NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 10, 2013
CONTACT: Jim Philipps, 202.942.4220

County leaders urge Congress to support mandatory PILT program funding

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A select group of county leaders representing more than 25 counties in 13 states are urging Congress this week to keep its promise to counties and communities and extend mandatory funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for FY14 and beyond.

County leaders are participating in a series of meetings Sept. 11-12 with officials at the department of the Interior, members of Congress and key Congressional staff to ensure that the federal payments are not disrupted. Leading the advocacy “fly in” effort is NACo Western Interstate Region (WIR) President John Martin, commissioner, chair, Garfield County, Colo., and NACo Public Lands Steering Committee Chair Mike Murray, commissioner, Lewis and Clark County, Mont.

Congress has yet to act on securing mandatory PILT funding for next year. Without additional mandatory funding, PILT will revert to a discretionary program subject to the annual appropriations process which county leaders fear could jeopardize continued full funding for PILT.

The PILT program provides payments to counties and other local governments to offset losses in tax revenues due to the presence of substantial acreage of federal land in their jurisdictions. As federal land is not taxable by local governments, public land counties have struggled historically to provide adequate services to the public in light of the annual losses in tax revenue. In many counties, more than 50 percent of their land is owned by the federal government.

PILT payments allow local governments to provide critical government services such as education, solid waste disposal, law enforcement, search and rescue, health care, environmental compliance, firefighting, and parks and recreation.

Support for the PILT program has long been a NACo legislative priority. NACo is the only national...
organization that advocates on behalf of the PILT program.

“Congress must keep its promise to counties and ensure that these federal payments are not disrupted,” said Matt Chase, NACo’s executive director. “The PILT program is a critical source of revenue for counties with large areas of tax-exempt federal land within their boundaries. Without the revenue, many counties would be forced to cut services, delay infrastructure maintenance and improvement and eliminate local jobs.”

States represented during the fly-in include Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming, and Washington.

Click here for more information about the PILT program or contact Ryan Yates at 202.942.4207.

###

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 3,069 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.