



CountyNews

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NACo continues push on 'waters of the U.S.' rule

By JULIE UFFNER
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

For the fourth time since June 2014, NACo took to Capitol Hill to testify about the proposed "waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rule, which threatens to significantly increase costs and disrupt the repair and maintenance of critical county infrastructure and facilities.

On March 24, Ouray County, Colo. Commissioner Lynn Padgett spoke at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. In her testimony, Padgett reaffirmed local governments' unease about the proposal.

"We are concerned that the proposal's unclear language would lead to unintended, adverse consequences for counties and residents across the country," Padgett said. She stressed that counties support "common sense" environmental protection and reminded committee

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Photo by Sylvia Johnson

Ouray County, Colo. Commissioner Lynn M. Padgett testifies before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry March 24. The hearing, "Waters of the United States: Stakeholder Perspectives on the Impacts of EPA's Proposed Rule," was led by Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) and Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.).

Input sought on tribal land-to-trust issues

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

After years of negotiations, the Lytton Band of Pomo Indians and Sonoma County, Calif. have reached an agreement that would enable the tribe to develop housing, a winery and hotel on tribal land in the county.

"In Sonoma County, there are five federally recognized tribes," Supervisor David Rabbit told a recent Capitol Hill roundtable,

convened by Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. "We have three intergovernmental agreements with those tribes that have worked very, very well," Rabbit added. Nationwide, there are 566 federally recognized Indian tribes.

More notice and more county-tribal collaboration are what NACo and California counties want when the federal government takes Indian lands into trust that are later

Key federal programs get boost in House

By BRIAN BOWDEN
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

On March 26, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed legislation that would extend several federal programs important to counties, including Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). House lawmakers passed H.R. 2, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, by a vote of 392-37. Under the legislation, SRS would be reauthorized for FY14 and FY15, and CHIP, along with other key health care programs, would be extended. H.R. 2 must now be taken up and passed by the Senate, likely after returning from recess on April 13.

Crafted by House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), H.R. 2 is a compromise bill that would permanently correct the formula by which physicians are paid under Medicare.

Importantly for counties, the bill also addresses several federal programs:

- **Secure Rural Schools (SRS) Extension:** H.R. 2 would provide two years of critical SRS funding to rural counties and school districts affected by the decline in revenue from timber harvests

on federal lands. It would authorize \$500 million to support local schools, roads, law enforcement and other critical services in more than 720 counties and 4,000 school districts across 41 states. H.R. 2 also includes provisions to expedite SRS payments to counties by requiring the federal government to make SRS payments within 45 days of the bill's enactment and provides greater flexibility for how counties may spend SRS funds.

- **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP):** CHIP is a federal-state partnership that provides low-cost health coverage to more than 8 million children and pregnant women in families that earn income above Medicaid eligibility levels. Current funding for CHIP expires in September 2015 and H.R. 2 extends funding for two years.

- **Disproportionate Share Hospitals (DSH):** H.R. 2 also supports the financing and delivery of Medicaid services by delaying the scheduled reductions in payments to hospitals serving a disproportionate number of Medicaid beneficiaries

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2015 health rankings show early deaths trending down



County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

A Healthier Nation, County by County

By **CHARLES TAYLOR**
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Premature death rates are declining in 60 percent of U.S. counties, according to the 2015 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, recently issued by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

This is the first year since the rankings began in 2010 that such data, for counties with populations of 65,000 or more, have been available. The data are based on changes since the 2010 rankings, which relied on the then-most-recent available data, 2004–2006. And this year’s rankings use the comparable data for 2010–2012.

“The way we measure premature deaths uses the years of potential life lost before the age of 75,” said Julie Willems Van Dijk, Ph.D., co-director of the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) program. In many of

these deaths are preventable, those who die at an early age are weighted more heavily in the calculation.

The 10 most-improved counties, or county equivalents, are Washington, D.C. (-31 percent), Madison County, Miss. (-27.9 percent), Pinal County, Ariz. (-26.4 percent), Martin County, Fla. (-23.3 percent), Albemarle County, Va. (-23.2 percent), Imperial County, Calif. (-22.9 percent), Baltimore City, Md. (-22.8 percent), Orleans Parish, La. (-22.4 percent), New York County, N.Y. (-22.2 percent) and Fulton County, Ga. (-21.7 percent).

Still, that means 40 percent of counties are not making progress in reducing early deaths.

CHR&R officials say premature death is the single most important component of its evaluation of health outcomes. For that reason, the measure is given the highest weight in its calculations.

Also new this year is a measure of the wealth gap, or income inequality, between the poorest and

most affluent residents of counties. For each county, it’s expressed as a ratio: income at the 80th percentile level divided by income for the 20th percentile.

For example, if the 80th percentile for household income in a county is \$200,000 and the 20th percentile is \$40,000, the income inequality ratio is 5. According to this year’s Rankings and Roadmaps’ data release, the median U.S. income inequality ratio for counties is 4.4.

The “top performing” counties are the 10 percent with ratios of less than 3.7. The worst performing 10 percent have ratios of 5.4 or greater. Nationwide, income inequality ratios are highest in large metropolitan counties, and those located in the Southeast, Southwest, and parts of Appalachia and the Plains regions.

“We’ve always had a measure of the childhood poverty level in the community,” Van Dijk said, “but we’ve had people telling us continuously since we started the rankings that we need more measures that tell us about the differences in our county.

“This is an economic factor, but it also has an impact on the social fabric of a community,” she added. “Where there’s a much

NACo County Health Learning Challenge Application

NACo, in collaboration with the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) program, is selecting up to three counties to participate in a one-year challenge to identify and address critical barriers to creating a Culture of Health in their communities. CHR&R is a partnership between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

The easy-to-complete application, due April 13, asks county teams to identify the areas they propose to focus on during the Challenge. The selected focus areas must link to the County Health Rankings model (www.countyhealthrankings.org/our-approach).

All teams must include an elected official as the lead applicant. For additional information about the NACo County Health Learning Challenge and the selection criteria, please visit www.NACo.org/CountyHealthLearningChallenge or contact Andrew Whitacre at awhitacre@naco.org.

larger divide, there’s often a loss of feelings of social connectedness.”

This year’s “key findings” from the rankings offer several strategies to reduce poverty and income inequality, they include:

- Investing in education to boost employment and career prospects by providing support for educational achievement from early childhood through adulthood
- Increasing public and private sector wages and enhancing benefits for low-income earners by offering living wages and paid sick leave, and
- Investing in workforce development to improve job skills and promoting labor market participation, fostering more and better career options.

“People get frustrated because they think these are really tough, complex — sometimes intractable — issues and there’s nothing we can do about it,” Van Dijk said. “We’re really asking people to think about a variety of strategies to really focus on reducing poverty.”

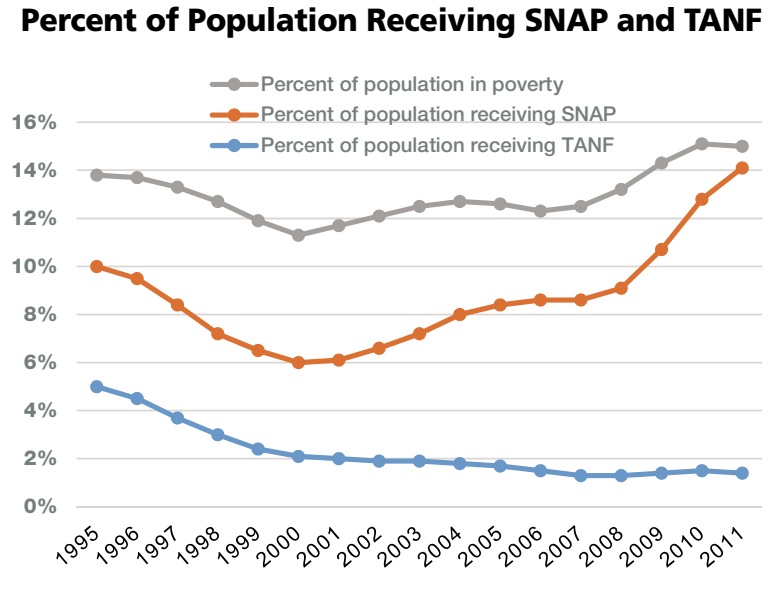
ANALYSIS

Block-granting SNAP — what’s the big deal?

By **HADI SEDIGH**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Each year, the House and Senate budget committees release plans that lay out broad outlines for future spending by the federal government. Although these plans are non-binding, they nonetheless merit scrutiny because they shed light on federal programs that could be targeted for cuts or elimination in coming years. In its past several plans, the House Budget Committee has called for the conversion of the federal food stamps program, officially titled the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, into a block grant.

