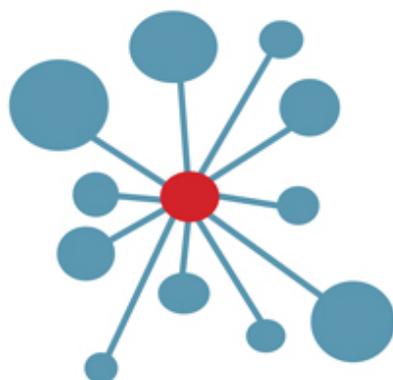




NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



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october 22 - october 24  
san antonio, tx**

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### **Sticking Around After the Executive Directors Conference in San Antonio?**

If so, ICMA has invited you to their U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) session following the close of NARC's conference on Tuesday afternoon. If you are interested, please reach out to Sarah Reed, [sarah@narc.org](mailto:sarah@narc.org), to confirm your participation and submit topics in advance of the conversation.

Energy Innovation: A Local and Federal Dialogue

Tuesday, October 24 2:00 PM - 3:10 PM

DOE wants to hear from you about opportunities and needs in key areas of community-scale energy innovation. What are effective strategies, tools, and resources that could support you as leaders in energy planning? Do you have feedback on current DOE projects? A key topic DOE will be prepared to discuss is how local governments can finance energy initiatives and the return on investment.

## **NEWS FROM WASHINGTON**

*Congress is in session.*

### **This Week's Three Big Things**

Official Washington is focused on three big things this week: recovery for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after Hurricane Maria, the massacre in Las Vegas, and the FY2018 **Senate Budget Resolution**. The Senate Budget Resolution, introduced last week, calls for a \$1.5 trillion reduction in tax revenues over 10 years and a maximum tax rate for individuals at 35 percent.

### **The Senate Budget Proposal**

Upon release of the budget proposal, Senate Republican leaders praised the budget proposal and the massive tax cuts it proposes as a necessary step toward stimulating the economy. They also indicated that they would not wait for the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the bi-partisan, bi-cameral Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) reviews, which they claim undervalue the impacts of economic growth.

Senate critics of the budget proposal, expressed concern that this budget and tax proposal will

increase the national debt substantially while Democrats uniformly criticized the tax proposal as a give-away to the richest Americans.

Congress needs to pass the budget resolution to take advantage of reconciliation – a procedure by which a simple majority, 51 votes – may be used to pass tax reform legislation with a simple majority.

According to the Senate Budget Committee, this resolution would do much more than simply set the stage for tax reform. It would:

- Provide a path to balance by restraining federal spending, reducing tax burdens, and boosting economic growth.
- Reduce spending by \$5.1 trillion.
- Provide reconciliation instructions to spur economic growth:
  - Finance Committee – \$1.5 trillion for comprehensive tax reform
  - Energy and Natural Resources – \$1 billion in deficit reduction by opening oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- Provide an on-budget surplus of \$197 billion in 2027 because of fiscal constraint and economic growth.
- Provide the maximum level of regular defense funding allowed under the law.
- Reduce non-defense discretionary spending by \$632 billion, consistent with previously agreed upon limits in the last conferenced budget resolution.
- Honor Social Security’s off-budget status.

In addition, the budget resolution would instruct Congress to:

- Retain its authority to repeal and replace the *Affordable Care Act*, so long as any action taken is revenue neutral.
- Extend the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) – a healthcare program for children in low-income households that do not qualify for Medicaid.
- Fund programs to address the opioid epidemic, domestic abuse, foster care, child care, and fatherhood programs.
- Restore American military power and improve benefits for veterans and service members.
- Secure the border.
- Enable the Budget Committee Chairman to make the necessary budget adjustments to accommodate any legislation adopted under “reconciliation” – the process that allows the Senate to pass legislation with a simple (51 votes) rather than a super majority (60 votes).
- Reactivates “Dynamic Scoring Authority” – a very controversial practice that allows CBO and JCT to incorporate the impacts of tax, spending, and regulatory policies on incomes, employment, and other broad measures of economic activity.

