NEW RELEASE

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America’s counties welcome debt ceiling deal and end of shutdown, but urge long-term solution

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today issued the following statement on passage of legislation to fund the federal government through Jan. 15 and raise the national debt ceiling until Feb. 7:

“The nation’s counties are pleased that Congress and the Administration have reached an agreement to reopen the federal government and raise the debt ceiling through early next year. Counties strongly urge our federal representatives to seek a bipartisan, bicameral and long-term solution to federal budget and debt challenges.

“Despite the two-week federal government shutdown, counties remained open for business and continued to deliver services directly to residents, businesses and communities. Counties cannot afford to shut down because they are responsible for so many critical programs and services that citizens rely on—including public health and public safety. Counties support over 960 hospitals, provide public health services through 1,550 local health departments and 2,914 counties own jails. They also own and maintain 44 percent of America’s roads, 228,026 bridges and almost one third of the nation’s transit systems and airports.

“Because of the unique federal, state and local partnership, a shutdown of the federal government and uncertainty in annual federal funding causes much disruption at the local level. The role of government is to create conditions for safe, healthy, vibrant and economically competitive communities. If we want to jumpstart and grow the economy, we need a more predictable policy environment from our federal partners for counties, businesses and the public to make informed decisions and move our country forward.

“A shutdown of the federal government and the constant threat of a shutdown erodes the public’s faith in all levels of government.”

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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 3,069 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.