The block-granting of SNAP would be unwelcome news to America’s counties, which, through NACo’s platform, officially oppose such a change to the program. At first, this may seem odd since in the same platform, counties strongly support other federal block grants such as the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), which helps counties provide vital services such as



Sources:
http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/indicators/rpt_indicators.pdf Table TANF2 page A-7
http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/indicators/rpt_indicators.pdf Table SNAP1 page A-25

child protective services to their residents. However, a deeper look at block-granting, and how such a proposal could impact a program like SNAP and its ability to serve people, sheds light on NACo’s position.

Currently, SNAP operates as an entitlement program, meaning that anyone who qualifies under its eligibility requirements can receive SNAP benefits. Funds flow from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to states, which in turn distribute

benefits — in some cases through county governments — to qualifying individuals. When demand for SNAP benefits increases, as it might during an economic downturn, federal funding for SNAP increases at the same rate, allowing the program to continue serving all those who qualify for its benefits.

If SNAP is converted into a block grant, on the other hand, states would likely receive a set, capped amount of funding each

See SNAP page 3

Quick Takes

5 Highest Mean Elevation Counties (BY FEET)

San Juan County, Colo.	11,240
Taos County, N.M.	8,510
Summit County, Utah	8,388
Teton County, Wyo.	8,053
Mono County, Calif.	7,750

Source: County Highpointers Association

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Teams selected for NACo's innovation challenge workshop

NACo and the NADO Research Foundation, with support from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), have selected the seven teams that will attend an economic diversification training workshop to assist counties and regions that are experiencing economic challenges due to the contraction of the coal industry.

The selected teams — led by counties and regional development organizations and including a broad range of other public and private sector partners — participated in a competitive process earlier this year to win spots at a training workshop to be held in Pike County (Pikeville), Ky., in late April. They will receive intensive, hands-on training designed to boost their potential to strengthen and diversify their economies.

The winning teams are led by:

- Big Sandy Area Development District, Ky., Floyd, Johnson, Martin, Magoffin and Pike Counties in Kentucky



- Cumberland Valley Area Development District, Ky., representing Harlan County, Ky.

- FIVCO Area Development District, Ky., representing Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Greenup and Lawrence Counties in Kentucky

- LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, Va., representing Wise County, Va.

- Moffat County, Colo.

- Perry County, Ky.

- Reconnecting McDowell, Inc., W.Va., representing McDowell County, W.Va.

The seven interdisciplinary teams will attend a three-day training workshop where they will receive individual assistance that will help them implement a variety of strategies and projects related to economic diversification, asset-based development, cluster development, workforce

training, broadband, recreation and tourism, and the health care sector.

"We were excited to be chosen to attend an Innovation Challenge workshop because we believe it will help us gain the necessary knowledge needed to facilitate and support new solutions and actions

that advance economic resilience within the county and surrounding region," said Duane Miller, deputy director of the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission.

Later in 2015, NACo and the NADO Research Foundation will hold two more rounds of competition to invite additional counties and regions to attend future workshops in Colorado in September and in West Virginia in November. Like the Pikeville event, each workshop will be structured to guide counties and regions to design solutions tailored to their communities' needs and identify implementable projects.

More information about this program is available at www.naco.org/innovationchallenge, or contact Jen Horton, program manager, at jhorton@naco.org.

Block-granting SNAP could hurt its responsiveness

SNAP from page 2

year, regardless of rising demand for the program's benefits. If demand were to rise, states would either have to change eligibility requirements so that fewer individuals would qualify for the program, or decrease the number of benefits each qualified individual receives. In either case, SNAP's current responsiveness to increased demand would diminish, ultimately weakening the program's ability to serve individuals in need of its benefits.

Almost two decades ago, another federal program designed to aid needy individuals was converted to a block grant; the resulting changes to that program are instructive. As part of the welfare reforms of 1996, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, which was an entitlement that provided financial assistance to children of low-income families, was renamed Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and converted to a block grant. Since this conversion, TANF has been funded at \$16.5 billion each year.

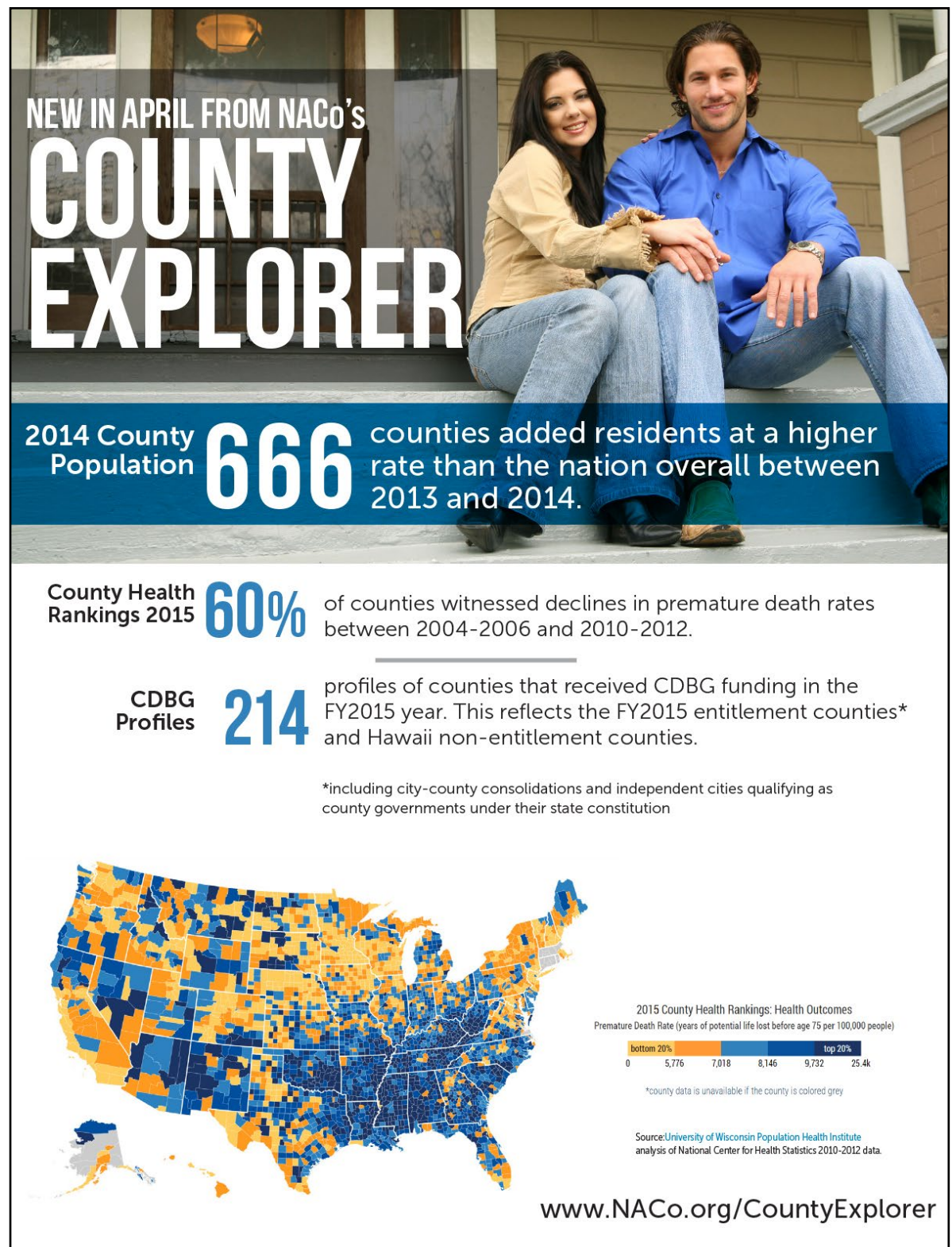
During the economic recession that peaked between 2007 and 2009, the unemployment rate throughout America more than doubled and the number of

individuals in poverty increased by more than 6 million, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP). In that same period, SNAP caseloads nationwide increased by 45 percent, while TANF caseloads increased by only 13 percent.

The impact of unchanged funding can be seen another way. Again according to the CBPP: in 1996, when the program was converted to a block grant, 68 percent of families with children in poverty received benefits; in 2009, 27 percent of similar families received TANF benefits.

This disparity in the ability of SNAP and TANF to respond to the economic downturn of the late 2000s speaks to the concerns county governments have with proposals to block-grant SNAP.

"Federal entitlement programs play a crucial role in helping Americans persevere through times of financial difficulty and any proposal to convert these programs to a block grant should be scrutinized closely, with the involvement of local governments, who are most directly involved in providing services to American individuals and families," said Toni Carter, Ramsey County, Minn. commissioner and chair, NACo Health and Human Services Steering Committee.





COUNTY INNOVATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

Augusta County, Va.