Before tax reform can even be considered through reconciliation, both chambers must adopt the same budget resolution. Because it is a resolution that Congress will use to guide its budget and tax work, no presidential signature is required.

Once adopted by the Senate, the Budget Resolution is expected to be considered by the House where its fate is less than certain. A key difference between the House and Senate draft budget resolutions is that the House version calls for \$1.4 trillion in tax cuts that are off-set by cuts in spending, essentially making the tax cuts “revenue neutral.”

### **Main Street Cybersecurity Act Passes Senate**

Last Thursday, the *MAIN STREET Cybersecurity Act (S. 770)* passed the Senate and moved to the House for consideration. The bill amends the *National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Act* to require NIST to consider small businesses when developing guidelines to reduce cyber security risk. NIST must also publish standards and resources that small businesses can use to reduce their risk. Resource requirements, as stated in the bill, “are generally applicable and usable by a wide range of small business concerns... include elements that promote awareness of simple, basic controls, a workplace cybersecurity culture, and third-party stakeholder relationships... [and] are technology-neutral.”

### **CHIP Not Authorized by Deadline**

Congress failed to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by its set

September 30 deadline. This has put the healthcare of almost nine million American children at risk. Healthcare advocates are now anxious about the program expiring because states passed budgets that assumed the CHIP program would be in effect, carrying with it significant federal funding matches. In a **Kaiser Family Foundation map** that tracks the projected dates of exhaustion of federal CHIP funds, the foundation reports that 10 states will run out of federal funding for the program by the end of 2017.

The Senate Finance Committee has **scheduled a markup** of the *KIDS Act of 2017 (S. 1827)* introduced in the Senate a couple of weeks ago to reauthorize CHIP for five years. The House Energy and Commerce Committee **has also announced** that it will be marking up a bill to reauthorize CHIP and extend federal funding to other important public health programs this week, though they have not yet provided us with a draft of the bill they intend to mark up.

### **NARC Submits WOTUS Comments**

Last Wednesday, NARC, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and U.S. Conference of Mayors sent a comment letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the *Definition of 'Waters of the United States' (WOTUS) - Recodification of Pre-Existing Rules* rulemaking pursuant to the executive order on *Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the 'Waters of the United States' Rule*. The organizations urged EPA and USACE to develop the new rule in an open and transparent manner with full engagement from local and state governments.

### **Upcoming Supreme Court Cases Local Governments Should be Watching**

The first day of the new Supreme Court term starts today, and the upcoming docket shows some interesting cases that could impact localities. Tomorrow, the Supreme Court will hear arguments for **Gill v. Whitford**, which will be their first official ruling on partisan gerrymandering. Some other cases **likely to be deliberated** in the coming months, include:

- Can businesses refuse service to gay couples? **Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission**
- Can states permit and regulate sports betting? **Christie v. National Collegiate Athletic Association**
- At what point can a state remove people from its voter rolls? **Husted v. Philip Randolph Institute**
- Can police arrest you for not believing your story? **District of Columbia v. Wesby**

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **NIST Video: When Disaster Happens, Will Your Community Be Prepared?**

NIST recently released a video asking whether your community could bounce back from a natural disaster? This video stressed the importance of having a path to resiliency set in place for worst-case scenarios. NIST resources are available to help local governments prepare, strategize, and implement changes to your community with resiliency in mind. Go to NIST's **community resilience webpage** to learn more.

### **Brookings Report: Signs of Digital Distress**

Despite the great number of benefits broadband has brought to communities across the country, the digital divide still exists for millions of Americans. According to a **report** released by *Brookings* last month, seven percent of Americans (21 million) lack access to the current U.S. standard for broadband download speed of 25 Mbps. Rural communities are the most affected, with one in four residents (12.7 million) lacking access to standardized speed.

When the report mapped out broadband access and subscription in American communities, metro areas in coastal areas (Florida, the Northeast, and the Pacific Coast) led in broadband performance. Communities in the south and low-density metro areas struggle with both accessibility and subscription. The report finds that income levels and geography are the two greatest drivers for the digital divide that exists in the U.S.

