

New BUILD program replaces TIGER grants

The Department of Transportation (DOT) announced April 20 the release of a new transportation infrastructure grant program that will replace the current TIGER Grant program. The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program will disburse \$1.5 billion for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impacts, including funding for roads, bridges, transit, rail or port support.

As with TIGER grants, county governments may apply directly or jointly with other local or state entities, with an application deadline of July 19.

DOT will evaluate BUILD applications on the following criteria: safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection, state of good repair, innovation, partnerships and additional non-federal revenue for infrastructure.

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Farm Bill expands SNAP requirements

The House Agriculture & Nutrition Act of 2018 — commonly known as the Farm Bill — passed out of the House Agriculture Committee April 18 on a party-line vote of 26-20.

The current Farm Bill expires Sept. 30. The Farm Bill helps counties make critical investments in infrastructure, nutrition, workforce and economic development in both urban and rural communities.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects the House bill would cost \$867 billion over the next 10 years — \$90 billion less than the enacted 2014 Farm Bill. The Nutrition Title in the House package accounts for over 75 percent of total spending and is projected to cost \$664 billion over the next decade. The remaining 25 percent — or \$203 billion — would be split between 11 other titles, with over \$199 billion going to the Crop Insurance, Commodity and Conservation titles alone.

Disagreement over the Sup-

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Beaches in Flagler County, Fla. have taken a beating from recent storms, including last year's Hurricane Irma. The 2018 hurricane season begins June 1. County officials discuss "lessons learned" from last year's active and deadly hurricane season, page 9.

Short-term rentals pit tourism against residents

By Mary Ann Barton
senior staff writer

When the El Dorado County, Calif. Board of Supervisors met one night a few months ago, the room was so packed it was shut down by the fire marshal. What brought so many people out? Citizens concerned about short-term vacation rentals in the popular tourist area in the South Lake Tahoe region.

With the summer vacation season just around the corner, many counties are gearing up for an influx of tourists, many of whom will "Airbnb" it in residential neighborhoods instead of staying at a local hotel, motel or inn. Counties often walk a fine line trying to keep local

businesses happy as they cater to tourists (property managers, cleaning services, grocery stores, restaurants, rental companies and ski resorts) while also keeping the peace with residents who aren't as welcoming to tourists coming and going next door.

"This is part of living in a tourist area, it's definitely a balancing act," said El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel. "You have to be careful, if you put the hammer down too hard, people are offended, they think you don't want them here and that's not the case. We want people to understand El Dorado County is open for business and that tourism is our biggest business. We want peaceful neighborhoods but we understand the tourism

market has changed."

County News took a look at how counties that attract tourists are dealing with short-term rentals while keeping the local economy humming.

Local ordinance says no hot-tubbing after 10 p.m.

Like many tourism areas around the country, El Dorado County is trying to keep both residents and tourism businesses happy. It's doing that by exploring possible ordinances that lay out the rules for home rental hosts and guests.

While the area attracts upwards of 3 million tourists per

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Farm Bill proposes grants for rural health crises

From FARM BILL page 1

plemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) provision in the Nutrition Title was front and center during the committee’s markup of the bill. The Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 would reshape SNAP, proposing a new work standard for adults aged 18–59 requiring SNAP recipients to find at least a part-time job within one month of receiving benefits beginning in 2021.

The bill would also expand state education and work programs, limit some eligibilities and eliminate broad-based categorical eligibility, through which states now can provide

benefits to those with incomes above 130 percent of the poverty line but disposable incomes below the poverty line. SNAP is an important public assistance program offering nutrition assistance to roughly 42 million low-income individuals and families across the country and is a major priority for America’s counties.

Other provisions in the bill include the elimination of all mandatory funding for rural development programs, such as water and wastewater infrastructure loans and grants. The previous Farm Bill provided \$150 million for rural development. The bill would also preempt local authority as it re-

lates to agricultural production or manufacturing standards if a similar agricultural product is produced in another state or locality that has less stringent standards.

The bill would provide flexibility for USDA to address rural health crises by offering one-year renewable grants to assist rural communities as they respond to a specific health emergency, and it would prioritize funding for these communities under several USDA programs that benefit rural health. Another reform included in the bill would exclude incarcerated individuals from the population counts used to determine whether an area is considered “rural” for the purpose of determining eligibility for USDA Rural Development program funding. This would particularly benefit counties operating regional jails.

Ultimately, the committee advanced the bill despite unanimous opposition from committee Democrats, who voiced significant concerns over the Nutrition Title and claimed that they had been excluded from the drafting process. The draft bill will be sent to the House floor, possibly as early as mid-May, where it would require 218 votes to pass. Senate Republicans’ narrow Senate majority may make it difficult to gather support for sweeping reforms to the SNAP program, setting up a potential road block to final passage.

The Senate Agriculture Committee has not yet released its own draft Farm Bill text, and an exact timeline for Senate action is unclear. If the Senate does not act soon enough, Congress may have to simply extend current Farm Bill programs this fall. **CN**

Rules for the new BUILD grants

From BUILD page 1

structure investments.

The non-federal revenue standard coincides with the administration’s plan to encourage local and state governments to put more local funding into projects. However, unlike proposed funding for many of President Trump’s infrastructure priorities, the BUILD grant program will contribute up to 80 percent of project costs for urban area projects and up to 100 percent for projects in rural communities.


While there are many similarities to the existing TIGER Grant program, there are some noteworthy differences. For example, the BUILD program strongly

encourages local governments to develop — and in some cases requires — a proven non-federal revenue stream for infrastructure projects. Also, the program does not allow new bond issuing to count towards this revenue goal, unless the applicant raises — or commits to raising — new funds to repay the bond. Funding can come from state, local and private sector investors, or other forms of cost sharing such as toll credits, sales and gas tax measures and asset recycling.

Another key difference: the funds may be used by rural areas for broadband deployment.