Library, Rotary Club Help Older Job Seekers Catch Up

By CHARLIE BAN
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Finding work seems hard enough when you don't already have a job, but it gets dramatically harder when navigating the market is vastly different than you remember.

Helping people in that situation — people in their 50s and 60s — became a mission for the Augusta County, Va. library, which joined forces with the local Rotary Club to help those jobseekers catch up. Though the county's 2012 unemployment rate was 5.1 percent, below even Virginia's 5.6 percent statewide rate, that was of little solace to people who lost their jobs, particularly following the recession.

Library staff, who were already helping people look and apply for jobs online at library branches, needed a more focused approach to do more than provide stopgap assistance.

"There are plenty of employment programs for the disabled,

those below the poverty line and to help young people find a job, but not many for older people," said Diantha McCauley, director of the county library. "For many of them, they're reentering a different job-seeking environment than the last time they had to look for a job. For years, the job market hasn't entered their minds and a lot has changed."

The "Job Club" became a part skills-training, part support group, meeting twice a month for three months. The support group stepped in because on top of difficulty adjusting technically to a new hiring environment, the stigma of losing a job at that age added another challenge.

"It's hard to admit you're looking for a job, especially after you've held one for a long time," McCauley said. "It was empowering for them to share their stories and find out they're not alone."

Skills instruction was provided by library staff and Rotary Club members and addressed resume writing, interviewing and personal

branding. Staff offered computer instruction and mock interviews.

Much of the focus on the actual job search focused on networking, another facet of the changing business environment.

"These days, most people are getting their jobs through their contacts, not the want ads," McCauley said, adding that the want ads themselves have largely gone digital. As a result, she said, there's an increased emphasis on social networking.

The culminating exercise in the three-month session is a cocktail party, attended by participants and members of the Rotary Club, who would provide a dress rehearsal for the job seekers. That meant some preparation, McCauley said, for the delicate balance they would need to strike to make a good impression in that environment. They don't win points for successfully holding a plate and a drink while juggling conversations, but failure to do so would reflect poorly on them.

"They're not there to eat; they're there to network," she said. "We worked on how to have a conversation, work their 'elevator speech' about themselves naturally into the conversation."

It wasn't all practice. One participant impressed a Rotary Club member enough during the party that he hired her.

Overall, five of the 45 people who attended at least one meeting of the Job Club reported finding a job, and organizers believe others may have done so without reporting

back to the library.

After two years of funding the \$2,100 program though a combination of Rotary District grants and matching funds from the local Rotary Club, the program wasn't renewed. Though McCauley was disappointed, she thinks the instruction and preparation the program provided helped a population that had a unique need at the time, one that may not persist.

County Innovations and Solutions features award-winning programs.



Profiles in Service

Liz Stefanics

NACo Board Member-at-large
Santa Fe County commissioner
Santa Fe County, N.M.

Number of years active in NACo: six-plus.

Years in public service: six-plus years as a county commissioner; four years as a state senator; five years in executive state government; 10 years teaching in public universities.

Occupation: county commissioner and health care consultant

Education: R.M.P.E. (Risk Manager for Public Entities); Ph.D.; M.S.; B.S.

The hardest thing I've ever done: my first run for office in 1992.

People (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Elizabeth Cady Stanton; Susan B. Anthony; Eleanor Roosevelt; Barbara Jordan.

A dream I have is to: make sure we visit all the U.S. National Parks and travel to countries promoting freedom and equality.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: flat-water kayak.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: white-water rafting.

My favorite way to relax is: on my own property in New Mexico and on the beach in Mexico.

I'm most proud of: completing my formal education but continuing to learn new things.

Every morning I read: a few newspapers, a few blogs, and my email.

My favorite meal is: lobster.

My pet peeve is: people who don't clean up after themselves.

My motto is: help others if you have the ability to do so — I learned that from my parents (who are 90 and 92).

The last book I read was: *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver.

My favorite movie is: *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* — hope for aging.

My favorite music is: pop and disco.

My favorite president is: still to come?

My county is a NACo member because: we gain comprehensive representation in D.C. and NACo offers benefits the county can actually use.

Corps, EPA to review 'waters' comments

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members that local governments are on "the front lines of safeguarding water resources in our communities."

She explained, "This proposal exacerbates problems with the current permitting process. It would cause greater delays in critical work, public safety risks and additional financial costs without benefiting the environment."

Waters of the U.S. — What Comes Next

The public comment period on the proposed rule closed Nov. 14, 2014 and the agencies received more than 1 million comments. EPA and the Corps of Engineers will review the comments and plan to release a final rule by late spring or early summer.

The focus now moves to Capitol Hill, where lawmakers plan to introduce and debate legislation to stop the proposed rule in the coming months.

In a recent budget debate in the Senate, Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) offered a non-binding amendment on the proposed wa-

ters of the U.S. rule, which passed by a vote of 59 – 40. While this amendment is non-binding and would not stop implementation of the proposed rule, it is a sign of the Senate's willingness to take up future legislation to withdraw the proposed rule.

Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW), is drafting a bill that would require the agencies to restart the rulemaking process. It would also specify the types of ditches that would be exempt, based on EPA's statements that it is not the agency's intent to regulate certain types of ditches. It would specify that farming, public safety and other types of ditches would not be considered "jurisdictional" — subject to federal oversight — under the proposed rule.

However, the political climate in the Senate is uncertain, and it is important that any waters of the U.S. bill have Democratic co-sponsors. In the meantime, the earliest the Senate could vote on a bill is June. If the proposed rule is finalized before the Senate vote, it makes it harder to move

pieces of legislation out of the chambers.

In the House, Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.) introduced the Waters of the United States Regulatory Overreach Protection Act (H.R. 594) to withdraw the proposed rule. This bill is identical to a measure that passed in the House last year that NACo supported. However, this bill is not expected to move.

Instead, staff from the committee of jurisdiction, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, have indicated they are drafting a yet-to-be introduced bill that would force the agencies to withdraw the proposed rule and requires the agencies to propose a new rule within 12 months. The bill would also set specific consultation requirements — specifically with state and local governments — during the rule-making process. The committee plans to introduce and move this bill in mid-April.

Since the rule's publication, NACo has expressed concerns about its scope and called for it to be withdrawn until further analysis and more in-depth consultation with state and local officials could be completed.

Technology trends to watch in 2015



By **BERT JARREAU**
NACo CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER

We've all heard repeatedly from national politicians and business pundits how governments must act more like businesses. I submit that there is one area where county governments have a competitive advantage over businesses: counties share everything.

When I worked at Ford Motor Company as a divisional chief information officer, for competitive and antitrust reasons, it was nearly impossible for me to share information with General Motors or Chrysler. To do so, I would have had to first get permission from Ford's legal counsel. Since that was a difficult process, it was easier to follow the path of least resistance and not share anything.

On the other hand, counties share everything. This information-sharing culture, coupled with counties that like adopting innovations early,

makes spreading innovations among counties extremely fulfilling. Such "early adopter" counties, to name but a few, include Bexar County, Texas; Fairfax County, Va.; Hennepin County, Minn.; Maricopa County, Ariz.; Montgomery County, Md.; Oakland County, Mich.; and San Diego County, Calif..

I take the product view of innovation, where innovation is the commercialization of new ideas. It entails creating and diffusing new knowledge to successfully develop and market new or improved products and processes. Therefore, innovative companies provide counties with innovative solutions.

Early-adopter counties implement these innovative solutions, then diffuse these innovations to other counties by openly sharing at NACo Technology Innovation Summits and NACo educational workshops how these solutions helped them reduce costs, improve productivity and enhance service delivery.

I've highlighted the following technology trends for 2015, as shared by early-adopter counties at NACo Technology Innovation Summits. Over the next several months, we'll dive deeper into how counties are benefitting from these trends.

Outside-in Transformation

Until recently, county governments created innovation, information and value to county



constituents internally. The days of self-containment are over. Many of today's top information (IT) technologies — including cloud, everything-as-a-service, mobility, the consumerization of IT, social media, crowdsourcing and community content — are happening outside the county. Counties need to fully exploit the online communities that have emerged around these technologies in the outside world.

Multi-cloud Landscape

Cloud computing is a model for delivering IT services in which resources are retrieved from the

Internet through Web-based tools and applications, rather than a direct connection to a server.

Counties are using public clouds, private clouds and hybrid clouds. Their internal IT departments build some of these clouds, while others are sourced from external third parties. This multi-cloud landscape offers efficiencies but creates challenges for county governments to effectively manage information across multiple clouds and avoid losing control.

Of all the technologies to watch out for, cloud technologies have been a real game-changer. Modern innovations such as ride-hailing services (i.g., Uber, Lyft), would not have been possible without cloud technologies.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Many employees want to use their personal mobile devices at work. But they also want to use their own apps, networks and all manner of Web applications and tools.

