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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIII, No. 47, December 9, 2013

eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

Expect a negotiated Congressional Budget Committee approved budget by tomorrow, Tuesday COB. Otherwise, the U.S. House adjourns on Friday for the year, and will either need to pass a short term funding bill or fail to fund the government on January 15. A stopgap measure gives the Budget Committee time to work out budget kinks and fund the government halfway between the 2014 sequester level and the Senate Democrats top-line number – setting a budget agreement at about \$1 trillion. If a deal falls through, Democrats may push separate

PROGRAM UPDATE POLICY UPDATE

MEMBER REQUESTS

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES UPCOMING EVENTS

2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

REGISTER TODAY!

 **NARC**
Building Regional Communities

The advertisement for the 2014 National Conference of Regions features a central graphic of a 3D grid of blue cubes with a green globe in the center. To the right, the text '2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS' is displayed in a blue serif font. Below this, the dates 'FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014' and location 'WASHINGTON, DC' are listed. A prominent red call to action 'REGISTER TODAY!' is positioned at the bottom right. The NARC logo, consisting of a stylized geometric design and the text 'NARC Building Regional Communities', is located at the bottom left of the advertisement.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Pritzker Launches Next Phase of Advanced Manufacturing Agenda:

Last week, the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) Secretary, Penny Pritzker, launched the second phase of the Administration's *Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership* (IMCP), an initiative aimed at encouraging communities to develop comprehensive economic development strategies to strengthen their competitive edge in attracting global manufacturers and their supply chains. In the next phase of this program, regions and communities will be eligible to compete for a special designation that will elevate them in consideration for \$1.3 billion in federal dollars and assistance from 10 agencies. In order to earn the designation, communities must present strategies that identify technologies or industries in which their communities would be competitive in the future and would make investments in areas such as

legislation to fix the sequester.

Please be safe during the crazy winter storms sweeping the country this week. Airlines are cutting hundreds of flights and highways are shutting down due to icier than expected conditions.

Stay warm,
Fred

NARCLEADERSHIP

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Hon. Penny Gross
Supervisor,
Fairfax County, VA

Chair Jim Hassinger,
Executive Directors
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Executive Director,
Southwestern
Pennsylvania Commission

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Mia Colson

Program Analyst

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Office Manager

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Intern

workforce and training, research, infrastructure, export and supply chain support, and capital access. The Federal Register notice will be available on December 10. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

We Need Your Input! NARC is preparing an educational opportunity for members regarding the travel time data (HERE vehicle probe data) that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has recently started providing to states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) free of charge. We would like to know if:

1. You are currently receiving the data, are in the process of receiving the data, or plan to begin the process soon;
2. How you are using the data;
3. What assistance you think would be helpful to maximize your use of the data; and
4. Why you are not or have chosen not to use the data (including not knowing about it).

What we learn will help us shape our presentation. Please send your responses to the followiand thoughts to erich@narc.org.

Sign-up for NARC's Newest Newsletter: *Development Digest* is NARC's new economic and community development electronic newsletter. This monthly email and online publication features a roundup of local and national news, federal policy, and agency updates, tools, cutting edge research, and NARC member best practices in the fields of community and economic development. Sign up [HERE](#) for this publication. If you have ideas or input for future issues, please contact Autumn Campbell, autumn@narc.org. Also, please take a few minutes to complete a short survey to weigh-in on the economic and community development membership services that you would like to see. The survey is available [HERE](#).

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

Budget Deal Work Continues: With the end of the week deadline looming, Congress continues to work on a budget deal that would boost overall federal spending and replace part of the sequester. The Budget chairmen in both Chambers are negotiating a regular legislative budget

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framework that would provide nearly \$1 trillion in FY14 funding, replace sequestration with alternative, targeted spending cuts, and allow Congress to pass the full package with a single vote in each Chamber and minimize the opportunities for alteration. The framework would minimally raise FY14 spending in exchange for an array of deficit reduction steps in other areas. There are several potential complications, including adding unemployment benefits and an effort being pushed in the House to keep the Budget Control Act's spending requirements, which could derail or delay any full agreement. However, this effort, unlike recent past ones, is focused on easing the second year of sequestration, which is predicted to have even greater impacts, and avoiding government shutdown. The 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), which enacts budget spending caps and sequestration levels, sets FY14 spending at \$967 billion. House leaders have prepared a separate budget deal that would set spending levels for FY14 and FY15 at BCA levels.