For additional explanation of the criteria, please see <https://bit.ly/2HtYYXF> **CN**

SNAP/STATS



Dodger Stadium

2017 BEST BASEBALL CITIES

Overall Rank (1=Best)	City
1.	New York
2.	St. Louis, Mo.
3.	Los Angeles
4.	San Francisco
5.	Arlington, Texas

Source: Wallet Hub

TIGER V. BUILD GRANTS: HOW CRITERIA STACK UP	
TIGER GRANT PROGRAM	NEW BUILD GRANT PROGRAM
Merit criteria	Merit criteria
Primary criteria	Safety
Safety	State of Good Repair
State of Good Repair	Economic Competitiveness
Economic Competitiveness	Environmental Protection
Environmental Sustainability	Quality of Life
Quality of Life	Innovation
Secondary criteria	Partnership
Innovation	Non-federal Revenue for Transportation
Partnership	Infrastructure Investment
Other criteria	Other criteria
Demonstrated Project Readiness	Demonstrated Project Readiness
Project Costs and Benefits	Project Costs and Benefits
Cost Sharing or Matching	
Additional considerations	Additional considerations
Geographic diversity among recipients	Geographic diversity among recipients

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EAS, airplane noise, drones addressed in FAA bill

By Kevan Stone

associate legislative director

and Sofia Ferber

legislative assistant

The proposed Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2018, introduced by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leaders April 13, would reauthorize the FAA for another five years and addresses several issues important to counties such as the Essential Air Service (EAS) program, unmanned aerial systems (UAS) — AKA drones — the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and noise mitigation measures.

The agency is currently operating on a short-term authorization through Sept. 30.

The Essential Air Service (EAS) program, a long-standing NACo priority, assists airlines in serving rural counties by connecting them with larger transportation hubs.

The EAS program would receive \$153 million for FY2018 and up to \$168 million in the final year (FY2023) of authorization under the new bill.

In addition, the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) would be funded at \$153 million for FY2018 and up to \$168 million in FY2023.

Participation in SCASDP is limited to communities where the airport is not larger than a primary small hub, the service is insufficient and the air fares to the community are unreasonably high.

Another NACo priority, the Airport Improvement Grant



Program (AIP), provides federal grants to airports for airport development and planning. AIP funding can support a range of airports, including small general aviation airports.

AIP provides funds for capital projects without the financial burden of debt financing, although airports are required to provide a local match of between 5 percent and 25 percent, depending on the airport size and eligible costs.

The FAA bill would provide stable funding for AIP of \$3.35 billion for airport funding from FY2018 through FY2023.

Also included in the bill is language acknowledging NACo's call for greater local

government involvement in the development and implementation of policy regarding unmanned aerial systems within their boundaries.

NACo has been at the forefront of the FAA Drone Advisory Committee, the federal advisory board consulting on drone policy, and through these efforts has made a compelling case for local governments to play a role in the regulatory process. It directs the Department of Transportation to study local government's potential role.

This inclusion into the FAA Reauthorization bill further cements counties' important role. Noise mitigation, another

key priority, is also addressed in the FAA Reauthorization Act. The bill would require the FAA to study the potential health impacts of overflight noise and consider the feasibility of amending current departure procedures for noise sensitive communities.

Counties are sometimes faced with flightpath noise disturbances, and this federal investment would make resources available to address this issue. Finally, the bill would make several amendments to the contract tower program, which gives private firms the ability to operate air traffic control towers and accounts for around half of

the towers owned and operated by FAA. The new bill would modify the current calculation of contract towers' cost-benefit ratios and subsequent payments by requiring a recalculation of the annual cost-benefit ratio of towers in part supported by airports or local governments.

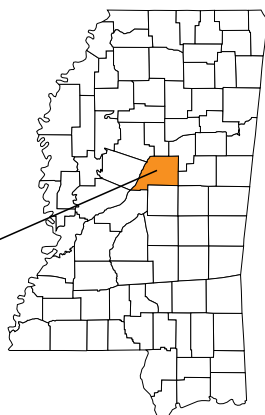
Other provisions in the bill address passenger rights, including banning airlines from removing passengers once they have boarded the airplane, to new requirements for facilities allowing mothers to nurse at various sized airports.

Counties own 34 percent of the nation's publicly owned airports. **CN**

New NACo ★
Member

GET TO
KNOW...

Attala County,
Miss.



**Welcome,
Attala County, Miss.**

Attala County was founded in 1833 and is named for Atala, a fictional Native American heroine from a novel written by Francois-Rene de Chateaubriand.

The county is the birthplace of several famous people including; Myrtis Methvin, the

second woman mayor in Louisiana; **James Meredith**, a well-known Civil Rights activist in the mid-'60s, who was the first black student to integrate The University of Mississippi and **Oprah!**

Attala County is part of the Natchez Trace Parkway, a scenic road that follows the Old Natchez Trace historical trail.



New York tests SALT deduction cap workaround

By **Charlie Ban**
senior staff writer

New York and New Jersey are still in the process of working out a way around the state and local tax (SALT) deduction limits included in the 2017 tax reform bill, while legislation to circumvent the cap has stalled in California.

New York is the furthest ahead, having passed its plan as part of the state budget that was signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D). The plan creates charitable funds to which property owners would pay their property taxes, without the \$10,000 cap on the SALT deduction. Taxpayers could then receive federal tax deductions and state tax credits from their charitable contributions.

Cuomo’s plan includes an option that would convert the state income tax to a payroll tax. Steve Acquario, executive director of the New York State Association of Counties, said the counties were waiting for guidance from both the state and federal government as to how the trusts would be implemented.

“The \$1 million question is whether the Internal Revenue Service will accept the deduction through the use of the locally-enacted charitable trusts,” he said. “The state’s congressional delegation has formally asked the IRS for an opinion and guidance.”

Shortly after Cuomo signed the budget, Jared Walczak from the Tax Foundation suggested that the “legally suspect workaround” could end up increasing tax payments and the likelihood of an audit.

“The IRS is highly unlikely to go along with this charade, as these so-called contributions bear none of the hallmarks of genuine charity,” he wrote. “New York could be setting its residents up for a fall. They could face audits; they might be exposed to tax penalties; and their tax liability could actually go up.”

He said the payroll tax might

be more likely to pass legal muster but would benefit fewer taxpayers, given the variety of contracts and wage laws to deal with.

Cuomo has also announced that New York, New Jersey and

Connecticut will sue the federal government, claiming the SALT deduction cap violates the Equal Protection Clause and the 10th Amendment. Walczak wrote that a judge was unlikely to rule that the cap vi-

olates either.