Today, employees expect to have massive amounts of information at their fingertips, empowering them to make better, quicker decisions. Similarly, customers now fully expect a county government's website to offer features that include Google-quality search, the ability to mashup information and high-quality videos.

Big Data

Big data offers the promise of better business decisions, but remains largely unfulfilled because the process of transforming big data into actionable information

is still too slow. Today, business happens in real time. Think how quickly you respond to tweets and text messages. Yet most big data analytics are still running on batch time. Deriving insights from huge data pools in near real time is in reach as new and diverse applications are developed.

Internet of 'Things'

Computers process information, but thanks to the rapid emergence of Internet-connected sensors, computers will also process physical systems and devices.

County governments are achieving efficiencies in building management, fleet management and public works through the use of sensors and the ability to analyze the data they provide through big data analytics.

Open Government

County governments are quickly moving to open systems, open innovation and open software. All this openness is creating new, massive efficiencies. Counties can now interact with their citizens as never before. Citizens, in turn, can now contribute ideas, insights, even code to their governments. Behind this change is a shift from excellent or perfect technology to IT that is "good enough."

Cybersecurity

County governments are pinpointing their sensitive data and prioritizing their security investments accordingly. However, counties are facing the reality that they can't always block a determined hacker from infiltrating their systems. Rather than focus solely on prevention, counties are using monitoring strategies and tools to rapidly identify and respond to security breaches.

Social Collaboration

County governments that can harness and prioritize collaboration with their employees and connect with external peers will reap valuable benefits. How do we leverage collective resources across the 3,069 counties? The County Innovation Network (COIN) online community is one way. COIN enables county officials and their teams to make their day-to-day work more efficient and effective through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and collaboration nationally.

Senate promises quick action on H.R. 2

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and the uninsured, called Disproportionate Share Hospitals (DSH), by one year from 2017 to 2018. Delaying these cuts further allows the 960 county-supported hospitals and others that serve Medicaid beneficiaries and the uninsured across the country to continue to stabilize local health care systems.

• **Community Health Centers, National Health Service Corps, and Teaching Health Centers:** Community health centers, known as federally qualified health centers (FQHC), provide primary health care services to almost 23 million people at more than 9,000 sites in rural and urban areas. The National Health Service Corps helps bring health care professionals to underserved areas and the Teaching Health Centers program provides expanded residency training in local communities. Funding for each

of these programs also expires this year and H.R. 2 extends funding for two years.

• **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program:** This program supports pregnant women and families and helps at-risk parents of pre-school children by using evidence-based, cost-effective models that improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect, encourage positive parenting and promote child development and school readiness. H.R. 2 provides funding for two additional years.

• **Qualifying Individuals (QI) Program:** QI is a Medicaid program to help low-income Medicare beneficiaries pay for their Medicare Part B premium. H.R. 2 permanently extends this program.

• **Transitional Medical Assistance Program:** Allows low-income families to maintain Medicaid coverage for up to one year as they transi-

tion from welfare to work. The bill permanently extends this program.

The Senate must now take up H.R. 2. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) promised swift action on the legislation following the Senate's two-week recess and expressed optimism that the measure would pass with broad support. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) noted that there could be a limited number of amendments offered on H.R. 2.

For questions regarding the SRS program, please contact Chris Marklund, associate legislative director, at cmarklund@naco.org or 202.942.4207. For questions regarding Medicare and health care programs, please contact Brian Bowden, associate legislative director, at bbowden@naco.org or 202.942.4275

(Chris Marklund, associate legislative director for public lands, also contributed to this report.)

Driverless cars will transform transportation, land use planning

By CHARLIE BAN
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

WEB* CONTENT

When technological advances add up to cars no longer needing a driver, the impacts on transportation and land use planning could rein in the ballooning roadway system and sprawl.

Those are some of the conclusions reached by Carnegie Mellon University researchers after a year-long analysis of autonomous and connected vehicles' impact on the Pennsylvania highway system. The researchers also have some guidance for counties and local governments to consider when planning long- and short-term transportation infrastructure improvements.

"Travel [may] become so much more efficient that we don't need to add extra lanes to roads at some point," said Allen Biehler, co-author of the study and himself a former Pennsylvania secretary of transpor-

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- » Autonomous and connected vehicle technology is already available to consumers
- » Transportation efficiency may mean the end of ballooning roadways
- » Counties can integrate connected vehicle technology with equipment upgrade

sooner, depending on private sector advances and the public's adoption of the technology.

"Virtually every major auto manufacturer is working on some sort of autonomous or connected car," Biehler said. "And technology companies are getting in on it—Google's car is out there gathering information with [sensors] that's going to make the kind of travel possible.

A day before Biehler spoke to

front of it slows," he said. "It will set you back \$120,000, but these are out on the market."

What Counties Can Do

Those incremental advances in technology will diffuse the cost of infrastructure upgrades counties and other local governments will need to make to accommodate these vehicles. Short-range communications systems in traffic signals can communicate to connected cars, and the city of Pittsburgh has installed those transmitters at 40 intersections, with which CMU's autonomous vehicle has interacted. The vehicle can learn what color the light is and when the light will change.

"That kind of connectivity is something counties can implement, so they're ready," Hendrickson said. "If you make it a part of routine equipment improvement—when you're switching out the signal controller—it's cheap."

Biehler sees big gains for transit efficiency as buses integrate equipment to interact with traffic signals.

"If they can communicate with traffic lights and get preferential treatment, that can help keep buses on schedule and make them more attractive to potential riders," he said. "Keeping ridership up will help keep the transit agencies solvent and keep more cars off the roads."

As buses become autonomous, Biehler said a decreased need for drivers can help cut labor costs, too.

In addition to accommodating the technology, Hendrickson suggested counties begin adopting it as they replace their vehicles.

"Adding on rear-view cameras will just be a good safety move, regardless of where those advances are ultimately heading," he said. "Advances like that aren't just a step in that direction, they're useful."

Hendrickson warned against investment in new permanent message boards for roadways, given their limited capacity to communicate compared to what smartphones already offer.

So far, four states and the District of Columbia have passed laws regarding autonomous vehicle testing and their safety on public roads.

Florida's legislation allows for operation of autonomous vehicles on public roads, providing the vehicle meets state auto standards and requires some kind of visual indication when it is operating in its autonomous mode.

Last year, Johnson County, Iowa passed a resolution supporting autonomous vehicle technology and a willingness to work with local jurisdictions in that effort, the first county in the country to do so.

"We haven't committed to anything, but we're hoping to encourage testing and development," said Andy Johnson, executive assistant to the Board of Supervisors. "We're letting Iowa City Area Development give us some direction on how to handle this."

Mark Nolte, ICAD's president, said the key for local governments is to not be overly prescriptive, because the current laws allow autonomous cars to be driven on public roads, but require that they be properly insured. Prescriptive regulations, he argued, will stifle development.

"There's nothing that requires that a carbon-based life form be behind the wheel of a car," he said.

"They're legal to drive on the roads, just like unmanned drones are legal until someone makes them illegal."

As for Johnson County's resolution, "Proclamations (like that) let the public know areas are open to business and eager for development," he said. "This is coming, this will be the next transformative technology that will touch our lives, just like the Internet and smartphones did before it. Some say it's right around the corner, others say it's 20 years away."

Read this story online at www.countynews.org to see a video of Carnegie Mellon University's autonomous car drive 33 miles.



Photo courtesy of Carnegie Mellon University

The interior of Carnegie Mellon University's autonomous car includes displays that give passengers a heavily simplified look at what factors are influencing how the car navigates.

tation. "On the other hand, in the meantime, do we set aside a lane for the cars that are autonomous, while the technology spreads?"

He added that counties will have the ability to affect the results by identifying potential impact areas and incentivizing something that is to their advantage in maintaining the transportation system.

How is this Happening?

Fully self-driving autonomous cars allow the driver to cede control to a system of sensors and cameras, while connected vehicles can send and receive information from sources including short-range transmitters and cell towers. The CMU study assumes universal adoption of autonomous and connected automobiles by 2040, though it could come much

County News, an autonomous car built by Audi left on a 3,500 mile cross-country trip.

"That's going to be the big jump, when you start having cars that can drive themselves from the outset," said Chris Hendrickson, a co-author of the CMU study and director of university's Traffic 21 Institute. "That will be when transportation systems can realize the full efficiencies of what this technology has to offer. I predict we'll first see it in parking lots, where cars park themselves."

In the meantime, consumers will have a chance to test out and adapt to incremental advances in autonomous and connected vehicle technology.

