green roofs, urban tree canopies, green streets and alleyways, hurricane preparedness, affordable housing, and microgrids in municipalities. Visit [Neighborly's website](#) to learn more about the project and access the RFP packet. RFPs are due September 15.

### **Deadline Approaching for State Plans Regarding the National Public Safety Broadband Network**

By the end of the year, states will have to decide if and how they will participate in FirstNet and AT&T's National Public Safety Broadband Network. *Route Fifty* reported that 12 governors have already decided to opt into the project, while 43 others have submitted questions and comments. Before the release of final state plans, states want to know the process for transitioning into the network, what the communication channels will look like between states and FirstNet/AT&T, and what accountability frameworks will apply to these new state partners. There is another concern governors' offices are currently considering: state or local jurisdictions' procurement and contracting requirements may complicate whether first responders can access AT&T's services and network.

## **REGIONS LEAD**

Visit [www.regionslead.org](http://www.regionslead.org) to read up on the latest NARC blogs. We invite members to submit blogs to the site too.

### **NARC Federal Budget Call Recap: Where We Are Now and What to Expect in the Fall**

by Maci Hurley

Senators and representatives may be home for recess, but the issues they left in Washington will be here when they return on September 5. Not only will the issues be here, but the urgency to address them will have increased significantly. Top issues that await them include: the adoption of a federal budget, 12 appropriations bills, legislation to raise the debt ceiling, and tax reform.

### **Guest Blog: Implications of Southeast Michigan's 2045 Forecast**

by Dr. Xuan Liu, Research Manager, SEMCOG

Demographic and socio-economic trends discussed in the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' (SEMCOG) 2045 Regional Forecast will necessitate some lifestyle changes in the greater Detroit, Michigan region. The biggest of these trends is the aging of the population and the lack of incoming young people. These trends will create a labor shortage that can impact a regional economy.

## **FEATURED JOBS**

*View full list of jobs!*

### **Training Specialist**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

### **Systems Planning Manager**

Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization, Fort Lauderdale, FL

### **Executive Director**

Centralina Council of Governments, Charlotte, NC

## **FUNDING**

*View full list of grants!*

### **Grants Available for the HUD Community Compass Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program**

Applications Due: September 28

HUD is announcing the availability of approximately \$56 million for its Community Compass Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program (Community Compass), HUD's integrated technical assistance and capacity building initiative. Community Compass is designed to help HUD's customers navigate complex housing and community development challenges by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, tools, capacity, and systems to implement HUD

programs and policies successfully. The NOFA is a competitive funding opportunity that gives grant recipients funds to become technical assistance providers and provide technical assistance and capacity building to HUD customers/grantees. Applicants are encouraged to procure subcontractors and consultants to demonstrate expertise across a wide variety of HUD programs, as well as in specific skill and policy areas.

### **2017 Targeted Air Shed Grant Program Grant Opportunity**

Applications Due: October 18

The Targeted Air Shed Grant Program will assist local, state, and/or tribal air pollution control agencies in developing plans, conducting demonstrations, and implementing projects to reduce air pollution in nonattainment areas that EPA determines are the top five most polluted areas relative to ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), annual average fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), or 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The overall goal of the Targeted Air Shed Grant program is to reduce air pollution in the nation's areas with the highest levels of ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> ambient air concentrations.

### **HUD Research and Evaluation, Demonstrations and Data Analysis and Utilization Program (HUDRD)**

Applications Due: October 15

HUDRD seeks to further HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research's (PD&R) mission to inform policy development and implementation to improve life in American communities through conducting, supporting, and sharing research, surveys, demonstrations, program evaluations, and best practices. Through this NOFA, there will be two projects available: Project 1 - Understanding Child Trajectories in HUD-Assisted Housing and Project 2 - The Social and Economic Impacts of the Community Development Block Grant Program. More information should be available soon.

## **EVENTS**

*[View full list of events!](#)*

### **International Climate Action: Opportunities for State and Local Government Engagement**

August 22, 12:00-1:00 PM ET

International climate agreements are forged by national governments, with far-reaching implications for sub-national governments, businesses, institutions, and individuals. This webinar, hosted by the United Nations Foundation, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, and the State of Washington, will focus on how state and local governments can stay engaged in international climate action and the mechanisms for doing so.

### **FEMA's National Continuity Quarterly Webinar**

August 23, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

For this quarter, FEMA will be hosting a national continuity webinar titled "Continuity of Operations – A Law Enforcement Perspective." This webinar will highlight the importance of having a continuity plan for law enforcement departments at various levels.

### **Best Practices for Communicating Economic Impact**

August 23, 2:00-2:30 PM ET

In this 30-minute webinar, you'll learn about: effective report design: tailoring content to your audience; communication channels: from web, to email, to live meetings; and success stories: real-life examples and live demos!

### **Land Use, Environmental Stressors, and Water Resources: Degradation to Restoration**

August 30, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Land use and environmental stressors, such as drought and deteriorating water infrastructure, can accelerate the depletion of freshwater resources that support humans and ecosystem services. Using representative studies from around the world, plus their own body of research in human-dominated ecosystems, the EPA will discuss environmental stressors and management practices impacting global water quantity and quality. They will then describe a conceptual framework for understanding and predicting global patterns of water use and water quality degradation, characterized by the increasing interaction between land use and environmental stressors. Finally, they will discuss the role of ecosystem restoration and management in securing and improving

water resources and related ecosystem services.

### **Smart Governance: Defining Your IT Strategy**

August 31, 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET

Now more than ever, IT leaders are dealing with changing policies, new and varying risks, increasing demands and restricted budgets, but they must continue to operate their information technology services responsibly and with transparency. Tune in for a *Route Fifty* digital event exploring how technology officials are tackling these challenges while also innovating for the future. Don't miss this opportunity to hear directly from leaders building and executing an IT governance framework that: allows for agility, provides secure and efficient services, modernizes processes and technologies, optimizes resources, and ensures mission success.

### **Using the New Census Bureau Poverty, Income, and Health Insurance Data: A Practical Guide by the Coalition on Human Needs**

September 7, 3:00-4:30 PM ET

On September 12 and 14, the Census Bureau will release its annual poverty, income, and health insurance survey data. The Coalition on Human Needs will use this webinar as an opportunity to show you how to use the local, state, and national findings. You'll get brilliant predictions and insights about trends. You'll learn about the wealth of information available, and how it can help make your case for public investments in vital programs. Whether your organization wants to comment on the findings at the time of release or use them all year long, this webinar will give you the tools you need.

### **NARC Webinar! Trees, Stormwater, and Resiliency: An Opportunity for Local Communities**

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

Traditional 'gray' infrastructure systems – like roads, utilities, and water/wastewater networks – have long supported our cities and towns as they grow and develop. However, as leaders grapple with shrinking budgets and deteriorating local infrastructure, the resilience and multifunctionality of green infrastructure and trees continues to broaden its appeal as a fiscally responsible investment for the long-term health and vibrancy of an area. A new interactive tool developed by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Council of Governments in partnership with the US Forest Service, NARC, Davey Resource Group, and Centerline Strategies, LLC will enable community planners, engineers, stormwater managers, community foresters, and policymakers to better capitalize on trees when investing or reinvesting in their stormwater systems. This resource can help you unleash new and innovative approaches for realizing the full capacity of trees as a component of your community's infrastructure systems. Join us for this webinar to discuss regional resilience planning and how [TreesandStormwater.org](http://TreesandStormwater.org) can assist you in maximizing the benefits of trees and green infrastructure in your community.

## **CONTACT US**

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