Meanwhile, the New Jersey Legislature has passed a bill that creates a similar system of charitable trusts, and it awaits the signature of Gov. Phil Murphy (D), who has championed

the bill. But John Donnadio, executive director of the New Jersey Association of Counties, is not holding his breath on the measure’s passing muster with

See *SALT* page 11

Strong start for babies and toddlers moves forward

Eighteen counties are among 30 communities targeted by leading national organizations to focus on child development from birth to age 3. Research shows investments in the first three years of life, when a child’s brain develops faster than at any other time period, are most critical in helping more children become more confident, empathetic, contributing members of their communities.

The National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, Center for the Study of Social Policy, National Institute for Children’s Health Quality and StriveTogether each selected community partners that are demonstrating a commitment to ensuring children have a strong start in life.

The partnership is funded by the Pritzker Children’s Initiative, a project of the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation. The Sorenson Impact Center, housed at the University of Utah’s David Eccles School of Business, is working with PCI and the partner organizations to manage the initiative.

“This announcement marks an unprecedented moment in our nation’s commitment to our youngest learners. For the first time, communities across the country will work together to take action to increase high-quality services for children from birth to age 3 toward a common goal of kindergarten readiness,” said Janet Froetscher, president of the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation.

“The communities will support a strong start for babies and toddlers through local solutions: giving children a healthy start at birth, strengthening support for families with infants and tod-

dlers and expanding high-quality care and learning environments.”

The selected communities will launch the initiative in partnership with national organizations supporting the effort. Partner organizations will equip communities with tools to strengthen early childhood systems and share best practices with other cities, counties and states. In turn, communities will share resources that will drive policies and make the case for public and private investment in core services for infants and toddlers.

The needs of infants and toddlers cannot all be addressed with a one-size-fits-all approach. As part of this joint initiative, local leaders will pursue a variety of interlocking strategies in the child care, health, early childhood education and human services domains that promote and work toward the well-being of young children. These integrated approaches will build on promising existing community-driven efforts and work to address new


ABOUT THE PRITZKER CHILDREN’S INITIATIVE

For more than 15 years, the Pritzker Children’s Initiative (PCI) has been committed to a single, attainable goal: that all of our nation’s at-risk children will have access to high-quality early childhood development resources, increasing their likelihood of success in school and life. With a focus on the importance of ages birth to 3, PCI supports initiatives that unlock public and private investments in early childhood development, increase the supply and reach of evidence-based interventions and accelerate innovation and knowledge sharing.

challenges as they aim to provide parents with unique tools, information and guidance at a time when many feel most overwhelmed.

“We are grateful and proud to partner with the Pritzker Chil-

dren’s Initiative in our efforts to improve kindergarten readiness. We applaud the pioneering work of the counties and cities named in today’s announcement. County leaders leave no stone unturned in pursuit of our goal to build healthy, vibrant, safe communities for our residents – and the best path to success starts early. With the Pritzker Children’s Initiative, we will strengthen early childhood systems and help to build brighter futures for kids today,” said Matt Chase, NACo executive director.

Research shows that investments in children and their families in the earliest years help communities create better education, health, social and economic outcomes that increase revenue and reduce the need for costly, less effective interventions later in life. With an estimated 3 million of the nation’s youngest children at risk of reaching kindergarten not ready to learn, this initiative seeks a dramatic investment in improving kindergarten readiness. 

PRITZKER CHILDREN’S INITIATIVE SELECTIONS		
National Association of Counties Boone County, Missouri Champaign County, Illinois Dauphin County, Pennsylvania Pierce County, Washington Ramsey County, Minnesota Washington County, Virginia Watauga County, North Carolina Tarrant County, Texas	Center for the Study of Social Policy Boston, Massachusetts Denver, Colorado Guilford County, North Carolina Los Angeles County, California Kent County, Michigan Multnomah County, Oregon Orange County, California Onondaga County, New York Ventura County, California Volusia and Flagler counties, Florida	National Institute for Children’s Health Quality (NICHQ) and StriveTogether Albuquerque, New Mexico Memphis, Tennessee Norwalk, Connecticut Salt Lake City, Utah Spartanburg County, South Carolina Tucson, Arizona
National League of Cities Austin, Texas Baltimore, Maryland Chattanooga, Tennessee Cleveland, Ohio Denver, Colorado Minneapolis, Minnesota		

Counties 'riding out' bump in tariffs

By **Charlie Ban**
senior staff writer

County officials in regions supporting steel production are encouraged by recent tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, but others are concerned about the consequences of upsetting the international trade balance, both globally and at home.

President Trump declared that the 25 percent tax on imported steel and 10 percent tax on aluminum would put the industries on an even playing field with international competition, which has prompted talk of a trade war with China. But in northern Minnesota's Iron Range, where most domestic ore is mined, St. Louis County Commissioner Tom Rukavina was pleased with the tariffs.

"For years, I've said that we have to ensure we have a viable steel industry in the United States, whether it's for bridges and buildings or for machinery or ships and tanks," he said. "In that regard, what President Trump has done is something that should have been looked at a long time ago."

Rukavina said protectionism has already paid off for St. Louis County, crediting the Obama administration's 2016 duty on steel imports, aimed at punishing foreign producers from selling steel below cost, with bringing a lot of St. Louis County's workforce back to the mines.

"That's actually what put people back to work around here," he said.

Lake County, Ind., with two U.S. Steel mills in its borders, should benefit, too as well as the five operating integrated steel mills in northwest Indiana. But the tariffs are only a leg up for the county.

"We are aware of the challenges that the steel industry faces due to the onslaught of these steel imports, more importantly, these things are going to provide an even playing

field for the steel industry," said Karen Lauerman, president and CEO of the Lake County Economic Alliance.

While the tariffs could provide some temporary support for the steel industry, Lauerman says that's more of a reason than ever to move beyond just steel.

"Even without international trade cutting in, the steel industry is modernizing and becoming more advanced, it's always evolving and changing," she said. "What we can do as a county is build on the foundation of the steel industry and attract new technology and manufacturing jobs and opportunities."

In Madison County, Ill., U.S. Steel had announced plans to bring its Granite City mill online after idling it two years prior. County Board Chairman Kurt Prentzler said the tariff bolstered the move and gave residents a sense of security, even though the news about the mill predated the tariff.