"The top-of-the-line vehicles include options like adaptive cruise control, where the car will stay in its lane and slow down when the car in

WORD SEARCH

Honolulu County, Hawaii Facts

Learn more about this featured county in 'What's in a Seal?'

H	B	X	H	Q	C	G	L	S	M	R	L	Z	C	T	Y	H	A	M	J
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J	I	W	Z	Q	A	R	G	D	X	I	Z	T	R	O	Q	G	Y	N	K

- ARCHIPELAGO** (chain, cluster or collection of islands like Hawaii's)
- BANZAI PIPELINE** (a.k.a. "Pipeline" or "Pipe," a famous surf reef break in O'ahu)
- BISHOP MUSEUM** (Honolulu's largest museum of history and science)
- CEBU CITY** (one of Honolulu County's "sister cities" in the Philippines)
- HA'AHEO NO 'O HONOLULU** (county motto, "The Pride of Honolulu")
- HAWAII SYMPHONY** (formerly known as the Honolulu Symphony; oldest U.S. symphony orchestra west of the Rocky Mountains)
- IOLANI** (the only palace in the U.S., home of Hawaii's last monarchs)
- KAMEHAMEHA** (Hawaii's first king, who established Honolulu as the capital of Hawaii in 1850)
- KAUAI** (county to the northwest)
- LILUOKALANI** (Hawaii's last queen, who was overthrown in 1893)
- MAUI** (adjacent county to the southeast)

- MILITARY PRESENCE** (is notable in Honolulu County due to its many military bases)
- O'AHU** (island on which Honolulu County is located)
- PACIFIC OCEAN** (surrounds the majority of the county)
- PEARL HARBOR** (famous naval base whose attack brought the U.S. into World War II)
- PINEAPPLES** (a main export of Honolulu County)
- PUNCHBOWL** (census-designated place in Honolulu's District VI)
- SHELTERED BAY** (nickname derived from "Honolulu" which translates as "calm port" or "sheltered harbor")
- SPALDING HOUSE** (a.k.a. Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House; the only contemporary art museum in Hawaii)
- TOURISM** (Honolulu is greatly dependent on the tourist industry)

NACo seeks reform in Indian land-to-trust policy

LAND TRUST from page 1

of the interior has no authority to take lands into trust for tribes not federally recognized by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Barasso's roundtable sought to gather more information, on both sides of the issue, for his committee. "I am looking for a new beginning, and today's dialogue is a good start," he said.

Indian nations want Congress to come up with a legislative "Carcieri fix" that would nullify the effects of the Supreme Court decision and focus exclusively on the Interior Department's ability determine tribal status and add to Indian land holdings.

However, NACo, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and others, want any Carcieri fix to be more comprehensive and deal with "problems" in Interior's trust land acquisition process — by giving localities more leverage to negotiate with tribes and requiring earlier notice from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) about tribal acquisition and development plans.

Representatives of the United South and East Tribes, the National Congress of American Indians and other tribal officials also gave their views.

Rabbit explained that the agreement reached with the Pomo Indians in Sonoma — outside of the federal process — will require the tribe to pay the county \$6.1 million to mitigate effects of the development of a 200,000-case winery, 200-room hotel and homes.

In a recent CSAC brief on Indian Fee to Trust Reform, the state association said counties should receive information equivalent to the public information required for planning, zoning and permitting at local levels. Currently, Rabbit said, counties are consulted only about decreased local tax revenue and conflicts over who has jurisdiction.

Last month, Sonoma County supervisors passed a resolution noting that "large tribal development projects, including casinos, can attract large volumes of visitors and lead to a myriad of significant adverse social and environmental impacts on the surrounding community."

Napa County Supervisor Diane

Dillon also spoke at the Capitol Hill listening session. "We're not about telling tribes what they can do so much as dealing with the mitigation and the impact from what happens off tribal land," she said.

Tribal officials, while willing to work with localities, say the Indian Reorganization Act has served

them well for 70 years, with some exceptions, and is the basis of the federal obligation to restore "stolen" Indian land.

Chief Kirk Francis of the Penobscot Indian Nation said that in 1980, the Penobscots had a 12-million-acre land claim in Maine, encompassing about two-thirds of the state. Today

tribal holdings are about one-quarter million acres.

"The whole idea of the land-to-trust process, in my mind, is regaining our ancestral territory that is at the very core of our culture and beliefs," he said, "but it also provides the ability within those territories to create quality of life for real people."



Photo by Charles Taylor

Susan Podziba (center), a public policy mediator, listens to Randy Noka (I) of the Narragansett Indian Tribal Council. On his right is Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians.

Excerpted relevant NACo policy

NACo policy supports government-to-government relations that recognize the role and unique interests of tribes, states, counties and other local governments to protect all members of their communities and to provide governmental services and infrastructure beneficial to all — Indian and non-Indian alike....

The association also supports improvement of the process by which lands are considered to be taken into trust such as revising the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 to require adequate advance notice of applications, actual meaningful consultation (including providing counties 120 days to respond to applications and requiring the Department of the Interior/Bureau of Indian Affairs to respond within 90 days, in writing, to such comments explaining the rationale for acceptance or rejection of those comments) and (to the extent constitutionally permissible) the consent of the affected counties....

NACo opposes administrative action or a legislative "quick fix" to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court's *Carcieri v. Salazar* decision.

Carcieri decision in brief

The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Carcieri v. Salazar* has been described as a "landmark" ruling. In essence, the 2009 decision says the secretary of the interior cannot place land into trust for Indian tribes that weren't federally recognized when the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was passed in 1934.

It began as a dispute between the Narragansett Indian Tribe and local governments in Rhode Island. The tribe sought to build housing for the elderly on 31 acres of land that the U.S. Interior Department had taken into trust for tribal use.

The state of Rhode Island (whose governor at the time was Donald Carcieri) sued the Interior Department, alleging that then-Interior Secretary Ken Salazar had no authority to grant the land trust status.

Rhode Island argued that the Narragansetts were under the Guardianship of the Colony of Rhode Island in 1709. The tribe subsequently relinquished its tribal authority and sold all but two acres of its land. From 1927 to 1937, federal authorities considered the tribe to be under state jurisdiction, and hence, not federally recognized in 1934. The high court concurred.

SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

Effective Public & Private Sector Partnerships

Miami-Dade County's Internal Services Department released its first online auction with Public Surplus in March 2014. Prior to that time, the county had utilized various auction methods for disposition of surplus assets, including live auctions and sealed bid sales.

Live auctions, while well attended and popular with the community, were expensive in terms of weekend staffing requirements, limited space and locations to conduct the live auction. And because they were only conducted every few months, storage of surplus inventory remained an issue taking space that could otherwise be used for departmental operations.

When the county discontinued live auctions, Miami-Dade began using a sealed bid sale process. The sealed bid sale process was a slow, paper-laden procedure that required a great deal of administrative work by county staff, including collection of, and processing of, bid deposits and other payments

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received directly from bidders. The sealed bid sale process, due to the numerous steps involved, also limited the number of surplus assets that could be sold during each sealed bid sale. Additionally, and most importantly, the sealed bid sale process seemed to be reaching a limited audience of recurring bidders, which led to concerns about openness and transparency of this process from a procurement standpoint.

Today, approaching the one-year anniversary of our transition to online auctions, we have sold 834 surplus assets online totaling approximately \$1.9 million.

This transition has been transformational for us, both in terms of meeting our core objective, which is compliance with county

and state requirements for disposition of county assets, and also in maximizing the revenue and taxpayer dollars that is generated from the sale of these assets and returned to county departments for the purchase of new assets and/or other operational needs.

We also found that by allowing Public Surplus to handle payment collection on our behalf, our staff could focus more on developing the content of our online auction listings and the marketing of our surplus assets rather than the administrative tasks associated with payment collection. Further, we have been impressed with the level of participation by not only new local bidders but also bidders throughout the United States, and, from time to time, other countries.

Sister counties reach across Cascade Mountains

By CHARLIE BAN
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

If a tsunami hits the Oregon coast, Tillamook County Public Works Director Liane Welch doesn't expect the cavalry to come from the state capital in Salem. She expects it to ride over the Cascade Mountains in a helicopter.

It's not that she lacks confidence in the state government, but if her coastal county is in the midst of a major disaster, particularly a tsunami resulting from a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake, her first assistance will likely come from Tillamook's sister county, Umatilla. It's a mutual aid partnership she's developed that she'd like to see other sets of counties in her state emulate.

The Cascadia subduction zone is the convergence between two tectonic plates in the Pacific Ocean stretching from British Columbia in Canada to Northern California. The Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission says a massive earthquake near the subduction zone is overdue, the last one having taken place in 1700. The commission's 2014 report anticipates the earthquake and subsequent tsunami will disrupt water, power, heat, gas and telephone service. The state has



Photo courtesy of Tillamook County

Tillamook County, Ore. public works crews clean up after a flood.

planned an emergency exercise in 2016 to prepare.

