WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today joined President Obama in urging Congress to extend legislation to fund federal highway, transit and aviation programs and move toward completing new reauthorization bills.

During a White House event today attended by NACo representatives, President Obama said it was “inexcusable to cut off necessary investments at a time when so many of our highways are choked with congestion, when so many of our bridges are in need of repair, when so many commuters depend on reliable public transit, and when travel and shipping delays cost businesses billions of dollars every single year.”

NACo agrees with the president and renewed its call on Congress to resolve their differences and act before the current “highway bill” extension expires at the end of September. The current surface transportation legislation, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) expired in 2009. Congress has extended the Act seven times.

Of equal concern to counties is the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) program, which expires Sept. 16. It has been extended 22 times.

“If the authority for these key transportation programs is allowed to lapse, thousands of transportation projects will be stopped, thousands of government and private sector jobs will be jeopardized and millions of dollars of aviation-related taxes and federal fuel taxes will not be collected and will be lost forever,” said NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake. “Time is up for Congress to meet its obligation to the American people on these critical transportation and infrastructure program and funding issues.”

The nation’s counties own one-third of the nation’s airports, 45 percent of the highways and bridges and one-third of the transit systems.

More information is available at www.naco.org.

###

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.