Hokama becomes NACo president
Vows to help strengthen county transportation and infrastructure services

New Orleans, La. – Council Member Riki Hokama, Maui County, Hawaii today was installed as president of the National Association of Counties (NACo). The swearing-in took place on the final day of NACo’s 79th Annual Conference held in Orleans Parish (New Orleans), La. Hokama is the second Hawaiian to hold the position.

“I am honored to serve as NACo’s president and help counties provide much-needed services to residents across the country,” said Hokama. “Counties are the leaders on a wide range of issues, and I will work to make sure that we are well-prepared and well-represented at the federal level.”

Since 2001, Hokama has been active in NACo as a member of the Board of Directors, Financial Services Corporation Board of Directors, Election Reform Task Force, Audit Committee, Membership Committee, Presidential Theme Advisory Committee, Finance Committee and Governance and Structure Task Force. He also served as chair of NACo’s Transportation Steering Committee.

During his address to conference delegates, Hokama announced his presidential initiative to strengthen counties’ ability to deliver transportation and infrastructure services to their communities. His Transportation and Infrastructure Initiative will address the county role in promoting investments that support economic competitiveness, improve passenger travel, foster creative partnerships, ensure safety and enhance community quality of life.

“A top priority is to reauthorize MAP-21, a surface transportation bill, and to secure funding for the Highway Trust Fund,” said Hokama. “My Presidential Initiative is also flexible enough to include other transportation and infrastructure issues such as airports, technology and hospitals. There is a significant need to re-invest in America.”

Counties play an essential role in America’s transportation and infrastructure networks. Investing over $100 billion each year in roads, bridges, transit, water systems and other public facilities, counties facilitate everything from Americans’ daily commutes to the shipping of goods around the globe.
Counties are responsible for building and maintaining 45 percent of public roads and nearly 40 percent of bridges, and are involved in the operations of a third of the nation’s transit systems and airports that connect residents, communities and businesses.

Hokama was first elected to public office in 1978 as a delegate to the Hawaii State Constitutional Convention. Later, he was elected to serve on the Maui County Council from 1999 to 2009 and again in 2011. He is chair of the Council's Policy Committee and has been an advocate for the job creation, services for young and elderly residents and fiscally-responsible government.

Raised on the island of Lanai, Hokama graduated from the University of Hawaii with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo), based in Washington, D.C., is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo assists America’s 3,069 counties in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties. NACo promotes sound public policies, fosters county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. More information at: www.naco.org.