

County News

National Association of Counties • Washington, D.C.

Vol. 26, No. 2 • January 24, 1994

National Commission on Superfund reaches consensus to protect local governments

By Diane S. Shea
associate legislative director

On Dec. 21, 1993, the National Commission on Superfund (NCS) released its consensus recommendations for a comprehensive package of reforms to the Superfund hazardous waste cleanup statute. The proposal includes relief both for municipal solid waste (garbage and sewage sludge) generators and transporters and for local governments that have owned or operated Superfund sites.

Congress and the Administration have anxiously awaited the NCS recommendations believing they will dramatically increase the chances that Superfund legislation can be enacted in this Congress.

With prominent members of the chemical industry now publicly supporting relief for local governments, it is unlikely that the municipal liability portion of the package will be significantly eroded as Congress considers it.

The municipal relief recommendations appear in the report's allocation process that would put an end to lengthy, expensive "third party" lawsuits and provide additional federal funding (raised by an increase in the corporate environmental tax) to pay for the so-called "orphan share" — waste attributable to insolvent or unidentifiable parties. EPA would nevertheless retain strong authority to require cleanups.

Under the NCS proposal, the total shares allocated to generators and transporters of municipal solid waste (MSW) and sewage sludge would be between zero and 10 percent. If the initial allocation phase determines that the total



Cleaning up sites where hazardous waste like this was stored is costing the country billions of dollars.

Congress and the Administration have anxiously awaited the NCS recommendations believing they will dramatically increase the chances that Superfund legislation can be enacted in this Congress.

share of all MSW and sewage sludge disposal at a site exceeds 10 percent, then the final shares of such parties would be reduced proportionately and the amount above 10 percent will become part of the

"orphan share." The proposal would also require a household hazardous waste collection program for disposal of MSW beginning three years after the date of enactment.

Municipal owners and operators would initially have their shares allocated just like other parties, but they could then submit information to the allocator (who would be a neutral administrative law judge) demonstrating that they do not have the "ability to pay" their full shares. Other parties would have an opportunity to respond. The ability to pay test to be used by the allocator closely resembles the test in the NACo-supported Lautenberg legislation, S. 965.

The first step in determining ability to pay is an analysis of the local government's overall financial condition. After this analysis, a local government would not be deemed to possess the ability to pay if such payment would: 1) create a "demonstrable risk" that it will default on existing debt obligations, be forced into bankruptcy, or be forced to make budgetary cutbacks that would substantially reduce current levels of protection of public health and safety, or 2) violate legal requirements or limitations concerning the assumption or maintenance of governmental fiscal obligations.

In addition, if the local government owner or operator asserts that it has additional environmental obligations besides its potential liability under Superfund, it may create a list of the obligations and estimate the costs of complying with each obligation, and EPA would be directed to assist with this task if requested.

The significant consensus reached by the NCS may be local

governments' best hope of achieving significant Superfund relief before the end of 1994. Supporters of the proposal need to send Congress and the Administration a clear message to turn the NCS proposal quickly into law.

The NCS is a blue-ribbon panel that includes 26 chief executive officers of Superfund's major "stakeholders," including industry, environmentalists, citizen activists, states and local governments.

Mandate Update

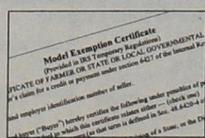
More than 2,000 delegates are expected to attend the "Stop the Mandate Madness" rally on the Capitol steps on March 8, the last day of the NACo Legislative Conference scheduled for March 4-8 in Washington, D.C. Counties surrounding Washington have also been invited to send bus loads of representatives to participate in the rally.



In addition, plans are being developed to hold several field hearings in key areas to help the public and media better understand how unfunded federal mandates force local officials to fund national priorities by raising local taxes and cutting back on critical local services such as law enforcement, education and health care.

For more information, contact Larry Jones, associate legislative director, 202/942-4228.

Rules for claiming exemption from federal diesel fuel taxes have changed for state and local governments. Find out what you need to do.



NACo's legislative staff complete their predictions about what's ahead in the 1994 congressional session.

News from the nation's counties page 7

County News begins a look at the major health care reform proposals and what they could mean for counties.



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America's Counties

New Hampshire's counties fight hard to gain visibility

By Barbara Sheen Todd
NACo president

(In "America's Counties," NACo President Barbara Sheen Todd writes about state and regional associations of counties. This is the eighth in her series.)

At one time, New Hampshire was part of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and it was not until 1769 that five counties were created: Rockingham, Strafford, Hillsborough, Cheshire and Grafton.

New Hampshire's 10 counties derive their power from the state constitution and statutes which specify the responsibilities of the governing bodies that include a three-member board of commissioners and a county delegation, all elected from single-member districts.

Budgetary and administrative authority over county government is the responsibility of the county commissioners, while the county delegation must appropriate the funding to meet county operation and maintenance costs.

Counties have the option of appointing a county administrator or chief administrative officer to deal with the basic fiscal, operational and administrative needs of the county. Most of the counties have elected to do so. While there are provisions for home rule and charter counties, none have pursued this alternative.

home employees.

New Hampshire's toughest legislative battles

The association has been an effective voice for counties with the New Hampshire Legislature. Through the leadership of New Hampshire county officials and their state asso-

Grafton County commissioner and president of the state association, "County government is relatively invisible compared to state or municipal government in New Hampshire ... yet county government is more local and responsive than state government. It can achieve economies of scale not possible at the municipal level."

Commissioner Taffe cited as an example the fact that it is more costly effective for counties to operate nursing homes and corrections departments than it would be for municipalities.

President-elect Betty Waite Luce, Rockingham County registrar of deeds said, "County government is a good buy for taxpayers. Counties receive only 7.3 percent of the total tax bill proceeds with the greatest share going to the municipal governments and the schools. In spite of that, the 10 county governments in New Hampshire employ 35,090 people, directly operate 11 nursing homes, and provide additional financial support for many private nursing homes which serve another 3,000

residents." Those responsibilities are costly and significant.

Future challenges for New Hampshire's counties

County leaders in New Hampshire are concerned with the increase in juvenile crime and the rising costs which accompany it. They cite a need to provide greater investment in our youth, which would identify potentially troubled youth before they become statistics.

As the primary providers of health care for the elderly, county officials in New Hampshire are deeply concerned about the impact of proposed federal health care legislation and rising health care costs.

Other future legislative challenges will directly relate to this issue as well as to the need to provide a better investment in transportation services to provide access to programs for those living in rural areas.

The county leaders in New Hampshire are confident that the future of their state will hold an important role for county government and they are committed to see that role fulfilled.

Maintaining visibility and stressing the importance of county government is a perennial challenge to county leaders in New Hampshire.

New Hampshire Association of Counties

The New Hampshire Association of Counties was founded 23 years ago to provide a mechanism for lobbying county interests with the state. Since that time, the state association has also effectively developed a network for all county officials. In addition to its lobbying initiatives, the state association coordinates training for the certification of correctional officers, as well as seminars and educational forums for nursing

association, the Unified State Court System was passed, which shifted judicial costs from county taxpayers to the state.

Health care costs, the need for a broader taxation base for counties and unfunded mandates will continue to be major concerns for New Hampshire's counties. Maintaining visibility and stressing the importance of county government is a perennial challenge to county leaders in New Hampshire.