"After all of our history of steelmaking in the United States, I think it's fair to have an American steel industry," he said, acknowledging the tariff was a signal from the federal government that domestic steel production was important. He stressed that production of materials necessary for domestic energy production, particularly oil and gas drilling, were matters of national security and central to American self-reliance.

While steel producing counties are riding high, that sentiment is not universal, particularly for industries that use the steel, or regions that manufacture products or grow crops that could be targeted in a trade war.

Spartanburg County, S.C. Councilman David Britt worries that protectionism will upset the international market that has integrated itself into counties around the country. Britt chairs the county's Economic Development Committee and is a member of the

Economic Futures Group.

He points to 125 international companies that have taken root in Spartanburg County over the last 30 years, including BMW's first production facility outside of Germany, which has fueled a lot of the county's economic growth.

"This is going to put a foot on the throat of economic development, which impacts the citizens of Spartanburg County, the state and this country," he said.

"My biggest concern is that somebody is not telling the president what he needs to hear: This steel industry that he is concerned about, you're talking 100,000 employees,"

"Even without international trade cutting in, the steel industry is modernizing and becoming more advanced, it's always evolving and changing."

he said. "In upstate (South Carolina) alone, you're talking that many employees in different industries. It goes up to the millions, when you look at the southeast, that will be affected by this."

The BMW plant, which opened in 1994, now produces the most BMW car engines in the world. The company contracts out the work on all the other auto parts and the tariffs increase costs for every manufacturer that uses foreign steel and aluminum.

And it might not stop there. The price increases for foreign steel can give domestic producers license to raise prices.

"American steel prices are jacking their prices up to meet almost what is happening with foreign tariffs," Britt said.

Britt works for a national corporation that produces prefabricated concrete for construction, and he's seeing the consequences of the tariffs manifested there.

"It's having a tremendous effect on our customers and our projects," he said. "Costs are going up at every stage of the game."

In short, he is worried that the benefits of taking action to

protect one industry will have a net loss for U.S. producers and their county economies, particularly if they participate in international trade.

"I am greatly concerned about the jobs and opportunities," he said. "You got to look at the reciprocal effect on the industries that are here."

Reciprocal effects could be felt in commodities markets if other counties impose their own tariffs on U.S. exports.

In Cherokee County, Iowa, the productivity of agricultural land directly affects its valuation, but Supervisor Dennis Bush said the county board is not panicking about drops in demand for corn or soybeans resulting from a retaliatory tariff.

"It's something we keep on the backburner, it's pretty early in the game," he said. "They threatened tariffs but there's nothing set in stone yet."

"But any drop in the price of either corn or soybeans affects the valuations of the land in subsequent years, so it would directly affect county government in that we wouldn't have the same tax base."

"We're just riding this out and watching it unfold." **CN**



This BMW plant in Spartanburg County, S.C. is BMW's largest, producing 450,000 vehicles per year.

Regulating rentals: keeping both tourist industry, residents happy

From RENTALS page 1

year, keeping the local economy going, residents in the region are pushing back and have banded together to form the Tahoe Neighborhoods Group to stem what they see as a trend that is hurting their sense of community.

The county is listening to residents and considering possible ordinances including those in South Lake Tahoe which is cracking down, handing out \$1,000 tickets to visitors who don't park in the garage, driveway or immediately in front of the property (in some cases, it's a \$2,000 fine — one ticket for the visitor and another ticket to the homeowner, who often passes it along to the visitor). Other infractions for visitors include those related to noise, trash, too many visitors or hot-tubbing after 10 p.m.

Infractions could add up to even more severe penalties. Vacation home owners who receive three upheld violations within 24 months lose their short-term rental permit — permanently.

On the other side of the coin, the tourism industry, led by the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, is contemplating backing a competing measure to protect what they call "our economy." They, too, have banded together, forming a group called Sustainable Community Alliance.

Clark County, Nev.

Clark County, Nev. commissioners voted in September to pursue a lawsuit against a company that continued to rent out a home even after receiving four cease-and-desist letters. County Code Enforcement Chief Jim Andersen hopes to introduce a new ordinance allowing his officers to issue citations and fines without first going to court. Currently the county is imposing liens on homes of offenders.

The officers investigate short-term rental complaints every weekend.

In Arlington County, Va., the county is looking to a third-party



vendor to track down hosts who haven't bothered to register with the county since it enacted a new ordinance regulating short-term rentals, said Benjamin Hampton, a spokesman in the county manager's office. Out of 1,600 short-term rentals found online, only 140 have actually registered with the county. The county is now sending out letters to let hosts know they need to register, he said.

Some neighborhoods are taking enforcement into their own hands. In San Diego County, Calif., the second most popular area for Airbnb guests in California, home owner associations are hiring private investigators to catch homeowners who are violating HOA bylaws that prohibit turning units into short-term vacation rentals.

Neighborhoods can opt out of short-term rentals, for a price, in Sonoma County, Calif. The county itself set aside "exclusion zones" for certain neighborhoods in 2016. Since then, other neighborhoods have applied to prevent short-term rentals on their streets too. In March, the county approved the first "X-zone" permit for about a dozen applicants who live along a three-mile road who had started the process two years ago. The group had to pay for a zone change (\$5,582) plus pay for Permit Sonoma staff time at \$140 an hour for a grand total of close to \$11,000. County officials are looking into how to make the process less ex-

pensive.

In Davidson County, Tenn., in the Nashville area, no more than 3 percent of the single-family and two-family units within each census tract are permitted as non-owner-occupied short-term rental use. Anyone who wants to see if there is availability can plug an address into an online map. In Davidson County, owners must obtain an operating permit, must pay hotel occupancy taxes and sales tax. They must also obtain a business tax license if they are grossing more than \$10,000 per year.

Collecting taxes on short-term rentals

Across the country, some counties are making sure that anyone renting their home for short-term stays are paying a hotel or "bed" tax.

Lancaster County, Pa. refused to sign an agreement with Airbnb that would have allowed hosts to skip the registration process, saying that it would hinder the ability of officials to collect the county's 3.9 percent hotel room rental tax and 1.1 percent hotel excise tax.

The hotel industry is also getting into home rentals and is calling on counties to reject "voluntary" collection agreements for sales and bed taxes, arguing that a mandatory agreement would level the playing field.

