WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) next week will hold a Congressional briefing on the broad range of rural development programs authorized in the farm bill. Many of these programs assist rural communities through grants and loans which in turn leverage private sector dollars and expand economic opportunity.

Congressional Rural Caucus Co-Chair Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) and Rep. Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.) are expected to offer brief remarks at the beginning of the briefing.

WHO: National Association of Counties

WHAT: Congressional Briefing: “Rural Development in the Farm Bill – Perspectives from Rural County Elected Officials”

WHEN: 10-11 a.m., Wednesday, March 28

WHERE: B318 Rayburn House Office Building

Speakers include:

- **Commissioner Lenny Eliason** of Athens County, Ohio. Eliason, NACo’s President, will discuss the benefit of a robust farm bill for rural counties.

- **Supervisor Lu Barron** of Linn County, Iowa. Barron, NACo’s Rural Action Caucus chair, will discuss the major policy priorities of rural counties.

- **Commissioner Don Larson** of Brookings County, S.D. Larson, NACo’s Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee chair, will provide examples of how USDA Rural Development programs help spur economic innovation in South Dakota.

NACo supports full funding of all titles in the 2012 reauthorization of the farm bill and calls on Congress and the administration to place particular emphasis on crafting a bill that provides
enhanced resources to rural development programs and strategies that promote rural prosperity. The 2008 Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2012.

“The farm bill is critical to all Americans, but especially rural Americans and the communities in which they live,” said NACo President Lenny Eliason. “The briefing is an excellent opportunity to learn from rural county officials about bipartisan and common sense solutions to enhance economic opportunity in rural areas.”

Members of the media are welcome to attend the briefing. For more information, contact Jim Philipps at 202.942.4220 or jphilipps@naco.org.

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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.