Renewed Optimism in Long-Term Farm Bill Negotiations: Farm Bill negotiations have plodded along for over a month, but last week, conference Committee leaders indicated there could soon be a breakthrough. After a marathon closed-door session on Wednesday, House and Senate negotiators emerged with optimism, though they indicated they didn't expect to move a package before the holiday recess, but House Majority Leader Eric Cantor said he was leaving open the possibility of voting on a compromise bill as early as this week. If negotiations continue into 2014, a short-term extension will be necessary.

Blumenauer Pushes for Gas Tax Increase: In a move that received a lot of attention, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) last week introduced the UPDATE Act of 2013, which would follow the recommendation of the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction report and increase the federal gasoline tax by 15 cents per gallon, nearly doubling it to 33.4 cents per gallon. The bill would also index the gas tax to inflation, so the spending power of the money collected would not erode over time. The federal gas tax has remained unchanged for more than two decades; Blumenauer's proposal would put the tax slightly higher than it would be - had it been indexed for inflation in 1993. You can read more about this proposal **HERE.**

MEMBERREQUESTS

Request for Qualifications from EARPDC: The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) is issuing a request for qualifications for a consultant to prepare an implementation plan for the CLEAR Plan 2030. The implementation plan will draw from the results of the CLEAR Plan public engagement process and from livability projects implemented in rural America. Sealed submissions will be accepted until 3:00 pm Friday, December 13, 2013. To download the Request for Qualifications scroll down to "News & Announcements" on the EARPDC homepage at <http://www.earpdc.org/> and click on "Implementation Plan Request for Qualifications."

Membership Dues Structure: The Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC) is reviewing its current membership dues structure, and is looking for examples of bylaws and dues for states that have regional council associations.

Members ask for your thoughtful reply. Please forward any feedback to Anna Rosenbaum, anna@narc.org, including which member assistance request to which you are responding.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Economic Development Administration

Next Deadline: December 13 for funding cycle 2 of FY 2014;

Other Deadlines: March 14, 2014 for funding cycle 3 of FY 2014;

June 13, 2014 for funding cycle 4 of FY 2014

EDA is soliciting applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides competitive, merit-based investments that support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. The full announcement is available [HERE](#).

Wells Fargo Foundation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: December 16

Designed to support projects that link economic development and community well-being to the stewardship and health of the environment, Wells Fargo and the NFWF have launched a five-year, \$15 million initiative that will be used to leverage other public and private investments with an expected total impact of over \$37.5 million. Funding priorities for this program include supporting sustainable agricultural practices; promoting land and water conservation; facilitating investments in green infrastructure and energy efficiency; and encouraging broad-based citizen participation in project implementation. More information is available [HERE](#).

Department of the Treasury – Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI)

Deadline: December 23

Funding is available for the CDFI Program, which aims to use federal resources to invest in CDFIs and to build their capacity to serve low-income people and communities that lack access to affordable financial products and services. Through the CDFI program, the CDFI Fund provides two types of monetary awards to CDFIs - Financial Assistance awards and Technical Assistance awards. More information on this opportunity is available [HERE](#), and more information on the CDFI program is available [HERE](#). Funding for the Native American CDFI program is also available. More information can be found [HERE](#).

National Endowment for the Arts

Deadline: January 13, 2014

The NEA Our Town Program aims to support creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Our Town will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to improve their quality of life; encourage greater creative activity; foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and revitalize economic development. More information is available [HERE](#).