According to Betty Jo Taffe, a

Rules change for exemption from federal diesel fuel tax

Effective Jan. 1 of this year, local and state governments can no longer purchase clear, undyed diesel fuel; pay the federal excise tax on the fuel; and claim a refund of taxes paid, according to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

New rules require that the vendor seek a refund from the IRS, instead of the local or state government.

To purchase diesel fuel at a tax-excluded price, local governments must 1) purchase the fuel from a "registered ultimate vendor," and 2) supply that vendor with an "exemption certificate," which the vendor will need to support his or her claim for a tax credit or refund.

Through March 31, the so-called exemption certificate can be the government's unexpired "Exemption Certificate for Purchaser of Diesel Fuel" if the certificate was provided to the vendor before Dec. 31,

1993. If not, and for purchases after March 31, 1994, a new exemption certificate must be provided in substantially the same form as the Model Exemption Certificate that appears next to this article.

This rule does not apply to state and local governments that are able to buy dyed diesel fuel, but state and local governments purchasing dyed fuel must make certain that a notice stating: "DYED DIESEL FUEL, NON-TAXABLE USE ONLY, PENALTY FOR TAXABLE USE," is provided by vendors and appears on all papers connected with their purchase of dyed fuel.

It is also important to note that rules regarding refunds have not changed for the purchase of gasoline.

For more information, contact GFOA's Federal Liaison Center, 11750 K St., N.W., Suite 650, Washington, DC, 20006. Phone: 202/429-2755, fax: 202/429-2755.

Model Exemption Certificate (Provided in IRS Temporary Regulations) "CERTIFICATE OF FARMER OR STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNIT" (To support vendor's claim for a credit or payment under section 6427 of the Internal Revenue Code.)

Name, address, and employer identification number of seller.

The undersigned buyer ("Buyer") hereby certifies the following under penalties of perjury: Buyer will use the diesel fuel to which this certificate relates either — (check one)

- On a farm for farming purposes (as that term is defined in Sec. 48.6420-4 of the Manufacturers and Retailers Exercise Tax Regulations); or
- For the exclusive use of a State, political subdivision of a State, or the District of Columbia.

This certificate applies to the following (complete as applicable):

If this is a single purchase certificate, check here and enter:

1. Invoice or delivery ticket number. _____
2. _____ (number of gallons)

If this is a certificate covering all purchases under a specified account or order number, check here and enter:

1. Effective date _____
2. Expiration date _____ (period not to exceed 1 year after the effective date)
3. Buyer account or order number _____

Buyer will provide a new certificate to the seller if any information in this certificate changes.

If buyer uses the diesel fuel to which this certificate relates for a purpose other than stated in the certificate Buyer will be liable for the tax.

Buyer understands that the fraudulent use of this certificate may subject Buyer and all parties making such fraudulent use of this certificate to a fine or imprisonment, or both, together with the costs of prosecution.

Signature and date signed _____

Printed or typed name of person signing _____

Title of person signing _____

Name of Buyer _____

Employer identification number _____

Address of Buyer _____

Public Announcement

On Jan. 25, 1994, NACo released a Request for Qualification for vendors seeking to provide a national information exchange program for NACo constituents. The program should provide electronic mail, public and private forums, public and private bulletin boards, data base capability, private conferencing, electronic forms, and resource connectivity in a manner that is easy to use and cost-effective. The vendor conference will be held on Feb. 4, 1994, and vendors must submit their proposals by 3:00 p.m. (EST) on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 1994. For copies, please call Hirut Ayele at 202/942-4240.

County News invites Letters to the Editor

If you have a compliment, complaint or different point of view, let us know. Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail or fax to: County News, NACo, 440 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2080, 202/393-2630.

Publisher's Perspective The NACo Vision and Three-Year Plan

By Larry Naake
County News Publisher



For the third year in a row, the NACo Board of Directors, at its Dec. 11, 1993 meeting, adopted a "NACo Vision and Three-Year Plan" for the association. The plan is an evolutionary document that helps guide the association leadership and staff toward the future and keeps NACo on a course toward meaningful and achievable goals. The plan contains a series of major goals, supporting strategies and programs to carry out those goals, and even more specific activities or tactics to achieve the strategies and goals.

One of the most important parts of the vision and plan is the vision statement itself. This statement was adopted last year by the Board and states that:

"NACo, with the creative involvement of its members, will develop the leadership, programs and services necessary to enable counties to:

- meet the challenges of the 21st century
- manage rapid change, and
- assist their citizens in achieving a better quality of life.

A collaborative partnership, involving government, health, education, business and the community is essential to the achievement of these efforts and our success as a nation."

The 1994 plan

After reviewing the accomplishments in 1993, the Board then reviewed and adopted our goals and strategies for 1994 and beyond. The 1994 goals include six initiatives and priorities that have been established by President Barbara Sheen Todd for her year as NACo president. These priorities are as follows:

- 1) to establish a Membership Programs and Services Steering Committee that would reach down into the NACo county membership to determine and prioritize those services and programs that should be provided by NACo to enable counties to become more effective and self-sufficient, and to assist them in serving their citizens more effectively
- 2) to undertake a Children's Initiative Project that would span the next two years and assist NACo in providing policy and programmatic leadership
- 3) to establish a public interest group leadership council composed of the leadership of other local government associations at the national level
- 4) to establish a Sustainable Development Task Force that will explore and develop options that encourage economic growth, job creation, and the effective use of our natural and cultural resources
- 5) to initiate a Governance Project to examine the changing roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local governments, and
- 6) to determine whether or not NACo should establish a Far East office in Singapore to promote economic development in counties throughout the United States.

In addition to the six "presidential priorities," the Board adopted an additional 17 major goals, with 51 strategies or programs to carry out those goals, and an additional 100 specific activities or tactics to implement the strategies. This is an aggressive program for NACo during 1994 and the following two years, but one that we believe we can achieve.

Just a few of the "new" goals or programs planned for 1994 and beyond include:

- to write and distribute a quarterly column from NACo to be sent to daily and weekly newspaper editors throughout the United States that would advance our position
- to improve the content and format of *County News*, using the reader survey that was conducted during 1993
- to establish a National County Training Center to meet the ever-changing training needs of county officials and personnel
- to regularly produce NACo "research products" that can be disseminated to NACo members and the media
- to develop The Financial Management Center, a new NACo service that was approved by the NACo Board of Directors, and
- to expand computer and communications capacity within NACo headquarters office to support quality services to members.

We are extremely excited about our goals for the future and the fact that our Board of Directors is intimately involved in developing and implementing those goals. All of us believe in the old adage that you "need to plan your work and work your plan."

What's Ahead in '94 Aggressive campaign to stop unfunded mandates will continue in '94

By Larry Jones
associate legislative director

After a successful year of lining up House and Senate members to co-sponsor mandate relief legislation, NACo is preparing to continue an aggressive campaign to get legislation enacted.

The campaign was launched last Oct. 27 (National Unfunded Mandates Day), when state and local officials took part in a national effort to educate members of Congress, the public and the media on how unfunded mandates drive up state and local taxes and cut services.

To keep the momentum going this year, NACo is planning to hold several field hearings to continue to educate the public and media. Also a "Stop the Mandate Madness" rally is being planned for the Legislative Conference in March.

