



EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Dear Colleagues,

Last week, Congress adjourned for the Thanksgiving holiday without voting on any measures to keep the government running beyond December 11, when the current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires. On Friday, President Obama announced several executive actions intended to address a number of immigration-related issues, including border security enforcement, prioritizing deportations, extending temporary legal status to certain categories of undocumented individuals, and streamlining processes for legal immigration. Several Congressional leaders have indicated their intention to stall the debate on a potential omnibus package as a result of the President's executive actions on immigration. NARC will continue to monitor the situation closely and alert members to whether Congress will choose to pass a short-term CR, an omnibus package that would fund the government through the end of FY 2015, or instead allow the government to shut down on December 12.

In happier news, it was lovely to see many of you at the NLC meeting last week!

I hope everyone has a lovely Thanksgiving holiday,
Joanna

PROGRAM UPDATE

DHS 2014 National Emergency Communications Plan: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released its first updated *National Emergency Communications Plan* (NECP) since the original in 2008. The NECP is the Nation's over-arching strategic plan for enhancing emergency communications capabilities and interoperability nationwide, and this update addresses the increasingly complex communications landscape that the public safety community uses. The 2014 NECP focuses on three priorities: (1) Maintaining and improving emergency responders' current Land Mobile Radio systems; (2) Ensuring emergency responders and government officials plan and prepare for the adoption, migration, and use of broadband technologies, including the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network; and (3) Enhancing coordination among stakeholders. Click [HERE](#) to view the 2014 NECP and related documents.

EPA Opportunity for Technical Assistance to Analyze Travel Efficiency Strategies: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is seeking state, local, or regional agencies interested in working with EPA to assess the potential for greenhouse gas (GHG) and criteria pollutant emissions reductions under alternative travel efficiency scenarios. EPA will select three agencies to demonstrate the Travel Efficiency Assessment Method (TEAM) approach to evaluating potential emission reductions from travel efficiency strategies, and to document the process in case studies. If you are interested, please submit a letter of interest by December 31. Click [HERE](#) for the notice and project description.

Administration Releases Unified Agenda on Regulations: On Friday, the Administration released its new Unified Agenda (UA), the document that outlines which regulations each agency has pending. Among other things, the UA indicates that EPA's rules governing carbon dioxide emissions from both future and existing power plants are both on track. The next rounds of Performance Management rules from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) should be released in November 2014 and March 2015. Click [HERE](#) for the new UA.

GAO: Federal and State Environmental Review Requirements are Similar, but Not Duplicative: A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) considers the interaction between the federal *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) and state environmental regulations. Eighteen states have *State Environmental Policy Act* (SEPA) requirements for highway projects, and seventeen allow for the partial or full adoption of the FHWA analyses or documentation to meet state environmental review requirements. The report analyzes different environmental review requirements and the types of projects they apply to. Click [HERE](#) to read the report.

Prepare for the Holiday Season With Recipes from *What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*: Just in time for the holiday season, USDA is launching *What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*, a consumer-friendly interactive tool that offers families lower cost cooking alternatives, healthy meal planning, grocery shopping, and food preparation for all to enjoy. This interactive tool allows users to search an extensive database of healthy recipes as well as filter and sort results by program, meal, cuisine, cost, and several other options. Click [HERE](#) for the website.

NLC Report on Open Data: As society becomes more data driven, data has the ability to drive the bottom line for private companies and help the public sector define where and how services can best be delivered. In *City Open Data Policies: Learning by Doing*, the National League of Cities (NLC) identifies how cities can take advantage of the opportunities presented by open data initiatives. Click [HERE](#) to read a summary of their recommendations and to download the report.

NACo Issue Brief on Protecting Critical Infrastructure: The National Association of Counties (NACo) recently released a new issue brief, *Improving Lifelines: Protecting Critical Infrastructure for Resilient Counties*. This publication serves as a guide to help leaders understand the vulnerabilities and threats to critical infrastructure. By having a better understanding of the interconnectedness of lifelines, and how damages to one sector can cascade and affect others, leaders will be better prepared to address vulnerabilities and protect their lifelines. Click [HERE](#) to read the issue brief.

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in recess.