Institute Without Borders

Deadline for Expression of Interest: January 13, 2014

The Institute without Boundaries (IwB) is seeking curriculum partners for Connecting Divided Places, a project that investigates social, economic, environmental and cultural divisions in cities. IwB seeks applications from municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and companies

interested in working to address the problems dividing cities and regions. IWB is looking for organizations interested in collaborating on design solutions that make for more balanced, healthier and resilient city-regions of the future. Read more [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: January 15, 2014

As part of the Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA), the 2013 Construction Equipment Funding Opportunity will provide rebate incentives to selected eligible applicants to either retrofit or to replace their nonroad construction equipment engines. Applicants may submit only one application for up to five pieces of equipment and up to \$120,000 in rebate funds. Applications may be downloaded from the website. Completed applications and required documentation should be sent by email. More information is available [HERE](#).

Community Forest Program Grant

Deadline: January 15, 2014

The U.S. Forest Service's Community Forest Program (CFP) protects forests that are important for people and the places they call home. CFP provides funding to local governments, tribal governments and nonprofits to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. Click [HERE](#) for more information about available funding.

Health Resources Services Administration – Rural Health Network Development Planning Program

Deadline: January 16, 2014

Funding is available to develop and promote the planning and development of rural healthcare networks aimed at achieving efficiencies; expanding access to, coordinating, and improving the quality of essential health care services; and strengthening the rural health care system as a whole. This program brings together key parts of a rural health care delivery system, particularly those entities that may not have collaborated in the past under a formal relationship, to work together to establish and improve local capacity and coordination of care. This grant program supports one year of planning with the primary goal in helping networks create a foundation and focus efforts to address important regional or local community health needs. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: January 22, 2014

EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) has announced FY 2014 EPA funding for Brownfields Job Training Grants, Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants, Brownfields Assessment Grants, Brownfields Multi-Purpose Grants, Brownfields Cleanup Grants, State Assistance Grant, Hazardous Waste Management Grant Program for Tribes, Tribal Solid Waste Management Assistance Project. More information is available [HERE](#) and the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP) will host a webinar on December 4th to discuss this opportunity. Sign up for the webinar [HERE](#).

Department of the Interior – Bureau of Reclamation

Deadline: January 23, 2014

Funding is available through the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program to support new Water and Energy Efficiency Grant projects. Proposals are sought from states, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts and other organizations with water or power delivery authority to partner with Reclamation on projects that increase water conservation or result in other improvements that address water supply sustainability in the West. More information is available [HERE](#).

Department of Labor – Employment Training Administration

Deadline: January 27, 2014

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), has announced \$100 million in grant funds for the Youth CareerConnect grant program. The program is designed to provide high school students with education and training that combines rigorous academic and technical curricula focused on specific in-demand occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers as well as the related activities necessary to support such training to increase participants' employability in H-1B in-demand industries and occupations. More information is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation (NSF) - Cyber-Physical Systems

Deadline: January 29, 2014

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have a shared interest in advancing basic and applied research in Cyber Physical Systems (CPS), which are systems in which physical processes are tightly intertwined with networked computing. For transportation, CPS will provide the foundation necessary for a safe, efficient highway transportation system connecting

vehicles, infrastructure, people, and goods in a vibrant, competitive economy. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Deadline: January 30, 2014

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$181 million to develop commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit existing facilities with appropriate technology to develop advanced biofuels. Funding is available through the Biorefinery Assistance Program provides loan guarantees to viable commercial-scale facilities to develop new and emerging technologies for advanced biofuels. The announcement is available [HERE](#), more information about the program is available [HERE](#) and the full text of the Federal Register notice is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Housing

Deadline: February 3, 2014

Funding is available for FY 2013 and FY 2014 Continuum of Care Program Competition (CoC) to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness. Full text of the notice of funding availability (NOFA) is available [HERE](#).

NSF - Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering

Deadline: February 4, 2014

The Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering (CyberSEES) program aims to advance interdisciplinary research in which the science and engineering of sustainability are enabled by new advances in computing, and where computational innovation is grounded in the context of sustainability problems. More information is available [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)

Deadline: February 5, 2014

The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program seeks to develop nation-wide-community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving these resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. Projects seek to address water quality issues in priority

watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: February 18, 2014

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for eligible applicants for projects that address local environmental and public health issues within an affected community. The CPS Program is designed to help communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

Energy for Sustainability

Deadline: February 20, 2014

This program supports fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources. Current interest areas in sustainable energy technologies are: Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy, Photovoltaic Solar Energy, Wind Energy, and Advanced Batteries for Transportation. Learn more about this program [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Value-Added Producer Grant Program

Deadline: February 24, 2014

The USDA announced today \$10.5 million in carry-over funding from 2013 to help U.S. agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Awards may be made for either economic planning or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of value-added agricultural products. More information is available [HERE](#).

