



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



Member Note: Please update your files to reflect NARC's new address: 660 North Capitol Street NW Suite 440, Washington, DC 20001.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

The House will return from the holiday on November 29; the Senate will return November 28.

Overview

President-elect Donald **Trump nominated** Senator **Jeff Sessions** (R-AL) for Attorney General and Representative **Mike Pompeo** (R-KS) for CIA Director last week. These nominations will have to be approved by Congress in order for them to become a part of the administration. Contrastingly, Trump's **appointment of Mike Flynn** to White House National Security Adviser is not subject congressional approval. Trump is expected to name additional administration roles this week. On Sunday, Vice President-elect Mike Pence **previewed the early agenda**, and announced that repeal of the 2010 health care law will be the new Administration's number one priority. Pence also added that the new team in the White House will focus on illegal immigration, tax reform to revive the economy, rebuilding the military, and investing in infrastructure. Republican lawmakers warn that the national debt could throw a wrench in the President-elect's plans. The cost of the plans and the lack of details on how to pay for them at the same time Congress will have to raise the nation's \$20 trillion debt limit this spring could make for interesting discussion on Capitol Hill.

On Tuesday, Obama will present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 21 recipients, including Ellen DeGeneres, Bill and Melinda Gates, Robert Redford, Diana Ross, Michael Jordan, and Bruce Springsteen. Later this week the president will pardon the National Thanksgiving Turkey in a ceremony in the Rose Garden and celebrate Thanksgiving at the White House.

The **2017 Senate schedule** was released last Friday, and they will be in session during the

National Conference of Regions this February! When the Senate returns from holiday, their next vote will be on a bill regarding the use of technology to deliver health care in rural areas (**S 2873**) on November 29.

With the current continuing resolution (CR) set to expire on December 9, House Republicans will work on a continuing resolution to fund the government through March 2017. By adopting a new CR and holding off on new spending decisions, Congress will basically be ignoring a year's work on spending – angering those hoping to increase defense spending and Democrats who will lose any advantage point they have when Republicans control both chambers and the White House. The new timeline will provide President-elect Trump's new team more time to develop their own spending plan.

Federal Aid for Flint's Water System

Congressional leaders announced that Flint, Michigan may finally get federal funding to fix its lead pipes as part of the 2017 stopgap spending package. House Energy and Commerce Chair Fred Upton (R-MI) told reporters that funding would be included as part of the spending package Congress is now considering. Estimates put the cost of replacing Flint's water pipelines from \$300 million to \$700 million or more, depending on the scope of the effort. Congress has been trying to pass aid for Flint as part of a larger bill on water resources, the *Water Resources Development Act*. The House and Senate passed two very different bills and had hoped to reach agreement on a consensus bill.

Executive Order: Establishing a Community Solutions Council

On November 16, President Obama built on his Administration's efforts to modernize the way the Federal Government works with cities, counties, and communities — rural, tribal, urban, and sub-urban. He signed an Executive Order establishing a Community Solutions Council. The Council will provide a lasting structure for federal agencies to strengthen partnerships with communities and improve coordination across the Federal Government in order to more efficiently deliver assistance and maximize impact.

115th Congressional Leadership Taking Form on Capitol Hill

Following the elections, Congress began shuffling around committee and leadership positions. Current Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-WI) has support from the Republican Conference to stay in that position, with Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) as Majority Leader. House Republicans also elected Steve Scalise (R-LA) as Majority Whip and Steve Stivers (R-OH) as leader of the National Republican Congressional Commission. Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) will serve a second term as Senate Majority Leader with his whole team.

For the Democrats, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) officially announced her candidacy for House Minority Leader with Joe Crowley (D-NY) and Tim Ryan (D-OH) as potential opponents. House Democrats have pushed back their elections to November 30 to sort out their legislative agenda before choosing leaders, but Pelosi is expected to hold her position. In the Senate, Chuck Schumer (D-NY) is the newly elected Democratic leader following Harry Reid (D-NV), who is retiring at the end of this Congress. Schumer added Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) to his ten person leadership team. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) remains the second highest ranking Democrat in the Senate.

Changes to committee leadership are also coming into focus. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), who was expected to retain his post on the Judiciary Committee, will instead become Ranking Member on the Appropriations Committee. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) will take his place as Ranking Member on the Judiciary Committee ahead of the Supreme Court nomination, making her the first woman to hold the position. Tom Carper (D-DE) will replace retiring Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) as Ranking Member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, and Clair McCaskill (D-MO) will move into Carper's position on the Homeland Security Committee.

Bringing Back Earmarks?

