President Rodgers announces cybersecurity initiative

Public-private partnership strives to better protect county government networks and residents from hackers and fraud

WASHINGTON, D.C. – National Association of Counties (NACo) President Chris Rodgers today announced that the association is making cybersecurity a priority through a public-private partnership to promote cybersecurity awareness and education.

Through a new NACo Cybersecurity Task Force, led by Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson, Douglas County, Neb., the association will disseminate information regarding services and programming from its federal partners directly to county government policy makers and IT professionals to better protect county government networks and residents.

Shortly after being installed as NACo President on July 17, Rodgers, commissioner, Douglas County, Neb., said he believed that it’s important for counties to address cybersecurity in a more comprehensive manner.

“With the role that county governments play in homeland security, we know that county governments are increasingly becoming a target for hackers and viral attack that could shut down our airports, water systems, electrical grids, and courthouses,” Rodgers said. “I am proud to say that NACo will be the first of the ‘Big Seven’ state and local government organizations to highlight this critical issue.”

Rodgers said it’s important that county staffs are armed with resources and knowledge necessary to combat the threats and outlined the objectives of the initiative:

- Raise awareness among county elected officials of the threats to county government cyber infrastructure;
- Provide educational materials/training for elected officials and their constituents on issues related to cyber security at work and at home;
- Connect county government with federally funded services offered by the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center;

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• Connect county government with Department of Homeland Security products and resources such as Cyber exercises, evaluations and IT risk assessments; and
• Provide input to NACo steering committees on pending cyber security legislation when warranted.

The NACo Cybersecurity Task Force is comprised of 41 members: 21 elected county commissioners, two county sheriffs, one treasurer/auditor, two State county association executives, three IT staff leaders (CIO or CISO), six private partners, five federal partners, and one university partner, The Peter Kiewit Institute-University of Nebraska.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation's 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).