Both NACo and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have endorsed legislation introduced by Senator Dirk Kempthorne (R-Idaho) in the Senate (S. 993) and by Representative Gary A. Condit (D-Calif.) in the House

(H.R. 140) as a top priority. These measures would relieve state and local governments from obligations to carry out future mandates unless federal funds are provided.

To the surprise of some members, these two bills have attracted far more support than expected. Following NUMDay activities, a total of 52 members signed on as co-sponsors of S. 993 and 136 signed on to H.R. 140 before Congress adjourned last year.

Although there is significant support for the Kempthorne/Condit bills, the leadership opposes the legislation and can be expected to work to prevent subcommittee and committee action.

In the Senate, the Governmental Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator John Glenn (D-Ohio), and the Senate Subcommittee on General Services, Federalism and the District of Columbia, chaired by Senator Jim Sasser (D-Tenn.), have jurisdiction over mandate relief proposals. In the House, the Government Operations Committee, chaired by Representative John Conyers (D-Mich.), and the Sub-

committee on Human Relations, chaired by Representative Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.), have jurisdiction over the proposed legislation.

While these members generally agree that mandates have become a problem for state and local governments, some have expressed concern that the Kempthorne/Condit bills would go too far.

If enacted, they feel the legislation would restrict the ability of Congress to enact essential mandates such as civil rights and voting rights legislation. To this, NACo President Barbara Todd responds, "The best way of ensuring that national priorities can be effectively carried out is for the federal government to fund them. County governments are already spending billions of dollars each year on federal mandates and we don't believe it's good policy for Congress to continue to fund national priorities on the backs of local governments. We do not have the broad tax base to raise revenues like the federal government and many of our counties are barely able to meet the demands for local services."

Infrastructure investment: new initiatives, but no new money

By Haron N. Battle
associate legislative director

A key component of the Administration's community and economic development strategy was revealed on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday when President Clinton issued the regulations, application and guidebook for the nine empowerment zones (nine urban and three rural) and 95 enterprise communities (65 urban and 30 rural) that will be designated in 1994 and 1995. Applicants already are developing comprehensive strategic plans that coordinate infrastructure improvements with a full array of social services aimed at revitalizing distressed communities.

Strategic planning will extend into other programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Counties receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS funds will submit consolidated plans that outline a 10-20 year vision for addressing identified needs. In developing a vision, HUD grantees will be expected to factor in related issues like transportation, the environment and health care that impact the achievement of long-term

community and economic development objectives.

Counties can count on expanded resources to address homelessness.

Funds to combat homelessness could increase from \$800 million into the \$1.1 - \$1.5 billion range. At that level of funding, there may be recommendations to consolidate Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance programs into a block grant (a position that NACo has supported for years).

But don't dismiss the categorical program grant writers yet in anticipation of block grant allocations. As a step toward consolidation, some McKinney programs that are now spread over 17 federal agencies may be merged.

Unlike increased funding to address homelessness, expect intense battles over appropriations for other HUD programs, particularly public housing. CDBG is likely to be funded at least at the FY94 level of \$4.4 billion. This is good news for the 135 urban counties that receive \$580 million in CDBG allocations and smaller counties that are funded through their states.

Recipients of HOME funds, which include 89 counties that receive direct allocations and 61 consortia in which counties participate, should expect their allocations in FY95 to be roughly the same as in FY94. However, the president's

budget will likely propose cutting HOME by \$250 million to \$1 billion in FY95. Congress could restore this money, but again, the overall HUD account will be tight.

All housing and community development programs will be reauthorized this year. Expect only minor, but positive revisions in the HOME Program.

The current two-tiered matching requirement will be replaced with a uniform match of 25 percent, thereby eliminating the bias against use of HOME for new construction. There may be some debate over eligible uses of CDBG.

Ultimately, Congress is likely to affirm that using CDBG to provide swimming pools for poor children in distressed neighborhoods is appropriate in communities that identify this need.

Other avenues will be pursued to undertake economic development.

Following public comment, the administration's regulatory reform proposal for the Community Reinvestment Act will, according to Comptroller of the Currency Eugene A. Ludwig, "channel billions of dollars in new credit into America's distressed communities, while at the same time reducing unnecessary burdens on the banks." Similarly, Congress will complete work on President Clinton's strategy for creating community development banks.

OMB urged to help find solution for overtime liability

By Larry Jones
associate legislative director

In a Jan. 19 meeting at the White House, NACo Executive Director Larry Naake urged senior officials of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and White House staff to assist in finding a solution to an overtime liability problem that continues to impose an enormous financial drain on many state and local governments. He told officials that "because of a quirk in the regulations, highly paid executive and administrative employees who earn be-

tween \$40,000 and \$90,000 annually have been successful in suing their public employers for overtime pay."

Isabel Sawhill, associate director of OMB, told Naake that she was aware of the overtime liability problem facing state and local governments. She mentioned that the federal government faced similar problems. Federal employees in several departments have also sued the federal government for overtime.

Although she made it clear she could make no promises at this time, she told NACo that she planned to meet with representatives of several federal agencies to determine what

actions should be taken.

While the Fair Labor Standards Act exempts executive and administrative employees from the overtime pay requirements, judges in many states have determined them to be eligible for overtime based on their interpretation of the regulations. Under the regulations, exempt employees must be paid a salary that does not vary based on the number of hours of work.

In most state and local governments, public accountability statutes are in effect that prohibit the use of public funds to compensate any employee for time not actually worked.

Traditionally, pay policy in the public sector has been linked to the amount of time worked. Some courts have determined such policy to be in violation of the regulations. Consequently, they have ruled that employees subjected to such policy are not exempt.

Although the Department of Labor changed the regulations in 1992 to relieve states and localities from overtime liability associated with public accountability statutes, the li-

ability has continued to pile up against counties, cities and states. This is largely due to fact that the regulations only addressed some of the issues raised by the courts.

Naake told Sawhill that "the potential liability in the public sector is enormous. Unless the regulations are changed, highly paid employees can be expected to continue to sue the federal, state and local governments for overtime when the law clearly intended to exempt them."

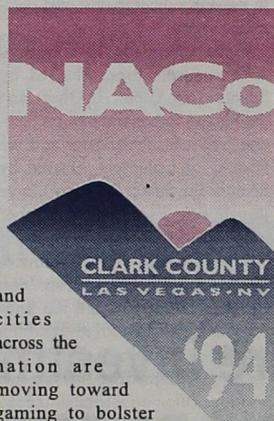
Clark County ranked as the second "up and coming" county in the USA

Clark County, Nev., host of the 1994 NACo Annual Conference, was recently ranked as the second "up and coming" county in the nation by *City and State* magazine. The annual ranking was based on a review of growth in counties with populations greater than 100,000.

Local officials credit a stable resort industry, economic diversification, the lure of favorable tax environment for new companies and conservative financial management by county government. "Whenever an area experiences the kind of growth Clark County has experienced in the past five years, the analysts always look to see how much the property tax has increased," County Manager Pat Shalmy explained. "We've managed to keep the lowest property tax rates in the state since FY90."

Clark County's population growth is far from over. County demographers estimate, as of July 1993, population figures of 919,388, and Nevada state demographers project that Clark County will reach the one million population mark by 1996.

The resort industry also continues to grow. At a time when many states



and cities across the nation are moving toward gaming to bolster their local economies, Clark County is repositioning itself as a family and resort destination. Three major resort projects, each sporting a unique family theme, will open by the end of 1993. These three resorts will bring the total Las Vegas room inventory to more than 87,000.