### **State and Local Governments Using Amazon Alexa**

As the use of Amazon Alexa grows, some state and local governments are beginning to test programs specifically created just for this platform. The hope is to make it easier for constituents

to ask questions and complete simple governmental tasks like renewing a driver's license. Los Angeles residents can use L.A. City Skill on Amazon to identify planned city events, like city council meetings. The State of Mississippi is giving Alexa the ability to disperse traffic alerts, aggregate local news, and draw answers from the MyMS state platform to answer common constituent questions.

## REGION SPOTLIGHT

### **Regional GHG Initiative Extended; Environmental Groups Want Expansion**

Last week, the nine northeastern states that make up the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) put plans in place to extend a program that auctions greenhouse gas emissions allowances to larger power plants, and then uses that money to finance renewable energy projects. The program would be extended to 2030 and include new emissions goals for years 2020-2030. While environmental groups applaud this decision, they think the plan can be improved. They want RGGI to make sure that the communities hit hardest by environmental degradation benefit from the program. These groups also asked officials that oversee RGGI to cap emissions from smaller power plants (up to 25 megawatts).

## REQUESTS

### **CDBG Coalition Requests Your CDBG Stories**

Does your regional council have any success stories about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in your region? The CDBG Coalition, of which NARC is a member, is looking for CDBG project information and stories to include in their *CDBG National Report*. Please submit your stories to Sarah at [sarah@narc.org](mailto:sarah@narc.org) by November 30 and include the following information: project name, location, project year, project description, use of CDBG funds, target population, amount of CDBG funds, leveraging, jobs created (if any, both temporary and permanent), project impact, a high-resolution photo, quote from a beneficiary, and project contact information.

### **Your NFIP Needs**

NARC is also looking for regional information and stories to share with our congressional contacts about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the December reauthorization deadline approaches. If you have any regional success stories or ideas about what should be addressed by the reauthorization of the NFIP, please share them with Maci at [maci.hurley@narc.org](mailto:maci.hurley@narc.org).

### **Regional Council Anniversaries**

Has your regional council celebrated a milestone anniversary recently or somewhat recently? If so, NARC would love to hear about it. Please share the details of events you hosted, social media campaigns, and general marketing collateral to Anna at [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org).

## FEATURED JOBS

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

### **Executive Director**

Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, Salisbury, MD

### **Principal Planner**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Legislation Manager**

Southern California Association of Governments, Los Angeles, CA

## FUNDING

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

### **Interior Announces \$94.3M to States for Parks and Outdoor Recreation**

The U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke announced in late September that \$94.3 million will be distributed to states, DC, and the U.S. territories for parks, outdoor recreation, and conservation projects. This funding comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which uses revenues from offshore oil and gas to support the conservation of land and water in

our communities. These millions of dollars will be awarded through federal matching grants that will leverage both private and public investment in our local public parks across the U.S.

### **DOJ Enhanced Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life Program**

Applications Due: November 8

Individuals 50 years of age or older who are victims of abuse in later life, including domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, exploitation, and neglect, face unique barriers to receiving assistance. Congress created the Enhanced Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life Program to help address the issue. The U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office on Violence Against Women plans to fund projects that will support a comprehensive approach to addressing elder abuse in their communities. These projects will provide training to criminal justice professionals to enhance their ability to address elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; provide cross-training opportunities to professionals working with older victims; establish or support a coordinated community response to elder abuse; and provide or enhance services for victims who are 50 years of age or older.

### **USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Competitive Grant Program**

Applications Due: December 13

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is requesting applications for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program for FY2018. Grant funding through this program will support projects that seek to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among low-income consumers participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase. There are three types of grants available to government agencies and nonprofit organizations through this program: (1) FINI Pilot Projects (FPP) that are aimed at new entrants seeking funding for a project in the early stages of incentive program development and operate through authorized SNAP retailers; (2) FINI Projects (FP) that test strategies that could increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by SNAP participants to inform future efforts and develop effective and efficient benefit redemption technologies; and (3) FINI Large Scale Projects (FLSP) designed to create or support multi-county, state-wide and regional incentive programs

### **HHS Research Grants for Preventing Violence and Violence Related Injury**

Applications Due: February 12, 2018

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) is soliciting investigator-initiated research that will help expand and advance our understanding about what works to prevent violence by rigorously evaluating primary prevention strategies, programs, and policies to address specific gaps in the prevention of teen dating violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and youth violence. This initiative is intended to support the evaluation of primary prevention strategies, programs or policies that target universal or selected high-risk populations (i.e., populations that have one or more risk factors that place them at heightened risk for perpetration of violence). Funds are available to conduct such studies focused on preventing the perpetration of youth violence and/or teen dating/intimate partner/sexual violence.

