



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

House and Senate resume session on November 30.

When Session Resumes

Congress will return to two major deadlines after Thanksgiving break – transportation reauthorization and a government-wide spending package.

Transportation Conferees Face Deadline

Senators passed a two-week extension leaving time to work out differences between the House and Senate versions of the six-year bill, but that short term extension expires on December 4. To provide NARC members with an overview of some of the more important issues the conference committee will be discussing during this process, we've compiled a **side-by-side document** outlining current law and how that compares with the details of the Senate DRIVE Act and the House STRR Act. Additionally, NARC and the rest of the LOT Coalition **sent a letter to conferees** last week outlining a number of issues that impact regions and local areas.

Congressional Budget Deadline

Following Thanksgiving break, Congress will have only ten days to reach an agreement on a government-wide spending bill; the current spending bill expires December 11. Reaction to the attacks in Paris and the controversy surrounding Syrian refugees will make those complicated negotiations even more difficult for lawmakers. Discussions on each of the 12 appropriations bills are continuing over the holiday, but the limited time for Congress to reach agreement could result in a combined legislative spending package. The biggest unknown will be how Congress will respond to the fight against the Islamic State and whether the spending bill will include efforts to block refugees from Syria. A fight over refugees could lead to a government shutdown.

Lawmakers Poised to Halt EPA Water Rule in Funding Bill

Congressional Republicans continue their effort to halt the Waters of the U.S. Ruling despite a White House veto threat. The provision could be included in the government spending package as well, drawing a veto. NARC joined local government colleagues in **opposing the rule** earlier this year.

White House Issues Veto Threat for Senate Bill that Would Block Clean Power Plan

On November 17, the White House issued a veto threat against two Senate resolutions that aim to block Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations on carbon emissions from new and existing power plants. Without sufficient votes to overturn a presidential veto, the resolutions were intended to demonstrate Senate concern over President Obama's climate policies on the eve of climate negotiations in Paris.

GAO Report Lists Lessons from the Private Sector on Preparing for Climate Change

Based on findings from a July 21 forum, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) released a report examining how businesses are preparing for climate change. The July forum convened 24 leaders from the private sector, government agencies, local governments, academia, national academies, and nonprofits. The forum identified climate risks to infrastructure, operations, and supply chains. The report follows a February 2015 GAO report which found that the federal government has fiscal exposure to climate change impacts in many areas.

OTHER NEWS

In Wake of Paris, How Prepared Are US States, Cities?

Pew interviews Chet Lunner a former senior official of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Democratic Mayor Walter Maddox of Tuscaloosa, AL to examine whether mid-sized cities are equipped to respond effectively during a terrorist attack. Terrorism exists in places of all sizes. While it is difficult to tell just how prepared every state and municipality is for a potential terrorist attack, security specialists say the ability to prevent and react well depends on a communication system and local counterterrorism efforts. Despite repeated efforts and hundreds of millions of dollars spent on collecting and sharing information about potential threats, little information filters down to local officials, says Lunner. Less-populated locales are where terrorists may settle in to plan or practice attacks. It is up to local police to get to know people and seek out information about potential threats, and for local officials to push for timely and relevant information from the federal government. For many states and municipalities, counterterrorism has become just a part of general disaster preparation.

Proposed Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Update

The EPA released an update to the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule last week that aims to address the issue of interstate air quality impacts. The emissions of NOx in 23 eastern states are impacting the downwind states ability to attain 2008 ozone standards. The proposal would include a reduction of 85 thousand tons of NOx by 2017 and \$1.2 billion in health benefits for Americans by issuing federal implementation plans (FIPs) that update the existing emissions budgets. There will be a public comment period on this update. States affected should see very affordable and implementable solutions before the 2017 ozone season.

NUCFAC Releases Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan

After receiving input from nearly 1,000 urban forestry leaders and stakeholders from around the country, the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) released their Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan: 2016 - 2026. The plan expands awareness of the benefits that urban forests provide to local communities; presents goals, actions, and recommendations for improving urban and community forestry in the United States; and identifies research needs and innovative funding and collaborative opportunities for urban forestry initiatives. The plan also serves as a framework for funding and recommendation priorities to be developed by NUCFAC for the USDA Forest Service's National Urban and Community Forestry program and the program's National Challenge Cost Share Grants.

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Transportation Research Analyst

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Senior Research Associate

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Senior Transportation Modeler

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Principal Transportation Modeler

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Senior Transportation Planner

Pima Association of Governments, Tucson, AZ

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

EDA Webinar on New Grants Process

December 8, 12:30 PM ET

EDA recently launched a new grants process and set of forms to improve and simplify the way it makes its investments. The new process went into effect last month, and is expected to result in timely and quality feedback on applications and ultimately strong projects that will create jobs and attract private investments. Join this webinar to hear more about EDA's new process and forms and how to apply for funding. Audio conference details: meeting room number: 1844263; dial-in number: 1-800-832-0736.

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

Broadband Opportunity: Boosting Uptake in America's Cities and Metro Areas

December 10, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM ET

While a high-speed Internet connection is already a necessary ingredient for economic prosperity, service quality and adoption remain uneven across the country. Pricing and speeds vary between and within cities and metropolitan areas and there are significant gaps in broadband adoption rates. The Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings and the National League of Cities will be examining how a new federalist framework can promote a network build-out that supports local independence while meeting national objectives around economic opportunity. Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) will provide a federal perspective and will be followed by a panel of metropolitan and industry leaders.

n4a Webinar: Creating a Livable Community Using a Scenario-Based Approach

December 11, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET

Howard County, Maryland embarked upon a comprehensive planning process to design the types of programs, services, and facilities to address the future needs of the county's growing aging population. The county engaged older adult residents and employed a futurist approach to envision multiple scenarios and outcomes. Come learn how they did this, what they accomplished, and where they are going from here. There will also be a discussion on the key trends shaping the future of aging that were explored during the project.

2016 National Conference of Regions

February 7-9, 2016* – 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 later this year. **Note: Capitol Hill Day is February 10. Please make room in your travel plans to meet with your representatives.*

CONTACT US

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