Economic diversification has been a concerted effort by the business community and local government. For the past five years, Nevada has

ranked higher than all other Southwest states for a positive manufacturing climate, according to a study by the national accounting and management firm of Grant Thornton. Nevada businesses do not pay corporate income tax, inventory tax, franchise, admissions or capital stock tax, or personal income tax.

New company commitments and relocation to Clark County in 1993 include manufacturing companies (Sigmatron, Inc., Spindle Company, Inc. and Full Throttle Apparel Company), service section industries (Household International, Haltronics and Cardinal West) and corporate headquarters (Ira Fischere and Roberto's Taco Shops).

According to Nevada Development Authority (NDA) statistics, 78 companies have relocated to Clark County in the past two years, adding approximately 3,600 jobs to the local economy. Recent successful relocations include Citibank Western Regional Office, Household Credit (GM Card) and Ocean Spray.

NDA records indicate approximately 75 percent of all business relocations originate from California.



◆ In a meeting at the White House, earlier this month, Executive Director Larry Naake met with Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Marcia Hale, Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs Loretta Avent and Deputy Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs John Hart. During the meeting, the White House officials asked for NACo's support of President Clinton's health reform legislation. Also, Naake promoted NACo's position on the crime bill particularly "front-end" investment and prevention.

On Jan. 12-15, Naake was in San Diego, Calif. for the Public Technology, Inc. board meeting.

◆ On Jan. 12, Mary Uyeda, director of the County Health Policy Project, participated in a health care seminar, sponsored by St. Louis County, Minn., where she spoke about the local perspective on the issue of Medicaid managed care and health care reform.

◆ Speaking on the subject of environmental mandates, Associate Legislative Director Diane Shea addressed delegates to the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia at their legislative meeting in Atlanta.

◆ Environmental Projects Director Jerry McNeil and Research Associate Naomi Friedman attended a briefing by the President's Council on Sustainable Development, Jan. 6 on Capitol Hill, where the issue of local government input was discussed.

◆ On Jan. 11, Associate Legislative Director Larry Jones and Legislative Assistant Donna Cooper attended a meeting of the State and Local Labor Management Committee to help develop plans for upcoming seminars that will focus on seeking excellence in state and local government through improved labor-management relations.

County News

"THE WISDOM TO KNOW AND THE COURAGE TO DEFEND THE PUBLIC INTEREST"

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Published biweekly except August by:

National Association of Counties Research Foundation, Inc.

440 First Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20001-2080

202-393-6226 FAX 202-393-2630

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County News cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to *County News*, 440 First St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001 (USPS 704-620) • (ISSN: 0744-9798)

NACo honors Florida PEBSCO rep.

Lou Moreno, state director for PEBSCO's Florida operations, was recently named the first recipient of the NACo Deferred Com-

pensation Program's John T. McHugh Award.

The award, named after former Middlesex County (N.J.) Adminis-

trator John T. McHugh, honors PEBSCO field service representatives who demonstrate commitment to the service of America's counties, their officials and employees.

PEBSCO, the Public Employees Benefit Services Corporation, administers NACo's Deferred Compensation Advisory Program. McHugh is a charter member of NACo's Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee and served as its chairman from 1984 to 1993.

Moreno was honored for his leadership in streamlining the process through which Dade County, Fla. employees could withdraw funds from their deferred compensation accounts to help meet emergency expenses in the wake of Hurricane Andrew.

Holiday Contest "Smart Lookers Honor Roll"

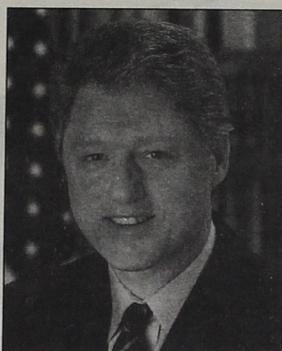
In our Dec. 20, 1993 issue, we challenged our readers to identify the item/s reflected in the holiday ornament photo on the last page, and promised to publish the names of those whose eagle eyes picked them out.

We were after two answers: The U.S. Capitol Building and the photographer. Most of you caught the Capitol, good for one gold star. The super eagle-eyed get two stars. Congratulations to:

- ★ Juan Garza Webb County, Texas
- ★ Gloria Lewton Clackamas County, Ore.
- ★ Louise Hammon Anne Arundel County, Md.
- ★ Judy Menish Skagit County, Wash.
- ★ Jane Carroll Broward County, Fla.
- ★ Thomas Pankok Salem County, N.J.
- ★★ Rick Clark Caterpillar, Inc., Peroria, Ill.
- ★ Lori Smithson Little River County, Ark.
- ★ Amy Nichols Summit County, Ohio
- ★ Curtis Hardman Kanawha County, W. Va.
- ★ Clovis Reed Simpson County, Miss.
- ★★ Robert Connors Polk County, Fla.

Counties and the Clinton Health Care Reform Proposals

(This is the first installment in a series of County News interviews that look at the major health care reform proposals about to be considered by Congress. We begin with the Clinton Administration plan. Subsequent installments will examine the major Republican and Democratic initiatives.)



Health Security Act may offer relief to county health programs

As the American health care system has deteriorated, county governments have borne a greater share of the burden of dealing with the problems of the uninsured and rising health care costs. County programs to provide coverage to the uninsured have greatly expanded and the proportion of county budgets devoted to such programs has grown as well. Public hospitals, many of which depend on county resources, have been taxed by a growing demand for uncompensated care. Finally, the rising cost of coverage for county employees has added to the financial burden on state and local governments.

President Clinton's Health Security Act offers direct relief to county government through a program of universal coverage and cost containment. By guaranteeing coverage for a comprehensive set of benefits for all American citizens, the president's proposal will eliminate the need for costly stop-gap measures that sap counties' budgets. And, by creating a market system that encourages health plans to compete for consumers on the basis of cost, efficiency and quality, the Health Security Act will sharply reduce the dramatic rates of increase in insurance premiums for both the public and private sectors.

The president's plan also recognizes that providing a Health Security Card to every American will not eliminate all barriers to health care services. That is why the Health Security Act is the only reform proposal now pending before Congress that makes a substantial investment in the nation's public health infrastructure. A new access initiative will pump new money into communities — urban and rural — to guarantee access to needed services.

In addition, special services for such things as transportation, translation and child care will be provided to those populations that need them. And federal efforts to increase the supply of health care professionals in underserved urban and rural areas will be increased to further reduce barriers to care.

The president and his Administration will work hand-in-hand with the leaders of county government to create a health care system that provides universal coverage, a

private employers (e.g., ability to self-insure, caps on premiums as percent of payroll)?

Answer: With two exceptions, counties and other governmental employers (including the federal government) are treated as any other regional alliance employer. Premium contributions are calculated and paid in the same manner; they are eligible to have a representative on the alliance board of directors; and the regional alliance receives a premium contribution from the corporate alliance when the spouse of a government worker is employed by a corporate alliance employer, but the family unit selects to join the regional alliance.

The two areas in which treatment of counties and other governmental employers differs from private employers in the regional alliance are:

- The 7.9 percent of payroll cap on employer premium expenses phases in to apply fully beginning Jan. 1, 2002. For most employers who purchase coverage through a regional alliance, the 7.9 percent cap applies beginning in the first year the employer's state is in the new system. (There is no cap for corporate alliance employers.)
- Government employers cannot form corporate alliances or otherwise self-insure.