Floyd County, Ga., collected more than \$100,000 in lodging taxes last year but is contracting with a company to go after

hosts who aren't paying their fair share. "There are a lot that show up online and aren't actually registered with the county and aren't paying the tax, which is required by law," said Floyd County Commissioner Rhonda Wallace. "We aren't trying to get anyone in trouble, we just want everybody to be aware of what the law requires you to do if you are allowing people to stay in your home and you are charging, you should be paying that tax. That's why we got that consultant; they can talk with them about it."

The third-party company hired by the county looks at property records and online activity to determine if all taxes are being paid. If someone has not been collecting and submitting taxes, the company will educate them about the requirements.

Tourism is a key driver for Floyd County, especially Forum River Center, which is used for conventions and concerts, and Rome Tennis Center which features 60 tennis courts at Berry College, Wallace said. The lodging taxes are used for tourism activities in the county including maintenance and operation of the tennis center.

In Florida, Airbnb collects and remits taxes in 40 counties. Not every county is quick to sign on with Airbnb. In January, Collier County, Fla. sued the online rental retailer seeking a court order for the company to pay current and past bed taxes. The county is hoping to receive a list

of hosts, but Airbnb has said it doesn't share that information, the *Naples Daily News* reported. Many counties create a host registry system.

Short-term rental hosts in Florida earned \$450 million in 2017. Miami-Dade, Broward and Osceola were tops at \$135 million; \$46 million and \$40 million.

Fairfax County, Va.

Virginia passed a law last year that allows localities to regulate short-term rentals. Just outside of Washington, D.C. Fairfax County is a popular spot for short-term rentals even though they are not technically legal yet.

"Before the General Assembly gave us that authority, we really only were managing these through our building codes and zoning ordinances," said Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay. "What we found through public hearings is that people want these [short-term rentals]. This isn't an attempt to outlaw them at all. We want to regulate them."

Last year, county supervisors directed the county to create a working group made up of Planning and Zoning, Tax Administration and Code Compliance and the Office of the County Attorney to draft new regulations and establish a registry.

"We're definitely wanting to allow these but we want to know where they are, it makes code enforcement or when someone calls in a complaint, it makes it a whole lot easier," McKay said.

HOA rules "always supersede" county ordinances, McKay said. A problem might come about if an HOA can't meet requirements to change their bylaws.

Fairfax County's planning commission will hold a hearing in May and a Board of Supervisors hearing is set for June. The hearings follow four community center meetings as well as an online survey that has received more than 5,000 responses.

The county could collect nearly \$500,000 in additional transient-occupancy tax revenue as well as another \$150,000 from permit fees. **CN**

Miami-Dade County's Ruvin, 80, still an idealist, still going strong

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

Even with 50 years of public service on his resume, Harvey Ruvin, former NACo president, prefers to look ahead. That's where the challenge is.

And it's why he isn't thinking of slowing down anytime soon, at 80 and with 46 years of service to Miami-Dade County under his belt, the last 26 as the county's clerk of courts.

Before that, he spent 20 years on the County Commission and served as NACo president in 1987 and 1988. He's in charge of a 900-person staff with eight offices handling a wide range of record-keeping responsibilities for a county of nearly 2.5 million.

"The greatest challenge is always moving ahead," he said, a sentiment that applies to technology and the environment, both of which have been strong themes throughout his career.

An environmental platform

drove his 1972 campaign for the Miami-Dade County Commission — the restoration of 10 miles of eroded beaches. In addition to the economic benefits that come from a vibrant oceanfront, the 12-foot sand dunes create a barrier to a rising Atlantic Ocean.

"With South Florida becoming Ground Zero for sea level rise, the dunes act as a protector on the eastern side," he said. "We'll have to do a lot more, though."

After five terms on the County Commission, Ruvin's campaign for clerk of courts took a similar look toward the future, namely digitizing all of the office's records and making computers the standard practice. His goal was to take the clerk's office paperless — court records, real estate records, commission records. He faced resistance from staff members, entrenched in the school of thought that paper was the only medium that courts should be based on.

"I understood that, because



Harvey Ruvin presents a proclamation to Robert Levy, the Claude Pepper Memorial Award Recipient for Advocacy. Photo courtesy of United HomeCare

optical scanning technology was still new, but it was possible," he said. "We just had to demonstrate that it was more efficient and served the public better. We wanted to serve people online, not in line."

The weather made that point for him. For a century, the coun-

ty stored its records in the basement, and when heavy rains flooded the courthouse a few months into Ruvin's tenure and soaked two shelves' worth of paper records, the crisis became an impetus for change. Within a few years, the fourth largest judicial circuit in the country was digital.

Despite all the change he has seen and started in his career, Ruvin is relieved to still see in himself the candidate for North Bay Village mayor, who campaigned for Eugene McCarthy at the 1968 Democratic National Conven-

See RUVIN page 11

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Cybersecurity symposium will go beyond passwords and hacks

By Dr. Alan R. Shark

In five successive years of surveying technology managers' biggest challenges, the topic of cybersecurity has consistently been rated as their number one concern.

Those of us who work in the technology management field know that cybersecurity has many subcategories — each having their own set of threats and remedies. So, digging beneath the overall category of cybersecurity we find no less than nine topics.

To help frame the issues we have added a list of questions aimed at helping the reader better understand what is behind each topic, they are:

1. Why Cybersecurity Must be the Number 1 Concern for County Government. So what Must Counties Do?

- Getting senior management on board, how and why.

- Assessing your county's risk factor, how does this work?
- Recruiting and Retaining the "right" people.

2. Cyber Awareness Programs: More than a Once a Year Event

- What does a good program look like?
- What are the elements of an effective program?
- How can you develop a program on a small budget?
- Where can you turn for outside help?

3. Ransomware: To Pay or Not to Pay? (Hint: Don't!)

- How can you prevent Ransomware in the first place?
- What are the best steps in avoiding having to pay?
- What risks do we assume if we pay?

4. Midterm Elections — How Can We Better Protect the Process?

- What resources are available to counties to help mitigate election risk?
- What are the most commonly found weaknesses?
- Are their grants we can take advantage of to help our county out?

5. Cyber Insurance: Risks and Rewards

- Why cyber insurance may be the county's best friend.
- What should cyber insurance cover?
- What should you look for when shopping for a policy?
- Are state-sponsored plans worth looking at?

6. Mobile Device Management and Encryption

- Examples of policies that work.
- How do we balance the needs for mobility and security?