But aid from the state's disaster plan, Welch said, may not address the personal needs of her 22 staff members in the public works department.

"If we get hit with something,

my people are going to have a lot to worry about, not just their work," she said. "We're going to be victims of the disasters, too and have emergencies with our own families, and our minds won't be completely on our jobs.

"You can only work 24 hours

a day for a day-and-a-half before your performance starts to suffer, but if you're also trying to manage your own family or home, it will happen a lot faster. There will be a leadership void, and we'll need help to fix that."

So a crew from Umatilla Coun-

ty's public works department will arrive by helicopter to complement the Tillamook crew for up to two weeks.

The mountains between the counties are key, she said, because they divide the state into two different environments, with different needs and vulnerabilities. While the coast will take the brunt of the earthquake and tsunami, the eastern counties will be relatively safe and able to spare personnel. Likewise, disasters characteristic of the east but not the west offers Tillamook County a chance to help Umatilla.

"I was in Eastern Oregon when Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980," said Tom Fellows, Umatilla County's public works director. The volcano deposited six inches of ash on Umatilla County. "We have a whole bunch of volcanoes to our west. Who is going to help us if they blow?"

Wildfires and flooding from the Columbia River could also pose a threat to Umatilla County.

Despite that, Fellows said he wasn't thinking about his county when he signed on to be Tillamook County's sister county.

"We saw it as a chance to help another county," he said. "I look at what happened in New Orleans and I saw the folks who recover the quickest are the ones with the plan to get started."

Courthouses of Georgia book receives national recognition

Courthouses of Georgia, a photographic narrative of the state's courthouses, was recently named as one of the Best Print Reference Books of the Year for 2014 by the *Library Journal*, a national publication for the library community.

The book was envisioned and developed by ACCG, (formerly the Association County Commissioners of Georgia) to commemorate the association's centennial anniversary in 2014 and to recognize the significant role that county courthouses play in the history and function of county government.

Each year, the *Library Journal Book Review* lends its professional

oversight to more than 7,000 titles in a wide range of disciplines. Fewer than 50 books are recognized by the *Library Journal* each year. *Courthouses of Georgia* was only one of four books in the nation recognized in the general reference category.

"This prominent, national recognition by the *Library Journal* is another indicator of the quality work put forth by the association and our partners to celebrate Georgia's county courthouses," said ACCG Executive Director Ross King. "Courthouses of Georgia continues to receive an outstanding reception here in Georgia and

is already in its second printing."

The book, which was published by the University of Georgia Press and released in October, was produced in partnership with the Georgia Humanities Council, Newington Photography and the State Bar of Georgia.

Organized by the nine travel regions of Georgia, the book offers the perfect starting point for touring any of Georgia's counties and instills an appreciation for historic preservation. International photographer Greg Newington's images pay tribute to the community's investment in preserving historic courthouses for future generations and celebrate new facilities designed to accommodate expanded county programs and services, keeping pace with the state's growth.

Former Georgia House of Representatives Majority Leader Larry Walker wrote the book's introduction. Walker shares his personal memories of Houston County's courthouses and weaves together stories of other courthouses as told by recognized Georgians.



Photo courtesy of Courthouses of Georgia anniversary project

Colquitt County, Ga. courthouse is among all the state's courthouses that are featured in ACCG's Courthouses of Georgia anniversary project.

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Financial Services News

Affluent Boomers 'Terrified' of Health Care Costs

More than 62 percent of pre-retirees say they are "terrified" of what health care costs may do to their retirement plans, according to an annual Nationwide Retirement Institute survey recently released. (Pre-retirees are defined as adults ages 50 or older with at least \$150,000 in household income who are not currently retired, regardless of whether or not they are currently working.)

The survey reveals concerns about out-of-control health care

costs, understanding Medicare and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) increasing those costs.

According to the online survey conducted in October 2014, of 801 Americans age 50 or older with at least \$150,000 in household income ("affluent boomers"), 72 percent say one of their top fears in retirement is their health care costs going out of control. More than half (55 percent) believe the ACA will increase those costs, and more than one-quarter of

employed affluent boomers (26 percent) now believe they will never retire.

"Even America's affluent workers don't know how they will fund their health care costs in retirement and they don't expect ObamaCare will help them," said John Carter, president of Nationwide's retirement plans business, which provides defined contribution and defined benefit plans to more than two million participants (representing nearly \$100 billion in assets under management).

"The ACA has increased awareness of health care costs in retirement. We think that's a step in the right direction, and what Americans need now is a plan to adequately prepare for those costs. It is possible. However,

instead of making a plan, too often the 'plan' is to just continue working."

The attention the ACA has received in the past year has increased the percentage of pre-retirees who feel very confident to confident that they know their personal benefits and consequences of the ACA (32 percent vs. 24 percent). Yet, pre-retirees are also more likely than last year to say they expect their biggest expense in retirement to be the cost of health care (51 percent vs. 43 percent).

Many Americans like aspects of the ACA, such as guaranteed coverage and access to multiple insurers. However, most affluent boomers (64 percent) believe the ACA will be a significant drain on the U.S. economy and will do more

harm than good to their employer (63 percent).

More than two-in-five affluent boomers (45 percent) say they would delay their retirement if they had to buy their own health insurance. Over one-quarter of parents (27 percent) say they would delay their retirement in order to keep their children on their employer-based health insurance plan.

Understanding Medicare

Over three-in-five affluent pre-retirees (61 percent) wish they understood Medicare coverage better, and 73 percent of those who discussed their retirement plans with a financial advisor say it is important or very important that their financial advisor discusses health care costs during retirement with them when planning for retirement. Nearly two-thirds of affluent pre-retirees enrolled in Medicare did not know that Medicare does not cover long-term care costs.

Solutions available

However, 77 percent say they have not discussed their health care costs during retirement with a professional financial advisor. Of those who have talked with an advisor, three-quarters (75 percent) discussed health care costs in retirement not covered by Medicare.

To help simplify this complicated issue and encourage these discussions, Nationwide's Personalized Health Care Assessment uses proprietary health risk analysis and up-to-date actuarial cost data such as personal health and lifestyle information, health care costs, and medical coverage to provide a meaningful, personalized cost estimate that will help clients plan for medical expenses. For those under 65 years old, it bases its calculations on the average cost of a Silver Plan in the Affordable Care Act exchanges in their state.

"It's much easier for advisors to have these difficult conversations when they can use a tool to provide a fact-based cost estimate based on their clients' health risk and lifestyle," said Kevin McGarry, director of the Nationwide Retirement Institute. "They now can break down and simplify a complex topic to take clients from terrified to confident."

Financial Services News was written by Lisa Cole, NACo Financial Services Center senior director.

NACo on the Move

► In the News

- Ouray County, Colo. Commissioner **Lynn Padgett** was quoted in *CQ Roll Call* regarding the proposed rule for "waters of the U.S." She spoke on behalf of NACo.

- Clinton County, Pa. Commissioner **Pete Smeltz** was quoted in *DTN-The Progressive Farmer* regarding EPA's proposed "waters of the U.S." rule. He represented NACo's stance on the issue.

- NACo was mentioned in *Agri-Pulse* in conjunction with the "waters of the U.S." proposed legislation.

► NACo Officers and County Officials

- NACo President **Riki Hokama**, First Vice President **Sallie Clark**, Second Vice President **Bryan Desloge** and the leadership of the Transportation Steering Committee convened in Redlands, San Bernardino County, Calif. at Esri's headquarters on March 19 for a day of interactive sessions on building smarter apps and tools for county governments.

► NACo Staff

- Emmanuelle St. Jean**, health program manager, spoke at the 2015 Healthcare IT Connect Summit March 23 in Baltimore, Md. with **Nick Macchione**, director of the San Diego County, Calif. Health Human Services Agency. The title of the panel was Data Driven Coordination of Health and Human Services. St. Jean represented NACo's Healthy Counties Initiative.

- Research Director **Emilia Istrate** presented NACo's County Explorer at the White House Rural Council meeting on March 24, in Washington, D.C.

- Jen Horton**, program manager, gave a presentation at the Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy event in Boston, Mass. March 25.

- Chief Innovation Officer **Bert Jarreau** presented at the Esri Public Sector CIO Summit March 26 in San Bernardino County, Calif. The panel session was entitled The Next Big Thing in Government Innovation.

► Coming Up

- Caitlin Myers**, membership services associate, will be exhibiting on behalf of NACo at the ACCG — Advancing Georgia's Counties Annual Conference in Chatham County, Ga. April 17 – 20, 2015.