Executive Order on Immigration Could Impact Omnibus: President Obama's expected executive action on immigration is likely to impact passage of a broad fiscal year 2015 omnibus spending package. Senate Appropriations Ranking Member Richard Shelby (R-AL) said Obama's action "poisons the waters" on the omnibus. Republicans would likely attach an amendment to an omnibus attempting to prevent the President from acting, which would put passage of such a package in serious doubt. This executive action makes it more likely Congress will pass a shorter-term continuing resolution instead of a full omnibus.

House Panel Holds Hearing on Emergency Response Communications: At a November 18 hearing before the U.S. House of Representatives Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, state officials warned that expired federal funding for emergency response communications could result in a hampered response to disasters. After 9/11, lawmakers responded to the inability of emergency responders to communicate with funding for the *Interoperability Emergency Communications Grant* program. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) testified that 26 states had full-time interoperability coordinators, compared with 44 in 2010. Statements from the subcommittee hearing, *Interoperable Communications: Assessing Progress Since 9/11*, are available [HERE](#).

MEMBERREQUESTS

Please send all responses to Anna Rosenbaum, anna@narc.org.

Communications Strategies: Does your COG have a written communications strategy that you can share? The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) in Detroit is interested in expanding their communications program and would like to see how other COGs have identified their communications goals, and their strategies to implement those goals.

Use of HUD's Location Affordability Portal: Does your COG or MPO regularly use the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) [Location Affordability Portal](#) for scenario or other planning purposes? If so, please let us know how and when you use the tool. HUD is interested in this information.

GRANTOPPORTUNITIES

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants still open!

HUD Secretary Castro Offers Grants Up to \$30M

Applications Due: February 9, 2015

U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Julián Castro announced funding available to help local communities across the country to redevelop severely distressed public and HUD-assisted housing and transform surrounding neighborhoods. This funding is subject to increase if there is an FY2015 appropriation. HUD is offering grants of up to \$30 million through its [Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Program](#) to support locally driven solutions for transforming neighborhoods struggling to address poor quality housing, inadequate schools, poor health, high crime, and lack of capital. Click [HERE](#) for the funding notice.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of events still open!

WEBINAR: Pre-Release Webinar on New Set of ACS Statistics for Communities Nationwide

December 1, 1:00 PM ET

The U.S. Census Bureau will hold a webinar to discuss the upcoming release of the latest [American Community Survey](#) (ACS) statistics covering communities of all sizes. The release includes detailed data for the five-year period between 2009-2013. The webinar will provide guidance on using and comparing the statistics; describe new and modified data tables; demonstrate how to access block-group-level data in American FactFinder – available in American FactFinder for the first time with this release; preview the latest edition of [Census Explorer](#), our gallery of interactive maps down to the tract level. Audio dial-in is 1-888-324-3810 with passcode: ACS 5 YEAR. Click [HERE](#) to register for online presentation.

WEBINAR: FCC State and Local Government Webinar

December 2, 1:00 – 4:00 PM ET

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is hosting a webinar designed to share vital information about Commission actions and priorities with their state and local government partners. The planned topics include acceleration of broadband deployment by improving wireless facilities siting policies; e-rate modernization; and technology transitions. Click [HERE](#) to register. You can also view the webcast at fcc.gov/live or listen in by phone by dialing 1.888.855.2214. Access code: 8926297.

WEBINAR: Engaging Community Partners to Support Healthy Food Retail

December 2, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Over the past several years, healthy food retail has become an effective strategy for improving the economic health and well-being of communities. This webinar will discuss how healthy food retail developers are engaging community stakeholders to ensure local residents have a stake in, benefit from, and have greater access to healthy foods. Speakers in this webinar will discuss how equitable development is a sustainable growth model and strategy to ensure residents benefit from having additional retail in their neighborhoods. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: Introduction to the National Center for Mobility Management

December 11, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) promotes customer-centered mobility strategies to advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community. This webinar will provide an overview of the NCMM's capacity-building resources available to communities and share tips on how to tap into the Center's expertise on transportation coordination, health care and job access strategies, funding and financing, and more. Click [HERE](#) to register.

NARC CONFERENCE: NARC's 2015 National Conference of Regions

February 8-10, 2015 – Washington, DC

Registration is open for the National Conference of Regions. This conference is a forum for locally-elected officials and their Regional Councils to explore federal policy issues, and discuss NARC's legislative priorities for the 114th Congress. Click [HERE](#) for the conference webpage.