7. Trusted Identities in Cyberspace: Why This is Critical?

- Why are trusted identities policies and procedures vital to a digital agenda?
- When will trusted identity policies and services become a reality?
- How might trusted identities change current business practices?

8. Cryptocurrencies and Blockchain — Risks and Rewards

- What are the differences between Blockchain and Cryptocurrencies?
- Should local governments be accepting Cryptocurrencies?
- How can Blockchain technology provide far greater security?
- How is Blockchain being used today?

9. Cloud Security — Promises Kept?


- What do you need to know about cloud contract security?
- Can you actually change the

terms of services as outlines in a contract?


- Does the federal government's FedRamp impact county government?
- What recourse do you have in case there is a breach in the Cloud?
- What is a cloud vendor really responsible for?

To help county leaders and technology managers better navigate cybersecurity, PTI along with NACo is holding a special one-day "National Symposium on Cybersecurity for Local Government" May 23 at NACo's first floor conference center.

All NACo participants receive a \$100 discount on their registration. Seating is limited.

To learn more and to register, go to <https://bit.ly/2JwSBDq>. 

Dr. Alan R. Shark is the executive director of the Public Technology Institute and serves as senior technology leadership advisor to NACo.



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 Smarter Counties Summit: Technology Driving Innovation
 Opioid Documentary Screening
 Crisis Communication Strategies for County Officials
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 Affordable Housing Forum
 Essential Practices in Technology Leadership
 Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health
 Emerging Strategies in Addressing Poverty
 Land-Use Planning for Large-Scale Solar Development

Automated Vehicle Employment & Deployment
 A How-To Discussion on Financing Main Street Redevelopment Projects
 Enhancing County Engagement in Early Childhood Development
 The Opioid Crisis: Supporting County Medical Examiners' Offices
 2020 Census: What Counties Need to Do Now to Prepare

Full schedule available online at
www.NACo.org/Annual



Scientists predict 3-5 'major hurricanes' for season that begins June 1



Water crashes over a bridge during Hurricane Harvey in Galveston County (Kemah), Texas. The storm caused \$125 billion in damage, tying with Hurricane Katrina.

By Mary Ann Barton
senior staff writer

As counties in Florida and Texas and other states continue to recover from last year's devastating hurricanes, scientists are predicting an active 2018 hurricane season with three to five "major hurricanes," according to scientists at North Carolina State University and at Colorado State University, who base their predictions on weather patterns and sea surface temperatures.

The hurricane season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30 but historically peaks in late August and early September.

Monroe County, Fla., home to the Keys, suffered 17 fatalities and saw 4,000 homes destroyed Sept. 10 after Category 4 Hurricane Irma hit. The area lost power, water, sewer, cell and internet service.

Monroe County Commissioner George Neugent, mayor of the county at the time, stayed behind when the storm hit. "I just felt like I couldn't leave the ship," he said. "I have a friend who has a bunker of a house, it's very elevated. We wanted as many people as we could to

get out of the Keys. This storm had potential to be a killer." The county began evacuations four days before the storm hit.

In an assessment of where they could do better, the county is taking a second look at:

- **The re-entry process:** "It had been 12 years since our last evacuation," Neugent said. "Four thousand homes were destroyed and people were trying to come back with nowhere to stay." The county is going to re-issue reentry car decals that identify drivers as county residents and also plans to create a new "Group 1" category to allow some residents early entry if they work for a needed service such as a grocery store, restaurant or trash hauler to get spoiled food removed from grocery stores.

- **Communication capability:** "That was the biggest challenge we had to deal with after the storm," Neugent said — cell phone service, computers and even satellite phones were all out. "Amazingly there were a few land lines with the old phone service," he said. "And when I say few, I think we had about three throughout the whole county." The

county is considering adding a 1,000-foot Category 5 hurricane-proof cell tower.

- **Debris removal:** More than

2.3 million cubic yards of debris was collected after the hurricane. County crews also collected debris from private

lands so it could be collected by debris contractors for FEMA

See HURRICANE page 10

FLORIDA COUNTIES MAY HAVE TO GO TO COURT TO PROVE BEACHES ARE PUBLIC

Some county officials in Florida are scrambling to create a "customary use" ordinance before July 1 that could preserve public access to privately-owned beach property and at the same time, possibly avoid losing some federal funding for disaster mitigation.

A new state law, HB 631, that goes into effect July 1 puts more of a burden on local governments to defend public access to sections of beaches adjoining private property. Some say the new law could also jeopardize funding from FEMA to help "shore up" beaches to better withstand hurricanes.

"It does pre-empt new ordinances," said Susan Harbin Alford, deputy director of Public Policy at the Florida Association of Counties. "However, it creates a judicial process where you can petition a court,

notifying all the property owners, presenting the evidence, and then you can get a judicial affirmation about customary use. In our view yes, it's pre-empting our ability to pass an ordinance; however, it at least provides a pathway [to new ordinances]."

St. Johns and Volusia counties already have grandfathered ordinances barring the fencing off of beach property.

Walton County will take a hit when the new law is enacted July 1; its customary use ordinance, enacted in 2016, will be null and void thanks to the new state law.

The county was already sued by private property owners because of its customary use ordinance which allowed visitors to walk, sunbathe and picnic on private beaches. A federal judge ruled that while county officials had the authority to

pass the ordinance, property owners also had the right to challenge the ordinance.

Now, with the new state law passed, counties will get one chance to defend a customary use ordinance in court. If a judge agrees, the ordinance can be passed and the beach can be made public.

Thomas Ruppert, coastal planning specialist with the Florida Sea Grant College Program, told WMNF-FM that "what the law says is, 'no, local governments, you can no longer pass ordinances ... only courts can make that decision.'"

In Flagler County, County Attorney Al Hadeed is drafting a new ordinance to preserve customary use and plans to hold hearings about it in May. Nassau, Indian River, Collier and Pinellas counties, among others, are considering ordinances similar to Flagler's before July 1.

Counties assess what went right, wrong during 2017 hurricane season

From HURRICANE page 9

reimbursement. “This was a perfect storm,” Neugent said. “Hurricane Harvey had just hit Texas and then Irma hit us and then Maria hit Puerto Rico. It was a trifecta of catastrophes that put tremendous demand on all of our resources.” Debris haulers were tied up in Houston and others were tied up elsewhere in Florida due to the hurricane’s path, he said. “The debris we could usually get out in a month went on for four months.”