Starting on day one, however, public employees will be eligible for the same discounts available to other families in the regional alliance. In addition, public employees and employers will benefit immediately from insurance reforms, community rating, special financial assistance to early retirees, and guaranteed cost control through premium caps that will back up market competition.

Public facilities and system transition

County News: *County governments are often responsible for providing health services to the uninsured through their public hospitals, public health clinics, and mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities. Under a reformed system, these facilities would either be folded into the overall system or would no longer provide the significant level of indigent care they currently provide. How does your plan assist these facilities while the system transitions to reform?*

Answer: The access initiative contained in the Health Security Act expands capacity in urban and rural underserved areas in ways that build on the experience and expertise of providers currently caring for underserved populations

(e.g., those funded by federal, state and county governments) and that give these providers the resources they need to participate successfully in the new system.

The Community Practice Network and Health Plan Program (Title III, Subtitle E) is designed to integrate publicly funded providers with other providers in underserved areas, bolstering their ability to coordinate care, negotiate effectively with health plans, and form their own health plans.

The program will increase the level of services available in underserved areas by supporting the creation of new practice sites and by renovating and converting existing practice sites, including public and rural hospitals.

In addition, it will improve access to specialty care in urban and rural underserved areas — and improve coordination of care — by linking providers in practice networks with each other and with regional and Academic Health Centers through information systems and telecommunication.

Grants and loans under the new program will be made to groups of providers working in medically underserved areas or caring for underserved populations. Types of providers eligible for assistance include:

- health professionals or institutions (including rural and public hospitals, and mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities) other than those listed below who provide care in underserved areas or to underserved populations
- providers funded under federal programs, including community and migrant health centers, homeless health, health care in public housing, family planning, Ryan White, maternal and child health, and Indian health
- rural health clinics and other federally qualified health centers, and
- providers delivering personal health services through state and local public health agencies.

In making awards, preference will be given to groups that include the maximum number of different types of publicly funded providers and that link these providers with those not supported by public funds.

All providers included in the community practice networks will receive automatic designation as essential community providers, assuring them payment for covered services from all health plans. Providers caring for underserved populations will continue receiving payment for enabling services, such as transportation, translation, child care and outreach through existing programs. Additional federal support for this purpose will be available through a new Enabling

Services Program and through new funds in the Community Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment formula grants (see response to next question).

The act also creates a new Vulnerable Populations Adjustment Program to help public and non-profit hospitals through the transition. This program will provide additional compensation for hospitals that provide a large proportion of services to low-income people. A portion of this adjustment will be targeted to providers in areas with large numbers of undocumented people.

In addition, the act provides several incentives to help enhance the ability of communities to attract and retain providers serving underserved populations:

- Primary care physicians practicing in underserved areas will be eligible for an increase in the Medicare bonus payment from 10 percent to 20 percent, while other specialists continue to receive a 10 percent bonus.
- Non-National Health Service Corps primary care doctors practicing in underserved areas will be eligible for tax credits of \$1,000 per month for up to five years. Non-physician providers (advanced-practice nurses and physician assistants) are eligible for a \$500 per month credit.
- Allowable depreciation expense for medical equipment is increased by \$7,500 for all doctors and by an additional \$10,000 for primary care physicians practicing in designated underserved areas.

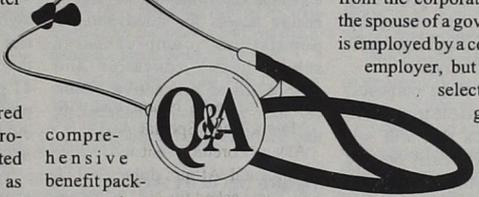
The act also provides funding authority for grants to Academic Health Centers to enable them to link with urban and rural areas. The grants may be used to enhance and build information and referral systems that will assure that these residents have access to the specialized treatment services in Academic Health Centers.

Special services

County News: *Some individuals that counties serve need special services to access needed health care (e.g., transportation, translation, child care). How does your plan address these needs?*

Answer: The Health Security Act recognizes that a Health Security Card will not, in and of itself, guarantee that all Americans receive appropriate medical care. The access initiative includes several programs to assure that isolated, culturally diverse, hard-to-reach persons get the supplemental services they need to obtain access to care.

These programs will also help individuals who have been denied



HEALTH CARE from page 5

access to the current medical care system shift their care patterns away from emergency rooms and receive earlier and more appropriate primary care services.

• Current Safety Net Programs — First, federal support for enabling services will continue through current safety net programs, such as community and migrant health centers, programs for the homeless, family planning, Ryan White, and maternal and child health.

Providers funded under these programs will receive automatic designation as *essential community providers*. This will guarantee them payment for covered services from all health plans. Equally important, it will assure that vulnerable populations have continuing access to practitioners with experience meeting their special needs, regardless of which health plan they choose to enroll in.

• Enabling Services Program — A new competitive grant program will expand federal support for outreach and enabling services. These grants will assure that diverse populations not served by existing programs have access to the supplemental services they need to use the health care system effectively. Awards will be made to community practice networks, community health plans, and other public and private not-for-profit organizations with experience and expertise in providing outreach and enabling services for underserved populations.

• Mental Health and Substance Abuse Initiatives — New funds will assure that low-income, hard-to-reach individuals know about and take advantage of the mental illness and substance abuse treatment benefits included in the comprehensive benefits package.

Working through the existing Community Mental Health Services and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment formula grants, these funds will support enabling services — community and patient outreach, transportation, translation, education — for low-income individuals and other vulnerable groups (such as the homeless, dually diagnosed or severely mentally ill). In addition, they will build up the currently inadequate infrastructure for delivering mental health and substance abuse services in communities and facilitate integrating these services within the broader health care system.

• School-Age Youth — Two new initiatives will reach out to one of our nation's most vulnerable groups — school-age youth and adolescents. The school-related services initiative will support the provision of health services — including psychosocial services and counseling in disease prevention, health promotion and individualized risk behavior — in school-based or school-linked sites.

Grants will be made to states for the development and implementation of statewide projects targeted at high-risk youth ages 10-19. In states that do not take this initiative, grants will be available to local community partnerships including public schools, experienced providers and community organizations.

The Comprehensive School Health Education Initiative will establish a national framework within which states can create school health education programs that improve the health and well being of students, grades K through 12, in areas with high needs.

The following programs, which are designed to expand capacity in underserved areas, will complement and reinforce the enabling programs described above.

• Practitioner Supply — The supply of practitioners in underserved areas will be increased by expanding the National Health Service Corps approximately five-fold from its current field strength of 1,600; by redirecting residency training to substantially increase the ratio of primary care physicians to specialist physicians; and by supporting the training of primary care physicians, physician assistants and advanced-practice nurses.

Special programs to increase the representation of minorities among health professionals will help to overcome access barriers that stem from cultural gaps.

• Capacity Expansion — Capacity in inner-city and rural areas will be expanded under reform both through expansion of the successful community and migrant health center program and through a new competitive grant and loan program supporting the development of community-oriented practice networks and health plans (described in more detail in response to the question above).

Public health initiatives

County News: How does your plan support public health? Does it recognize "core functions," such as monitoring and protecting the entire community against communicable disease, ensuring safe food and water, and health education? Are there initiatives to address diseases of major regional or national significance?