## **EVENTS**

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

### **NARC Webinar! Learn About Exclusive Deals on Alt-Fuel Vehicles Through F4F**

October 4, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Please join Fleets for the Future (F4F), the National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA), Zenith Motors, and National Auto Fleet Group (NAFG) to learn about the available clean vehicles provided through NJPA, a leading national purchasing cooperative with over 50,000 members. Vehicles range from plug-in hybrid sedans to propane and natural gas trucks to full electric shuttle buses and cargo vans. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure and associated services are also newly available. In October only, Zenith and NAFG will offer an additional discount on vehicles through F4F. Join the webinar to learn more about how you can transform your fleet while saving thousands of dollars in the process. There will be a live Q&A session following the presentations where participants can ask vendors questions directly.

### **Amazon HQ 2.0**

October 4, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

The online sales giant seeks a location for their second headquarters, and with it they want a diverse population and wide-range of amenities. As part of its search, Amazon also wants to learn about traffic congestion, universities, and statistics on the local workforce's qualifications. A winning city may have to offer a package of tax incentives to sweeten the deal. The question is whether attracting Amazon to your region is worth the investment and cost. For this presentation, REMI will demonstrate how to assess the costs and benefits of luring a major employer such as Amazon. Q&A to follow.

### **One Water Webinar: Institutionalizing Policies and Practices that Advance Water Equity**

October 6, 1:00 PM ET

The U.S. Water Alliance announced the release of the **Water Equity Clearinghouse**, an online database that showcases innovative and promising practices in equitable water management. The clearinghouse showcases the work of utilities, community-based organizations, nonprofits, coalitions, government agencies, philanthropic organizations, researchers, and others. Users can search for organizations by focus area, strategies, populations served, location, and more. Join this webinar for an overview of how to use this new clearinghouse. The clearinghouse is a companion piece to their national briefing paper, **An Equitable Water Future**, the most comprehensive paper to date on the connections between water management and vulnerable communities living in America.

### **Connecting Communities® Webinar: Advancing Financial Inclusion Through Innovative Financial Products and Solutions**

October 12, 3:00-4:00 PM ET

According to the Aspen Institute, more than 50 million Americans live in or near financial crisis, and a growing number lack savings cushions to weather emergencies. Far too many of these households lack access to basic, affordable financial services, and spend too much of their limited earnings on fees and interest. According to the Center for Financial Services Innovation, this amounts to more than \$145 billion annually. This marketplace is encompassed largely by non-bank financial services, such as check cashers, payday lenders and subprime loans, but also includes mainstream banking fees like overdrafts. These fees and their negative impact are compounded by the growing number of households with volatile or unpredictable income.

Organizations across the country are developing solutions to address volatility and financial inclusion and to support households in managing cash flow and building savings, increasing credit and confidence along the way. Hear from leading experts as they engage in dialogue about research, current initiatives and best practices to help address the challenges low-income households face in the financial marketplace.

### **Route Fifty Roadshow: Phoenix – Digital Edition**

October 18, 2:00-4:00 PM ET

Phoenix, Maricopa County, and the State of Arizona have become hotbeds of innovation, growth, and change. Through specific business policies with a special focus on the sharing economy, Arizona has become a magnet for the high technology industry, while outreach at both the state and local level to international trade partners have made the region a magnet for investment. Join Route Fifty for a digital event exploring the factors—from technology to infrastructure investments, local to international business outreach—that have helped the State of Arizona and Phoenix create an environment for economic success and learn how you can replicate it in your own community.

## **CONTACT US**

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