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**NACo expands Smart Justice Initiative to address juvenile justice reform in partnership with MacArthur Foundation**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today announced that it is expanding its Smart Justice Initiative to address juvenile justice reform in strategic partnership with the MacArthur Foundation’s Models for Change juvenile justice reform initiative. The Models for Change initiative promotes evidence-based practices at the state and local level to make juvenile justice more fair, effective, rational and developmentally appropriate.

NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative will build county leadership capacity, expertise and commitment for juvenile justice reform across the country. Through written publications, webinars and learning labs at sites around the country, NACo will educate county leaders on effective ways to improve public safety and support juveniles, even as they grapple with tight budgets and tough fiscal decisions.

Through this strategic partnership, NACo will:

- provide counties with information and resources to focus on juvenile justice reform
- create a comprehensive approach to addressing juvenile and criminal justice issues in local communities
- expose county elected officials to evidence-based models and tools, and
- develop peer exchange opportunities to build capacity and knowledge of proven and promising practices.

Local governments hold the primary responsibility for ensuring the delivery of services to prevent and address juvenile delinquency. As the chief provider at the local level in health, social services and juvenile corrections, county governments are at the forefront of constructing comprehensive strategies to provide for public protection as well as the services necessary to make a positive impact on individuals and communities.

“NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative aims to provide counties with the information and tools necessary to foster positive change in their communities,” said NACo President Linda Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa. “We are most pleased to partner with the MacArthur Foundation and Models for Change throughout 2014 to promote proactive and effective strategies...
to keep our communities safe and assist young people both inside and outside our local justice systems.”

For more information about NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform initiative contact Kathy Rowings at 202.942.4279 or krowings@naco.org. To learn more about Models for Change, visit http://www.modelsforchange.net.

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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 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.