Answer: The Health Security Act of 1993 is the only health care reform plan currently under consideration that emphasizes the crucial role of public health. The public health component of the president's plan authorizes funding to strengthen core public health capabilities at the state and local levels in order to:

- protect Americans against communicable diseases and exposures to toxic environmental pol-

lutants, occupational hazards, harmful products and poor quality health care

- identify and control outbreaks of infectious diseases and patterns of chronic disease and injury, and

- inform and educate health care consumers and providers about their roles in preventing and controlling disease and appropriate use of medical services.

To accomplish these purposes, grants will be available to states to undertake projects that will improve their ability to carry out one or more of the following essential public health functions:

- data collection, disease surveillance and health outcome monitoring

- protection of environment, communities, workplaces, housing, food and water

- investigation and control of disease and injuries

- public information and education, including community mobilization

- health services quality assurance and accountability

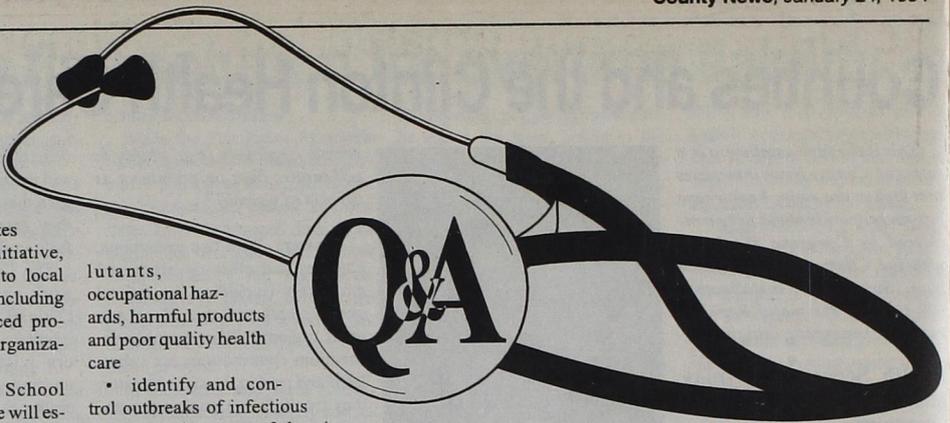
- public health laboratory services
- training and education of public health professionals, and
- leadership, policy development and administration.

States will be required to apply for financial assistance to undertake these projects by stating clear, measurable objectives regarding health outcomes to be achieved and functional capability to be improved.

The proposal authorizes new money to be provided to the states for core public health activities in the following amounts: \$325 million in FY96, \$450 million in FY97, \$550 million in FY98, \$650 million in FY99 and \$750 million in FY2000.

The president's proposal also provides for support of initiatives to address diseases of major regional or national significance. These initiatives are community-based initiatives to improve the health of the public. Grants will be available to public and private not-for-profit agencies to undertake community-based projects to achieve the prevention agenda set forth in "Healthy People 2000." These would address behavioral risks, physical and social environmental hazards, and appropriate utilization of clinical preventive services.

Funds authorized to carry out this proposal are \$175 million in FY96 and \$200 million annually from FY97 through FY2000.



In addition, funding will be provided for public health capacity expansion and enabling services to ensure access for disadvantaged populations, comprehensive school health education and school-linked preventive health services, workforce enhancement, and health research initiatives.

Health Security Act financing and maintenance-of-effort requirements

County News: How is your plan financed? Are there requirements for counties to maintain levels of financial effort?

Answer: To accomplish its key goals of universal coverage while reducing the rate of growth in health care costs, the Health Security Act proposes new federal outlays in five areas over five years:

1) Expanded public health service activities — \$53 billion.

These activities are designed both to revitalize and improve the public health function, and to supplement the comprehensive benefits package to ensure that Americans who are covered will have adequate access to care. Investment in prevention will reduce illness, lower costs, and improve quality of life.

2) Long-term care — \$62 billion.

The long-term component of the Health Security Act encompasses:

- a new home and community-based initiative for the disabled
- liberalized spend-down rules for the Medicaid-eligible institutionalized, and

- tax incentives for the purchase of long-term care insurance.

3) Establish a new Medicare drug benefit — \$66 billion.

4) One hundred percent tax deductibility for health insurance purchased by the self-employed — \$10 billion.

5) Net new premium discounts for employers and households — \$161 billion.

These new federal outlays over the five-year period are financed in the following six ways:

1) Reductions in the rate of growth in Medicare — \$124 billion.

These savings, through extension of expiring authorities, lower spending for uncompensated care made possible by universal coverage, reduced payment rates reflect-

ing increased efficiencies, and by making the Part B premium for high income Medicare beneficiaries income-related, would lower the Medicare rate of growth from 11 percent to approximately eight percent by the end of the decade — even while adding new prescription drug coverage.

2) Medicaid savings — \$65 billion. Because the Health Security Act will establish universal coverage, uncompensated care will essentially disappear, reducing dramatically the need for disproportionate share payments; those now on Medicaid will enjoy alliance coverage; many will be covered through their employers; and enrollment of cash-assistance Medicaid beneficiaries in alliances will reduce premiums paid by Medicaid on their behalf to the constrained private sector growth rate.

3) Corporate assessment and tobacco tax — \$89 billion. Large corporations which decide to opt out from regional alliances to form corporate alliances will pay a one percent payroll assessment, but will benefit substantially from savings from universal coverage and the consequent reduction in cost-shifting. Increasing the tobacco tax to the equivalent of 99 cents per pack of cigarettes will generate \$65 billion in additional revenues.

4) Savings in other federal wide health programs — \$40 billion. Integration of Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, Federal Employees Health Benefits and Public Health Service programs into the reformed health care system will allow substantial savings from lower premiums and new payment sources while maintaining availability of services and enhancing consumer choice.

5) Additional revenue effects — \$86 billion. Because of the substantial reductions in health care costs stemming from reform, taxable profits and other revenues will grow.

6) Reduced debt service — \$4 billion. Reductions in national debt growth flowing from health reform savings will generate additional savings in the cost of financing the debt.

The Health Security Act places no maintenance-of-effort requirements upon counties.

Academia and the urban crisis: Baltimore's breakthrough bid

By Neal R. Peirce
Washington Post Writers Group

(Neal Peirce is a syndicated columnist who writes about local government issues. His columns do not reflect the opinions of County News or the National Association of Counties.)

American universities, says Sargent Shriver, must shake their ivory tower ways and start acting more like fire departments.

"Fire departments go where the fire is. Universities need to bring the intellectual resources of their faculty, plus the altruistic motivations of their students, to bear on the fire consuming our cities," asserts Shriver, the Kennedy brother-in-law remembered as first director of the nation's war on poverty in the '60s.

Shriver is doing more than talk up a new university role. He is part of an effort, announced in December, to coalesce the 10 public and private universities of the Baltimore region in what's claimed to be the first American multiuniversity consortium designed to attack urban problems.

The lead university in the group is the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, where a new Shriver

Center, named in honor of Shriver and his wife Eunice Kennedy Shriver, will focus on training and deploying students to learn firsthand, as volunteer workers in an array of service programs, the problems of troubled city and suburban neighborhoods.

Mobilizing idealistic young people has been a hallmark of organized efforts of the Kennedy family for years. Shriver himself had a hand in creation of the Peace Corps, the Job Corps and VISTA.

