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M A D I A   A D V I S O R Y

WASHINGTON, D.C. – More than 1,300 county officials will deliver a strong, personal and multimedia “Why Counties Matter” message to federal lawmakers and policymakers during the National Association of Counties’ (NACo) 2013 Legislative Conference, March 2-6, at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

NACo leadership and members are rolling out an aggressive ground and digital campaign during the Legislative Conference to demonstrate that the nation’s 3,069 county governments provide the essential building blocks to create healthy, vibrant and safe communities. This includes supporting and maintaining key public infrastructure, transportation and economic development assets; creating and sustaining a skilled workforce to meet the needs of private industry; ensuring public health and public safety needs to protect the public; and implementing a broad portfolio of federal, state and local programs in a cost-effective and accountable manner.

Through advertisements in the Capitol Hill publication POLITICO and POLITICO.com, and the unveiling of a new 3-minute “Why Counties Matter” video, NACo will demonstrate how counties and the services and programs they provide are essential to the American people and communities across the country. NACo and its members will use social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, to spread the county message and communicate their individual activities throughout the five-day conference.

Counties, where most Americans live, matter because 2,914 counties own a jail or participate in a regional jail and admitted nearly 12 million people each year. Counties provide public health services, including flu shots and restaurant inspections through 1,947 health departments. Counties own and maintain 44 percent of America’s roadways and 228,026 bridges and almost one third of the nation’s transit systems and airports. Counties respond to all disasters and in most cases without assistance from other levels of governments. Counties run the nation’s polling places to keep our democracy strong. Counties own 900 hospitals and spend $68 billion on health care services annually.

During the conference, NACo leadership and members will meet with key Congressional offices on March 5 and March 6 to deliver the Why Counties Matter message in person and offer to work collaboratively with their federal partners to meet and exceed the needs of the American people.

“Counties matter because our services touch the lives of virtually every American,” said NACo President Chris Rodgers. “If you vote, drive to work, take the bus, get a flu shot, visit the library, go to...”
the hospital, eat at a restaurant, get a marriage license, buy a house, play in the park, recycle, or call 911—chances are that you are interacting with your county government.

Rodgers said that counties are a critical partner with the federal and state governments to lead the country toward economic growth and opportunity. NACo believes that it is important to find a balanced approach to deficit reduction and to avoid the looming across-the-board “sequester” budget cuts, which will negatively affect counties and the communities they serve.

“America’s counties have already shouldered more than their share of deficit reduction cuts to the federal budget,” Rodgers said. “We are concerned that there seems to be no real momentum to finding a bipartisan solution to replace the across-the-board sequester cuts scheduled to occur starting March 1. State and local budgets have been slashed, and counties have had to balance their budgets yet continue shouldering so many of the critical programs and services that people, industry and communities depend upon.”

Also during the Legislative Conference, participating county officials will hear from national leaders on issues important to counties and communities:

**Opening/Monday General Session**
1:30–3:30 p.m., Monday, March 4
- Mark M. Zandi, chief economist, analytics, Moody Corp. (approx. 1:55 – 2:20 p.m.)
- Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Senate Republican Conference vice chair (2:20-2:30 p.m.)
- U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder (approx. 2:30-2:45 p.m.)
- Bob Woodward, associate editor, The Washington Post (approx. 2:45-3:30 p.m.)

**Tuesday/Closing General Session**
8:30–10:15 a.m., Tuesday, March 5
- Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), minority leader, House of Representatives (approx. 8:35-8:50 a.m.)
- Sec. Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture (approx. 9:05-9:30 a.m.)
- Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.), (approx. 9:30-9:45 a.m.)
- Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.), assistant democratic leader, House of Representatives (approx. 10-10:30 a.m.)

On Saturday, March 2, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., the NACo Technology Summit will take place in the International Ballroom East (Concourse Level). This year’s Technology Summit will focus on how cloud technologies have enabled counties to achieve affordable initiatives and enhance mission critical operations while maintaining security.


- Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S.
Department of Labor
- Doug O'Brien, Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Kelvin Coleman, Director, State, Local and Tribal Engagement, U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s National Cyber Security Division
- Cindy Mann, Deputy Administrator and Director, Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Lori Eville, Correctional Program Specialist, Community Corrections Division, National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice
- Bob Perciasepe, Acting Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Nancy Stoner, Acting Assistant Administrator for Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- David Lloyd, Director, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Gregory Vadas, Chief, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission
- Deena Shetler, Associate Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission
- Jeffrey Steinberg, Deputy Chief, Spectrum and Competition Policy Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission

The policy development process initiated by the steering committees leads to the publication of the American County Platform, which NACo uses as a guide to deliver the county government message to the administration, Congress and the American public.

Educational Opportunities
In addition to carrying the county government message to Capitol Hill, county officials will participate in a variety of educational workshops. Workshop titles include: Disaster Recovery: What You Need to Know; 2014 Medicaid Expansion: Preparing for the Impact on Counties; Cyber for Counties: What Elected Officials Need to Know; The Cliff, Sequestration, Deficit Reduction and Counties; The Battle Over Tax Reform: What’s at Stake for Counties?; Economic Development 101 for Rural Counties; Jobs, Nutrition and Farms: Counties and the Farm Bill; and Smart Justice: Reentry Programs for Creating Safer Communities.

Note to Media
Members of the working news media wishing to cover conference events must present their press credentials at the conference press room, located in the Cardozo Room (Terrace Level), to obtain a NACo press badge. The press room will be open 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, March 2 and Sunday, March 3, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday, March 4 and Tuesday, March 5. (Press Room phone number: TBA).

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.