What went right

- The county is crediting its strong building codes for helping save many homes from Hurricane Irma’s devastating 130 mph and higher winds.
- After the storm, the county created its own austerity program including a hiring freeze to be prepared for lost revenue caused by the storm.
- The county had prepared ahead by coordinating statewide monthly conference calls starting in January 2017 to talk through challenges they might face if hit by a Category 4 storm.
- The public information of-

fice created a *keysrecovery.org* website to keep residents apprised of recovery efforts.

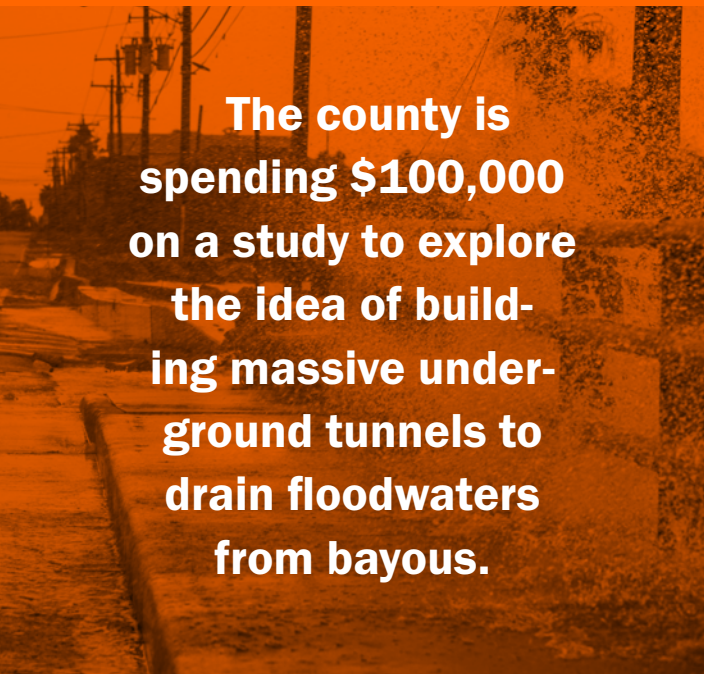
- The county helped coordinate the evacuation of people with special needs, brought in military aircraft to transport hospital patients to other medical facilities and arranged for extra transportation to take people to shelters on the mainland. It also worked to keep fuel trucks coming to the Keys and opened and stocked shelters for those who did not leave.

Harris County, Texas

Category 4 Hurricane Harvey made landfall Aug. 15 at Nueces County, Texas packing 130 mph winds, ultimately dumping more than 50 inches of rain in some parts of the region and causing an excess of \$125 billion in damage across the state, according to the National Hurricane Center.

In all, 88 people lost their lives in Texas either directly or indirectly due to the storm, according to the Department of State Health Services.

Nearly 30 percent of Harris County was flooded and the county needed \$44 million to



pay for debris removal.

Eight months later, Harris County commissioners are in discussions about a potential \$1 billion to \$2 billion flood control bond referendum to match funds available through FEMA’s Hurricane Harvey Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

“Members of Harris County Commissioners Court will meet May 1, at which point they will probably reveal a date and possibly an amount for a local flood control bond refer-

endum,” said Joe Stinebaker, director of communications for Harris County Judge Ed Emmett.

Other items on the county’s checklist:

The county is spending \$100,000 on a study to explore the idea of building massive underground tunnels to drain floodwaters from bayous. “It’s still a very, very long shot as to whether the project makes sense for Harris County,” Stinebaker said.

A new reservoir is also under discussion, at a cost of \$500 million. “No new reservoir is possible without federal or state financing,” Stinebaker said.

“Harris County taxpayers cannot be expected to bear the full burden of a project that benefits residents of several counties and may not even be built in Harris County,” he said.

“The judge has said the logical step is for the state to free up about \$500 million (the estimated cost) of its \$10 billion Rainy Day Fund to build a third reservoir that would protect a significant number of its residents in southeast Texas.”

Billboard campaign

The county is also planning a campaign to put up two dozen billboards to encourage residents to purchase flood insurance.

The county’s Flood Control District estimated that more than 80 percent of the county’s 1.4 million buildings lacked flood insurance when Hurricane Harvey hit.

The Commissioners Court recently voted to seek \$75,000 in federal grant funds for billboards.

The Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) has already started preliminary work in preparation for re-mapping the floodplains of Harris County.

The last county-wide re-mapping effort was completed in 2007 in response to Tropical Storm Allison. HCFCD works with FEMA as a local sponsor to perform much of the work to remap the floodplains, which are ultimately FEMA products.

Counties recovering from disasters are expected to receive some funding help soon from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, through its Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program. HUD awarded \$28 billion April 10 for mitigation projects stemming from disasters that occurred between 2015–2017. **CN**

WORD SEARCH

CUSTER COUNTY, Mont.
Created By: Mary Ann Barton

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T	E	R	Y	E	D	C	X	V	O	X	K	T	V	G	C	T	C	A	L

COURTHOUSE: The Custer County Courthouse was built in 1882; a new courthouse was built in 1949.

COWBOY: You can catch some cowboy poetry at the county’s Range Riders Museum.

CUSTER: The county was named for Gen. George Custer, a Civil War officer, better known for the Battle of the Little Bighorn, also known as “Custer’s Last Stand.”

FARMS: There are about 400 farms in the county, according to the USDA; the average size is more than 5,000 acres.

HORSE: One of the largest annual events in the county seat is the Miles City Bucking Horse Sale.

HUFFMAN: Photographer L.A. Huffman chronicled the West for five decades, starting with a unpaid position at Fort Keogh in the county.

KEOGH: Fort Keogh is a former U.S. Army post established in 1876, in the wake of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. It was named for Captain Myles Keogh who was killed in the battle. Today the post is a USDA research station.

MILES: The county seat is Miles City.

OLIVE: The Olive Hotel is a National Registered historic place. The Renaissance Revival-style building was built in 1898 and enlarged in 1908.

PENNSYLVANIA: The county was once larger than Pennsylvania; bits and pieces of it were carved up to create parts of eight other counties.

PIROGUE: Pirogue Island State Park offers 2.8 miles of hiking trails. You may spot a bald eagle at the park.