The Shriver's son, Mark, founded and runs the Baltimore-based Choice Program, in which young college graduates work around-the-clock with neglected and oftentimes delinquent boys and girls, aiming to save them from the streets and get them headed toward productive lives.

The Shriver Center will provide an academic home base for Choice and two offshoot efforts focused on job training and middle school dropout prevention. The center will also be home to the new Shriver Peaceworker Program, under which returning Peace Corps volunteers serve as university teaching assistants and try to relate their experience in Third World nations to conditions of the American city.

But the Shriver Center outreach is supposed to embrace more than youth

service and experiential learning, says University of Maryland-Baltimore County President Freeman Hrabowski. There'll be a close connection to faculty research and course design. Staff from every discipline, from social work to engineering to education, will be encouraged to work interactively with students willing to become engaged in the laboratory of the city.

If that suggests a shattering of academia's ivory tower, the Baltimore effort is supposed to go even one giant step further. It will seek to engage faculty from a constellation of area universities ranging from proud, nationally prestigious Johns Hopkins to blue-collar, historically black Morgan State and Coppin State.

The presidents of the 10 Baltimore area colleges agreed quickly to form a Presidents Council and join the urban outreach. Factors in the fast agreement may have been the Shriver's involvement, or respect for Hrabowski, a distinguished African-American academic. The motivation wasn't money, since no big endowment is in prospect.

In most cities, cooperative consortiums among universities have tended to come a cropper because of faculty jealousies or turf protection. Shriver believes those same prob-

lems would likely block a university agreement like Baltimore's in such cities as New York, Los Angeles or Chicago.

Many Baltimore colleges already have strong urban studies and outreach programs, some run collaboratively.

Another explanation: The times are changing. Lenneal Henderson, director of the William Donald Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore, suggests each Baltimore area college or university is beginning to recognize its direct stake in surviving in an increasingly perilous urban environment. For one thing, the colleges' customer base of future students is being affected by the family dissolution, crime, poverty and illiteracy running wild in the inner city and now infecting more and more suburbs.

Maybe the "American establishment" is perceiving the same dangers. It's unlikely that the Shriver name alone, for example, would have prompted such figures as former defense secretary and World Bank president Robert McNamara, television commentator Bill Moyers and psychologist Robert Coles to join the Shriver Center advisory committee.

Chair of the advisory group is Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning, who says Baltimore's combination of scholarship and service should provide a "laboratory for urban renewal" and perhaps even "a model for renewal of the nation."

None of that's a guarantee of success, of course. It will take a lot of new inducements, one guesses, to get ambitious faculty — top medical physicians, for example — to focus on such basic problems as public health for poor people. Another barrier could be black inner-city communities reacting negatively if they aren't consulted on new initiatives and get the idea that phalanxes of white students are being sent in to "save" them.

Leaders of the Shriver Center, however, sound too smart to let that happen. And national benefits could be immense if even one metropolitan region began to succeed at realizing Shriver's dream of "putting together an area's best brains with its best hearts" to start extinguishing the flames ravaging the foundations of urban America's social order.

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News from the nation's counties

North

NEW JERSEY

• The HUDSON COUNTY AIDS Network of Care, a model program of coordinated efforts to fight the growing AIDS disease, has been named one of New Jersey's 10 most outstanding direct-service programs.

The National Center for Public Productivity selected the Hudson County program to receive its state-wide Exemplary State and Local Award in recognition of its "significant achievements."

Award-winning programs were rated on seven factors: direct impact, impact on the quality of life of clients, cost-effectiveness, client satisfaction, potential for replication elsewhere, innovative nature

and obstacles that had to be overcome.

The Hudson County AIDS Network of Care began in 1989 in an effort to maximize the benefits generated by limited funding. At that time, the county had the nation's third highest rate of AIDS with more than 500,000 cases.

NEW YORK

• Saying that they're determined to "block bullets with legislation," WESTCHESTER COUNTY Legislators Thomas J. Abinanti and Ernest D. Davis are waging a war on assault weapons.

They have drafted a resolution urging the county board of legislators to support federal and state laws that would ban assault weapons.

"How many deaths will it take before we know that too many people have died?" Abinanti asked. "These weapons of mass destruction have no purpose but to kill people at relatively close range. They have no place in civilized society."

"The Brady bill made it through Washington and now Governor Mario Cuomo has given a tough-on-crime State of the State message," said Davis who has introduced similar legislation on two previous occasions. "Maybe people are finally starting to appreciate how ridiculous it is not to put some controls on weapons of destruction.

We're not talking about limiting people's rights; we're talking about saving lives."

Abinanti and Davis said that if the state fails to act soon to ban assault weapons, then Westchester County ought join New York City in imposing its own local ban.

South

LOUISIANA

• The Census Bureau is moving aggressively to design a new census process that is simpler, cheaper and more accurate. To test its plans, it has selected four jurisdictions — one of those is an area in Louisiana that includes six parishes: BIENVILLE, DE SOTO, JACKSON, NATCHITOCHEs, RED RIVER and WINN.

The primary changes being tested are the increased use of sampling and estimation. "We believe these methods offer the best hope for meeting the key goals of reducing costs and undercounts," said Roberta Tortora, associate director for research on the 2000 Census.

Among other changes that will be studied are closer cooperation with the U.S. Postal Service, a more user-friendly questionnaire, and improved motivational messages and reminder notices.

Results of the census test will be used by the Census Bureau and Congress to decide how the 2000 Census will be conducted.

MARYLAND

• The BALTIMORE COUNTY Public Library (BCPL) has issued a new multipurpose library card called the WOW Card at all of its 15 libraries. The WOW Card allows users to check out materials, pay for library services and obtain access to a vast network of information.

BCPL is the first library in the country to use a card of this type. In addition to its traditional function of checking out materials, the patrons can add money value to their cards and use them to pay for copies, computer printouts, extended loan reserve fees and video service charges. As a bonus, time value is added to a card, the library increases the amount by five percent, offering the patron a savings on services.

VIRGINIA

• HENRICO COUNTY recently implemented a 90-day pilot training program to develop management skills for executive level employees. For 30 days each, three randomly picked department heads will act as deputy county manager, while their respective assistants carry out the duties of department heads.

The program, developed by County Manager Virgil R. Hazelett, is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and working relationships of agency heads. Because the department heads will act as deputy county manager, they will be responsible for decision-making processes and may be involved in bud-

get review activities.

Each acting deputy manager will write a position paper and make a presentation to the county manager detailing what he or she sees as being done well or not well in Henrico County.

Midwest

MINNESOTA

• The DAKOTA COUNTY Board of Commissioners has begun videotaping its meeting for broadcast on a local cable television station.

The broadcasts are part of the county board's ongoing efforts to increase citizen understanding of and participation in county government.

"County residents can relate to highways, libraries and parks, but most residents have little awareness of the many other services the county provides," said Board Chair Steven G. Loeding. "We believe cablecasting our meetings is one more opportunity to help citizens relate to county government."

West

NEBRASKA

Governor Ben Nelson signs an executive order Jan. 6 that seeks to alleviate the burden of state regulation in local government.

The order, issued to all state executive departments, said, "to the

See NEWS FROM, next page

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NEWS FROM from previous page

extent feasible and permitted by law," no agency will issue regulations not required by state and federal law, and agencies will make efforts to ensure that local governments can afford the costs of any regulations that are issued.