Department of Energy

Deadline: Concept Papers due January 13, 2014; Final applications due March 13, 2014

As part of a new \$19 million investment in solar energy, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced funding available under the SunShot Incubator 9 program. This program will focus on early-stage support for small companies, encouraging private-sector investment and seeking app and web developers from both inside and outside of the

energy industry to zero in on reducing soft costs of solar adoption. More information is available [HERE](#).

NSF - Environmental Sustainability

Deadline: March 20, 2014

The Environmental Sustainability program supports engineering research that seeks to balance society's need to provide ecological protection and maintain stable economic conditions. Research in Environmental Sustainability typically considers long time horizons and may incorporate contributions from the social sciences and ethics. There are four principal general research areas which are supported: Industrial Ecology, Green Engineering, Ecological Engineering, Earth Systems Engineering. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Climate Solutions University Accepting Applications

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Model Forest Policy Program is offering a special funding opportunity for qualifying U.S. urban and rural communities working together addressing ecosystem services. Urban decision makers need to plan for climate impacts that result from land changes beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. To find out more about the Climate Solutions University, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

WEBINAR: Training for Municipal Solid Waste Landfills

December 10, 3:00 PM EST

Under EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule, owners or operators of municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills must report emissions from MSW landfills and all other source categories located at the landfill for which methods are defined in the rule. Owners or operators are required to collect emission data; calculate greenhouse gas emissions; and follow the specified procedures for quality assurance, missing data, recordkeeping, and reporting. EPA will cover who is subject to the reporting rule, review an applicability tool that can help facilities determine if they are subject, and address what to do if you must report. Registration is available [HERE](#).

WEBINAR SERIES: EPA Announces Webinar Series for State and Local Governments

The EPA's State and Local Climate and Energy Program announced a series of webcasts aimed at helping local governments as they explore

and plan climate change and clean energy efforts. These regular webcasts highlight EPA resources available to local governments and present examples of successful climate and energy programs and policies implemented locally. More information on this series and links to register are available [HERE](#).

- *December 11, 1:00-2:30 PM EST* - The Role of Communication in Ensuring Sustained Behavior Change
- *December 18, 1:00-2:30 PM EST* - Using Effective Communication to Showcase Program Successes

WEBINAR: Environmental Protection Agency

December 17, 1:00 PM EST

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Green Power Partnership (GPP) will host a webinar to address effectively engaging allies across the enterprise. Particularly for on-site and utility-scale green power opportunities, sustainability and energy staff find that they need to coordinate or collaborate with multiple functions within their organization. Building the support of an internal network can make all the difference when it comes to making a purchase or installing green power on-site. The webinar will discuss how to build this network, how to leverage other stakeholders' key issues and address their challenges, and who needs to be involved. Register [HERE](#).

Regional Solar Workshop: Detroit, MI

January 23, 2014, 8:30-12:30 PM EST

Local governments interested in learning about how to make their community solar ready in Southeast Michigan are invited to a free workshop sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership, City of Lathrup Village, Southeast Michigan Regional Energy Office and NARC. The workshop will provide actionable information on creating local –level solar policies and permitting processes. Areas of focus include: (1) The benefits and barriers of solar development in your region; (2) Revising planning and zoning codes and ordinances; and (3) Streamlining the permitting processes to enable solar development in your community. For more information and to register for the event, click [HERE](#).

NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions

February 9-11, 2014, Washington, DC

The National Conference of Regions is the forum that NARC uses to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda on topics of

relevance and importance to executive directors and local elected officials representing regional organizations and boards. Additional information will be available in late 2013.

NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 6-11, 2014, Louisville, KY

The Annual Conference and Exhibition is the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. Held annually in June, NARC's Annual Conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Additional information will be available in early 2014.

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