Emmanuelle St. Jean



Jen Horton



Bert Jarreau

About Nationwide: Nationwide, a Fortune 100 company based in Columbus, Ohio, is one of the largest and strongest diversified insurance and financial services organizations in the U.S. and is rated A+ by both A.M. Best and Standard & Poor's. The company provides a full range of insurance and financial services, including auto, commercial, homeowners and life insurance; public and private sector retirement plans, annuities and mutual funds; banking and mortgages; specialty health; pet, motorcycle, boat and farm insurance. For more information, visit www.nationwide.com. The information on the Personalized Health Care Cost Assessment will be kept confidential and used to provide an estimate of a client's potential health care costs in retirement. The estimate is based on a client's specific situation and goals, as well as their current overall health condition. The client's financial 3 situation and health condition may change over time and this may affect their future changes. Please keep in mind that these estimates resulting from this fact finder are for hypothetical purposes and are not guaranteed. Nationwide Investment Services Corporation (NISC), member FINRA. The Nationwide Retirement Institute is a division of NISC. Nationwide, Nationwide is on your side, Join the Nation and the Nationwide N and Eagle are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company

Symposium features ways to assist vets' transition

America's Warrior Partnership (AWP), a national nonprofit that both funds and mentors community groups to serve veterans and their families, is hosting its annual symposium May 21 – 22 in Augusta-Richmond County, Ga. The theme this year is Modeling a Better Future and will feature representatives from several successful community agencies across the country, as well as panelists and speakers from the Veterans Administration, Wounded Warrior Project and other organizations. Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Sloan Gibson has been confirmed as the keynote speaker.

Community Integration, a program developed by AWP to assist transitioning warriors back into civilian life, awards selected communities up to \$500,000 through a granting process. Participants



and potential applicants for this program are encouraged to attend the symposium. The symposium will present informational panels, break-out sessions, and ample opportunity for networking as well as information on the grant process.

Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center is offering special rates for symposium participants.



News From the Nation's Counties

►ALABAMA

Voters in **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** will get a second chance next year to decide whether to participate in the state's **Alabama Limited Self-Governance Act**. The County Commission recently approved a resolution that would place the question on the Nov. 8, 2016 ballot.

The act permits counties to exercise certain health and safety powers in unincorporated areas of a county, the *Montgomery Advertiser* reported. For example, it gives local governments the right to define what is junk and to handle issues such as noise, litter and overgrown weeds.

Since its passage by the state Legislature in 2005, it has been adopted by 20 of the state's 67 counties.

County voters last rejected the measure in 2006.

►ARIZONA

An Arizona state legislator who represents **PIMA COUNTY** has introduced a bill that would make counties **pay virtually all claims** from drivers who say bad pavement conditions damaged their cars.

"Any person whose vehicle is damaged from the county's failure to maintain a roadway may apply to the county for reimbursement for the cost of the repair," the proposed House Bill 2572 states. "The county shall reimburse the applicant within five days after receiving the application for reimbursement," according to *The Arizona Daily Star*.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Mark Finchem, said the measure is designed to hold county governments responsible for the money they receive from the state to fund transportation.

►ARKANSAS

The **PULASKI COUNTY** Quorum Court has approved creating a **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)** program and a board to oversee it.

County officials said it will provide property owners "the opportunity and flexibility to affordably finance renewable energy, energy efficiency and water conservation projects."

PACE is a financing program that allows property owners to borrow 100 percent of project costs and pay for them through a special assessment on their annual property tax bill.

"Through PACE, Pulaski County is demonstrating its commitment to renewable energy development, energy efficiency and the creation



►WASHINGTON

KING COUNTY Executive Dow Constantine (above, left) helped christen the county's first "**brand new**" **water taxi**, the M/V Sally Fox on March 28. It's one of two passenger ferries that will ply Puget Sound between downtown Seattle and Vashon Island. Also pictured are Kelly Fox Violet, daughter of the boat's namesake, who was a "passionate" advocate for foot ferry service in the county, Constantine said, and County Councilmember Joe McDermott.

The Sally Fox has room for 250 passengers — 45 percent more capacity than the current vessel — and 26 bicycles. It officially goes into service this month.

"Bringing more islanders quickly, reliably and directly to downtown Seattle — without their cars — benefits commuters, businesses and the environment," Constantine said. He also thanked supportive members of Congress, noting that 80 percent of funding for two boats comes from federal grants.

A second catamaran, the M/V Doc Maynard, is currently under construction and is scheduled to be delivered this fall.

of local jobs," County Judge Barry Hyde said.

The county's program is expected to be operational by this fall.

►CALIFORNIA

• Oakland City Council recently voted unanimously to add **ALAMEDA COUNTY** to an agreement with a developer to **finance a new sports complex** for the Oakland Athletics and the Oakland Raiders, the *Contra Costa Times* reported.

The county and city are joint owners and managers of 120-acre site that is home to O.Co Coliseum, a multi-use stadium where both teams play.

Oakland had already signed a pact with New City Development, which is trying to finance a multibillion redevelopment at the site. Officials envision a project that will include retail, housing and new stadiums, designed to keep the teams from moving.

Supervisor Nate Miley an-

icipates that his colleagues will approve the arrangement.

• Meanwhile, farther down the "Left Coast," **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** and the city of San Diego are cooperating to **keep the San Diego Chargers** in place.

The Associated Press reported that county supervisors and city councilmembers would spend up to \$500,000 to hire consultants, attorneys, bankers and other experts to build a case. Ultimately, voters will decide whether to back a new stadium for the Chargers.

The team is considering a rival plan with the Oakland Raiders to share a new stadium in **LOS ANGELES COUNTY**.

►IOWA

Starting in 2017, **LINN COUNTY** plans to begin **charging four cities for 911** dispatch services to help it fund additional positions to handle increasing call volumes.

The Board of Supervisors recently approved hiring two dispatchers, according to KCRG TV News. But county Sheriff Brian Gardner would like to hire four people to provide more shift coverage.

The cities — Hiawatha, Lisbon, Mount Vernon and Robins — have been receiving the dispatch services at no cost. Gardner says the county isn't looking to make money but rather to recoup the costs of answering 911 calls for the cities.

Mount Vernon Mayor James Moore said his city can't afford to pay. "In two years they just better hope that I'm not in office, I guess," he added, "because I am not going to just roll over and pay it to them."

►INDIANA

Gov. Mike Pence (R) has declared a public health emergency in **SCOTT COUNTY** due to a dramatic rise in the number of reported cases of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The county had **79 confirmed cases of HIV** since mid-December 2014. Typically the county averages about five new cases a year, according to CNN.

Public health officials say all the current cases are related to injection drug use — most commonly a prescription pain reliever called Opana (oxycodone). It's an opioid, in the same class of drugs as morphine and OxyContin.

Pence has authorized a 30-day needle-exchange program to combat what officials have termed "an epidemic," and a team of CDC HIV/AIDS prevention experts traveled to the area to work with state and local health officials.

►KENTUCKY

BOYLE and MARION counties' Fiscal Courts are opposed to a company's proposal to reverse the flow and type of product traveling through an **interstate gas pipeline** in their counties. Both have passed resolutions to that effect.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline plans to "repurpose" a natural gas pipeline through the counties to carry natural gas liquids, the *Herald-Leader* reported.

Opponents are worried about possibility of a leak or explosion in a section of the pipeline — which now runs above ground — that will be buried under a river that provides drinking water for Marion and parts of **TAYLOR and LARUE counties**.

An environmentalist who spoke at a public meeting in Marion County said if a natural gas liquids pipeline were to rupture, "20 percent of it

will get into the ground and into the groundwater."

►NORTH CAROLINA

Senate leadership introduced a plan to overhaul **how state sales taxes are distributed**. A companion bill in the House is on the way, KRAL News reported.

Currently, 75 cents of every \$1 raised by the 2 percent local portion of the sales tax stays in the county where a sale is made. The remaining 25 cents is distributed on a per-capita basis statewide. The legislation would shift that over the next three years so all local sales tax revenue is distributed per capita.

The state's 4.75 percent portion of the sales tax and local levies, such as the half-cent transit taxes imposed in **DURHAM and ORANGE counties**, wouldn't be affected by the proposal.

Projections run the gamut, with 59 percent of **DARE COUNTY's** tax revenue leaving, **WAKE COUNTY** roughly breaking even and **HARNETT COUNTY** seeing a 89 percent increase.

►NEW YORK

Prompted by one of its towns, **PUTNAM COUNTY** is looking into the possibility of merging all local police departments into one **countywide law enforcement unit**. The county has commissioned a feasibility study.

The town that requested the study has struggled to keep its budgets within a tax cap imposed by the state since 2012.

Current officers and administrators in local departments could potentially become part of the countywide department that would incorporate at least two towns and two villages.