The governor's new policy grew out of an Efficiency Summit, where representatives of local government expressed concern about unfunded mandates. Nelson also said he would push for similar controls at the federal level.

SOUTH DAKOTA

The Clinton Administration has appointed **PENNINGTON COUNTY** Commissioner Cheryl Kandaras to the position of principal deputy assistant secretary of installations and environment for the U.S. Navy.

Kandaras will be responsible for inspecting naval bases, monitoring new construction, and overseeing environmental compliance and cleanup on bases. She will leave the county board this week.

More news from ...

NORTH CAROLINA — CATAWBA COUNTY is reaching out to hearing-impaired citizens through a program that provides sign language instruction to county employees during their lunch hours.

Since the fall of 1992, Joanne Chase, a legal secretary in the county attorney's office who has been signing for more than 15 years, has taught the art of signing to 22 county employees from a variety of departments.

Her courses are offered on a voluntary basis and generally last 10-15 weeks. Included in lesson plans are field trips to a church with a deaf congregation and interpreting short stories and films that illuminate cultural issues specific to the hearing-impaired.

According to Assistant County Manager Steve Wyatt, the Employee Sign Language Skills Program has improved customer relations county-wide because employees can communicate more effectively with more of the people they serve. Wyatt says he would like to expand the program to provide an advanced course for volunteer employees who wish to further develop their new skills.

For more information, call 704/465-8201.

Notices . . . notices . . . notices

CONFERENCES

■ The **Neighborhood Reinvestment Training Institute** is holding its 17th Annual Conference, Feb. 22-26 in Atlanta, Ga.

Whether your interest is in innovative loan products, construction policies and procedures or conflict resolution, the conference has something to offer you with more than 48 courses scheduled.

For more information, contact the Neighborhood Reinvestment Training Department, 1325 G St., N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005, 202/376-2642 or 1/800/438-5547, fax: 202/376-2168.

■ "Winter Cities '94," a conference for those who deal with the challenges of winter living, takes place March 5-10 in Anchorage, Alaska.

The conference, expected to draw representatives from more than 15 countries and 50 cities will host discussions on subjects ranging

from Northern trade and development to social and scientific trends in the Arctic.

For more information, contact Zarrin Caldwell, Winter Cities Anchorage '94, Inc., P.O. Box 240086, Anchorage, AK 99524-0086, 907/278-9494, fax: 907/279-9494.

■ "Homelessness: Renewing our Commitment," the National Conference on Homelessness, has been scheduled for April 21-23 in Minneapolis, Minn.

The conference will take a broad look at system-wide causes of homelessness and will offer strategies for addressing the problem through advocacy, housing, jobs, health care and grassroots approaches. The conference is designed to offer urban, suburban and rural perspectives as well as the viewpoints of homeless and formerly homeless people who are actively involved in the planning and staging of this conference.

For more information, contact the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, 122 West Franklin Ave., Room 318, Minneapolis, MN 55404, 612/870-7073 or 612/929-8358.

■ May 16-18, are the dates set for "Building a Lead-Safe Future," a conference sponsored by the **Alliance To End Childhood Lead Poisoning**, in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact The Alliance To End Childhood Lead Poisoning, 227 Massachusetts Ave., N.E., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002, 202/543-1147, fax: 202/543-4466.

PUBLICATIONS

■ The **Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion** has issued its final report to Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala. The report: "Creating a 21st Century Head Start," can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Public Affairs, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Washington, DC 20447.

■ The **U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR)** has released "Metropolitan Organization: Comparisons of the Allegheny and St. Louis Case Studies." The publication highlights key findings from the studies and suggests further research directions on metropolitan governmental organization.

ACIR has also released "High Performance Public Works: A New Federal Infrastructure Investment Strategy for America," a report co-issued with the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**. This publication provides an overview of federal strategy for high-performance public works investments, cost-effective maintenance, soundly and equitably regulated projects, and financially viable facilities.

Both publications cost \$10, and can be ordered from ACIR, Suite 450, South, 800 K St., N.W., Wash-

ington, DC 20575, 202/6753-5640, or fax: 202/653-5429.

■ "Manufactured Housing: A HUD User Resource Guide," offers housing professionals, policymakers and interested consumers an introduction to research and descriptive information on one of today's most promising — and least understood — affordable housing options.

The guide organizes and synthesizes obscure literature on manufactured housing, providing a cogent introduction to a complex subject.

The publication costs \$4, and can be ordered from HUD USER, P.O. Box 6091, Rockville, MD 20850, 1/800/245-2691, 1/800/877-8339 (TDD), or fax 301/251-5747.

■ **ETR Associates** has published "The Comprehensive School Health Challenge: Promoting Health Through Education." This two-volume compendium collects previously unpublished essays from national experts on the critical roles schools can play in shaping the health of today's young people.

The publication costs \$59.95 and is available from ETR Associates, P.O. Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830, 1/800/321-4407.

Job market

BUDGET/FISCAL OFFICER — DOUGLAS COUNTY (MINDEN), NEV.: Key employee position available in northwest Nevada. Small rural county encompasses the Carson Valley and a portion of Lake Tahoe. BA degree acctg./business/finance/public admn. or related degree w/4-6 yrs of increasingly responsible exp. in public sector budgeting. SALARY: \$42,452-53,060 plus benefits. Closing Date: Feb. 18, 1994. Must submit Douglas County Application (required), Resume, Supp Questionnaire. Call Personnel (702) 782-9860.

COUNTY ENGINEER — BELTRAMI COUNTY, MINN.: Beltrami County is accepting applications for a County Highway Engineer. Responsibilities include overall planning, direction, administration and coordination of the Highway Department activities, functions and personnel.

Minimum requirements include educa-

tion and experience substantially equivalent to a bachelor's degree in civil engineering; at least four years of progressively responsible supervisory and administrative experience in public works or engineering operations; and registration or eligibility for registration as a civil engineer in the State of Minnesota. Salary range is \$46,539-\$58,123.

The county is considering establishing a public works department. Preference will be given for public works management experience heading a department with several divisions. Salary will be reassessed if this department is established.

To apply, contact the Personnel Department, Beltrami County Courthouse, 619 Beltrami Ave., N.W., Bemidji, MN 56601 or call 218-759-4156.

A resume may be included but will not be accepted in lieu of an application form. Applications must be returned to the Personnel Department by February 11, 1994. AN

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

COUNTY MANAGER — UNION COUNTY, N.C.: Urban oriented county located adjacent to Charlotte, Mecklenburg County. Population 90,000, FY 1993-94 budget \$75 million. 675 F/T employees.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR Highlands County, Florida

Challenging, advanced professional career opportunity involving the management of recently reorganized department of 21 employees responsible for planning, building and zoning. Also responsible for coordinating with local economic and development agencies, the local Housing Authorities and oversight of housing grant programs. Applicant should have general knowledge of all the above functional areas, with a specialty in at least one, preferably planning. Must have excellent management and administrative skills, as well as superior written and oral communication skills. Bachelor's Degree in Public or Business Administration, Planning or related field is required, with at least five years of progressively more responsible professional experience. Salary: \$35,143-\$51,116, plus benefits. Submit resume to Personnel Department, 411 South Eucalyptus Street, Sebring, FL 33870 no later than February 28, 1994. EOE/VP.

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