Congress also has been flirting with the return of spending earmarks, banned since 2010, to help move legislation on Capitol Hill. The push for earmarks that allow Congress to identify funds for specific local projects came from House Republicans. Supporters of earmarks note that they are only a small portion of the federal budget, but note that they are instrumental in avoiding partisan divisions on spending in Congress. House Majority Leader Paul Ryan (R-WI) squashed the idea of

bringing back earmarks at the same time that President-elect Trump announced he wants to crack down on lobbyist influence in Washington, but the push to bring back earmarks will likely return to Congress soon.

OTHER NEWS

New Report Explores How Cities and Counties can Combat the Opioid Epidemic

A new joint report from National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National League of Cities (NLC) examines how cities and counties can strengthen collaboration with each other and state, federal, private-sector and non-profit partners to tackle the opioid crisis. The report, **A Prescription for Action: Local Leadership in Ending the Opioid Crisis**, produced recommendations aimed at city and county officials. They include action steps on:

1. Leading in a crisis
2. Focusing on education and prevention
3. Expanding treatment

Several of the recommendations are accompanied by existing local practices from cities and counties. The report also includes recommendations for state and federal officials, who are pivotal partners in local efforts to combat opioid misuse, diversion, overdose and death.

ICC Extends Online Voting Period Through November 27

The Energy Efficient Codes Coalition (EECC) has a strategic goal of encouraging International Code Council (ICC) voting members to take action on the sustainability policies in their jurisdictions by voting to increase the cost-effective energy efficiency of the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) following the Final Action Hearings that took place earlier this fall. Originally set to expire tomorrow, the ICC extended the online voting period through November 27 offering a few more days to take action. The Energy Efficient Codes Coalition urges supporters of energy efficiency to take advantage of this extended vote period to vote on extra measures you may have not had time to vote on in the initial window. Please refer to the **EECC Voting Guides** for our detailed recommendations on measures to support or oppose. Take a look at the **ICC announcement** and **ICC instructions** for further details.

Broadband USA Guide for Local Officials and Citizen Groups

Smart-city infrastructure is the foundation for vibrant societies of tomorrow, yet today many communities do not have the required expertise and funding to develop and sustain new large-scale infrastructure and technology projects. Are you a community interested in using smart technologies to help increase efficiency and lower costs? Do you want to assist communities with smart infrastructure, including broadband backbones to support these technologies? If so, NTIA's BroadbandUSA team released a useful guide, **Using Partnerships to Power a Smart City: A Toolkit for Local Communities**, for local officials and citizen groups with tips for building successful public-private partnerships, including: what to look for in a partner, how to assess each partner's contribution, and how to structure the most fruitful partnership agreements.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

House Recognizes the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

Last Wednesday, Representative Peter Visclosky (D-IN) recognized the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) for their 50th anniversary. He indicated the vital role they play in the region for transportation, environmental planning, and land-use analysis. Representative Visclosky also commended NIRPC on their work on projects along the lakeshore and thanked current NARC Senior Vice President Geof Benson and NIRPC Executive Director Ty Warner among others for their work. Congratulations on 50 years, NIRPC!

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Principal Planner – Water Resources

Triangle J Council of Governments, Durham, NC

Transportation Planner

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

Associate Planner

Yakima Valley Conference of Governments, Yakima, WA

Budget Officer

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

Psychological Examiner

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

RFA: Walkability Funding for Regions

Application deadline: November 30, 11:59 PM ET

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) seeks applications from Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regions (or other similar regional entities) for competitive funding assistance to support attendance at the third annual walkability action institute, entitled "*Step It Up!: Action Institute to Increase Walking and Walkability.*"

Applicants must commit to accomplish all of the project's stated deliverables as part of course participation, and must establish an interdisciplinary team of four-to-six team members. Four of these team members must represent the required fields of public health, planning, transportation, and elected officials. Applicant teams may have up to two additional team members representative of other stakeholder disciplines.

Email questions to Karma Edwards at kedwards@chronicdisease.org. All applications and letters of commitment are due by email in one PDF document to Karma Edwards. Fax or mailed applications will not be accepted.

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

NARC Webinar! How the VW Settlement Could Impact Regions

November 29, 1:30-2:30 PM ET

Join Ben Prochazka from the Electrification Coalition to learn more about the Volkswagen settlement and the opportunities for states and regions to benefit from it.

NARC Webinar! NARC Election Webinar

December 5, 3:30 – 4:30 PM ET

As things continue to come into focus after the recent historic election, there is much to be learned about how things will play out over the next two months and the next four years. Please join NARC to discuss the results and what they mean for regions and local governments.

Save the Date! 2017 National Conference of Regions

February 12-15 – Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave NW Washington, DC

The National Conference of Regions is NARC's forum to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda for the year ahead, targeting topics central to our members' missions and their local elected officials' focus. Additional information will be available soon. Capitol Hill Day is the final day of the conference, February 15, 2017.

CONTACT US

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