►OHIO

A team of 16 detectives will respond to anticipated requests to **review fatal police shootings** throughout **CUYAHOGA COUNTY**. The investigators will receive training from agencies including the county Medical Examiner's office and the state Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation. Work on the use-of-deadly-force unit would come in addition to the detectives' normal workloads.

Interim Sheriff Cliff Pinkney told the County Council of his plan during his confirmation hearing, *The Plain Dealer* reported. The unit would include the deputies now involved in reviewing the fatal November

The H.R. Doctor Is In

Time to Talk about Time

Time passes more quickly, it seems, the older we get and the more enjoyable life is. After all, we may spend an hour in a dental chair and time seems to go by at a painful crawl. Yet, we may spend a similar amount of time with someone wonderful and beautiful like the HR spouse Charlotte, and how time flies. Before you know it, that hour is over.

So it is with bureaucracy. If you recognize, as a public administrator, the relative passage of time you can have a major influence over the way in which that time seems to move for yourself and others. Every elected and appointed official spends much of their work life in meetings — perhaps a third of that work life. You may well be in command over how those meetings are designed, how long they will last, what the agenda is like, etc.

If that's the case, take steps to make the meetings much more productive and enjoyable. Make the agendas as brief as possible and make the subjects as compelling as possible. Use humor and be

“ We can make our services memorable in a pleasant way and take advantage of the concepts of respect for the relativity of time.

very clear in the way you express yourself to others. Provide many chances for them to ask questions or offer suggestions and opinions.

Don't merely announce a decision that surprises, and perhaps annoys others. Instead, give them a chance to understand a situation which requires a decision and to perhaps offer input into the design of the outcome.

Of course, sometimes a “command decision” must be made because of emergencies or the nature of a problem. However, even military leaders at the highest levels appreciate that they empower others, help them grow, and produce better decisions following this model rather than an “Attila, the Leader” model.

Consider holding the meetings in nontraditional and non-bureaucratic places. A small government conference room, with chairs first purchased in 1967, is not conducive to the most productive possible meeting. Instead, make the meeting more interesting by holding it, for example, at a paleontology museum when the subject is whether or not the Civil Service concepts are extinct.

Meet at the sheriff's office and include a tour of the firing range to consider personal responses to difficult situations. Move executive meetings around so the attendees gain perspective into the depth of services the agency offers. Invite guests to staff meetings, such as employees from different departments or students from a nearby college, to add to their perspectives.

Make the meetings you preside over nothing like the hour spent in a dentist chair. Use the concept of process improvement to make the experience unexpectedly pleasant or at least not as annoying as it might otherwise be. An example

from the experience of one of my beautiful daughters at a veterinary office comes to mind. The first time she took her aging canine friend to the office to meet the new vet she was offered coffee and got to sit in what looked more like a living room than a clinical environment.

The next time she arrived for an appointment, amazingly, coffee was ready for her, just the way she had previously enjoyed it. The reason is that the attentive staff noted on a chart the kind of coffee she enjoyed having. The trip was unexpectedly pleasant and led to at least a score of positive

recommendations favorable to that service.

We can do the same thing in government. We can make our services memorable in a pleasant way and take advantage of the concepts of respect for the relativity of time. Make it a professional mission to create citizen and employee experiences which will be remembered for their pleasantness rather than high on the relative scale of how annoying they were.



Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor

Allegheny County, Pa. jail inmates get time on computer tablets

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice by a Cleveland police officer. The Sheriff's Department took over the investigation in January at the request of Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson.

►PENNSYLVANIA

• Inmates at the **ALLEGHENY COUNTY** Jail will soon be able to pass time behind bars working on **tablet computers**. The jail's program director said the tablets, which won't offer games or be connected to the Internet, will be loaded with educational, vocational and treatment software that the *Tribune-Review* reported will give inmates a constructive option while incarcerated.

The Jail Oversight Advisory Board approved the pilot program that will pay \$105,000 for 40 tablets, and, along with 80 tablets donated by a rental company, a \$2-per-tablet daily rental fee.

• Counties are voicing their opposition to Gov. Tom Wolf's

(D) proposal to **replace a fee on Marcellus Shale natural gas** wells with a flat annual payment, primarily to governments where wells are hosted.

Keeping the impact fee is one of the **COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA's** highest priorities, Executive Director Doug Hill told the Associated Press.

Wolf's severance tax would collect several times the amount of the impact fee. That proposal would dissolve the structure of the impact fee and replace it with a \$225 million annual payment—the 2013 impact fee generated \$226 million. Of that, \$123 million went to local governments, including 36 counties and about 400 municipalities.

Among counties, the biggest recipients were **BRADFORD COUNTY** — nearly \$7 million, **WASHINGTON COUNTY** — \$5.9 million and **SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY** — \$5.4 million.

►SOUTH DAKOTA

With the approval of the state Senate, **SHANNON COUNTY's**

name has officially changed to OGLALA LAKOTA COUNTY, the *Rapid City Journal* reported.

A ballot measure's approval in the November election put the ball in the Legislature's hands to do the will of 80 percent of county voters and rename the county after the area's tribe — after nearly 140 years of being named after the white chief judge of the Dakota Territory Supreme Court.

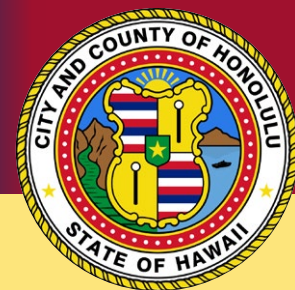
►TEXAS

If everything is bigger in Texas, **HARRIS COUNTY** is in the right state. The county containing Houston saw the **largest population gain** in the nation between July 2013 and July 2014, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The latest statistics show 89,000 residents came to the area in that time span.

(News From the Nation's Counties is compiled by Charles Taylor and Charlie Ban, senior staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please email ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.)

What's in a Seal?

City and County of Honolulu, Hawai'i



The seal of the City and County of Honolulu incorporates the shield of the state of Hawai'i — based on the coat of arms of the former Kingdom of Hawai'i — flanked by landmarks on the island of O'ahu. The City and County of Honolulu encompasses the entire island, with a population of just slightly over 950,000.

The emblem is described as a heraldic shield in quarters. The first and fourth quarters bear the stripes and colors of the Hawaiian flag. The center features the star of Hawai'i against a green background. It represented hope that one day that the “Star of Hawaii” would ultimately be placed on the flag of the United States.

Two “kapu” sticks (used during the Hawaiian Kingdom days by royalty to indicate “taboo” or “prohibited”) adorn the other two quarters of the coat of arms. They symbolize authority and the power of government.

Supporting the shield are the Nu'uanu Pali cliffs on the right side, and Diamond Head, also known as Le'ahi, on the left side. Diamond Head, a volcanic cone, is easily recognized as an iconic symbol of Hawai'i.

The crest is a rising sun above the shield, and the whole is surrounded by a legend **CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU** (above) and **STATE OF HAWAII** (below).

Originally designed in 1895 by Viggo Jacobsen as part of a competition for a seal for the Republic of Hawaii, the coat of arms was referred to as “The Great Shield.” Jacobsen was awarded \$50 for his design (about \$1,400 in today's dollars).

Jacobsen explained the great shield as “... the keystone of the whole design” and the sun as “symbolic of the new era which has dawned upon Hawaii....”

The seal was officially adopted on Feb. 9, 1909, shortly after the city began its operations in January. After Hawai'i achieved statehood in 1959, the seal was modified, replacing the term “TERRITORY OF HAWAII” with “STATE OF HAWAII.”

A seven-foot replica of the seal fashioned by Hawai'i artist Mamoru Sato hangs in the Honolulu Hale City Council Chamber. A smaller version, the model for the large seal, hangs in the mayor's office.

(Councilmember Trevor Ozawa and E. Tory Laitila, registrar, Honolulu Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts, contributed.)



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HAWAII

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND THE WIR CONFERENCE?

The 2014 mid-term elections have changed the political landscape in our nation's capital. There are 71 new members of Congress and senators serving in the 114th Congress, which means nearly half of Congress will have been elected in November 2010 or later!

And they will be making important decisions that impact our nation's Western counties. In fact, in 2015, Congress is expected to focus on the budget, tax and entitlement reform, and long-term funding for federal transportation programs. Congress will also be conducting important oversight over the Administration's broadband and Internet policies, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations, including the Administration's "Waters of the U.S." proposed rule.

It is also critical for Western counties to be at the table with Congress and the administration over ongoing discussions about Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) programs, active forest management and endangered species.

With the shift in political power and Congress poised to address many of these issues, counties need to tell our story and work with members and their staffs to shape legislation and policies that impact us!

REGISTRATION IS NOW **OPEN** @ www.naco.org/WIR