POST: The Miles City Main Post Office was built in 1916 by Hiram Lloyd Co. and designed by the U.S. Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth.

YELLOWSTONE: Yellowstone River runs through the county.

WATERWORKS: The WaterWorks Art Museum is a cultural leader in southeastern Montana.

WINSTON: Pianist George Winston grew up in the county.

BRIGHT IDEAS | ONONDAGA COUNTY, N.Y.,

New York county creates oasis of healthy options in 'food desert'

PROBLEM:

Parts of a New York county were a "food desert" for many residents, especially students stopping at corner stores for snacks.

SOLUTION:

The county health department worked with store managers to get fresh foods into corner stores.



By Mary Ann Barton
senior staff writer

Students heading to school in Onondaga County, N.Y., in the Syracuse area, often stop at corner stores for a snack before and after the bell rings. The corner stores are accessible to neighborhood families who don't drive and who do some of their food shopping there. In the past, most of their options were candy bars, chips and other snacks.

It's a problem you'll find in 55 percent of all ZIP codes in the country with a median income below \$25,000. About 23.5 million people live in food deserts, according to *dosomething.org*. The key characteristic of food deserts? An absence of grocery stores or farmers' markets stocked with fresh produce and whole foods.

But at Hawley Market, located near an elementary school in Onondaga County, students can now choose some healthy options including apples, bananas, mango and fresh fruit salads.

"Because so many students go to corner stores before and after school — and also their families frequent corner stores because of easy access — we wanted to make sure there were healthy products," said Kathy Mogle, a program coordinator for the county health department.

Three years ago, the county wrote letters to area corner stores to gauge their interest in

working with the county to help sell healthy food options. The county also mapped the stores that were closest to area schools.

"We literally reached out and hit the pavement and went to the corner stores and did an assessment," Mogle said.

The questions they asked included "What does the current environment look like?" "What do they sell?" "How is it promoted on the shelves?" We even looked at marketing," she said. "What are they marketing inside and outside the store?"

In a nutshell, the county found that typically on the outside of stores there were signs for "beer, lottery tickets and tobacco — we called them 'BLTs,'" Mogle said. "You didn't even know if you wanted to go inside the corner stores. It didn't look inviting."

After the Health Department sent out the letters, the stores either contacted the county or county employees just stopped by. The county first began working with three stores to help promote healthy food options, looking at procurement, placement, promotion and pricing.

One store in particular, Mogle said, was very eager to start selling healthy food options, and the county helped them with a mini-grant to purchase signage for fresh fruits and vegetables, baskets, shelving, a small refrigerator and a sandwich board to promote items outside.

The county helps each store


in a variety of ways, working at a pace that is comfortable for the store managers. They help connect stores with local farmers to find seasonal produce and give them "healthy option" tags with hearts on them to slap onto shelves near the healthy food to attract customers.

The county also helps promote the healthy food options in Facebook ads. During the first week of a Facebook campaign, the ads received clicks from 23,741 residents including 288 from parents and teens living near the stores. "It really helped," Mogle said. "Since we began using the tags and ads, sales went up 40 percent."

The county tweaks the program here and there, looking at which healthy options are selling well or slumping in sales, and examining sales data every three months.

"We also survey the customers," Mogle said. The county uses paper surveys and interviews residents in and around the neighborhoods, asking them what they would like to see sold at the stores.

A successful program is "all about the relationship" between the county health employees and the stores, Mogle said.

Her advice for other counties? "Go in with a positive attitude and let them know you'd like to help them increase their sales," she advised. "We like to give customers options. Just to sell bananas is a success. Make small changes and over time, encourage more sales through promotion and sampling. Slow and steady wins the race. Don't be discouraged if it doesn't happen overnight." 

If you want to find out more about the program, contact Kathy Mogle, health department program coordinator, at: Kathy.Mogle@ongov.net.


SALT 'fixes' face uncertainty

From SALT page 4

the IRS. "We never took a position on the bill, but there are so many other issues (as an association) that we're working on, that we're not worrying about what the real impact of this legislation is going to be," he said. "None of our county officials were asking for this bill, and not many municipalities were clamoring for it."

Former California Senate

President Pro Tempore Kevin de Leon had sponsored a similar bill in the state Assembly, but after leaving the Senate leadership to run for the U.S. Senate, he does not have the same political capital to push the bill as he once did, said Dorothy Johnson, a legislative representative for the California State Association of Counties.

"It has pretty much zero legs at this point," she said. 

Ruin champions environment

From RUVIN page 7


tion. "I'm proud that I entered public office as an idealist and 50 years later, I remain an idealist," he said. "There's tremendous satisfaction in public service because you can actualize your own concerns about people, about the environment, about the whole range of things. Most people go through their lives complaining about it, you have an opportunity to have an impact." In addition to his work as clerk to the Miami-Dade County Commission, the commissioners have looked to Ruvin for guidance planning the region's preparation for sea-level rise.

"This is an environmental challenge we'll be facing over the next 30 or 40 years, and while climate change doesn't respect county boundaries and it is a global issue, there are steps we can take to protect our county against its consequences."

The county's Sea Level Rise Task Force, for which Ruvin served as chairman, released a series of recommendations in 2014, chief among them a reinvention of the county's in-

frastructure. That focuses on sewage and drainage systems, road and bridge replacement, flood protection, pump stations and measures to protect against erosion due to salt water, all designed to work together as a system, rather than being developed independently, as they had been over time. "It's going to be very expensive, but much less expensive than FEMA coming in after the fact and handing out damages for a flooded community," he said. "We have the time and the tax base, with the help of federal and state government, to do all the work, all the reinvention that we should do even if sea level rise wasn't a factor."

With challenges like that, Ruvin doesn't see himself retiring, even after his current term as clerk ends in 2020.

"The challenge going forward for all of us in county government, whether it's courts, elections, or public safety is to stay on the cutting edge as technology evolves exponentially," he said. "Everything is evolving so quickly that the challenge is to make sure the plans you make today aren't old school in a few months." 

Happy Anniversary County News.



NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION



CALIFORNIA

A large and destructive **swamp rodent called a nutria** is invading waterways in **SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY**, the farthest north it's ever been spotted in the state, KCRA-TV reported. The rat-like creature, once thought to be eradicated from the state, popped up again in 2017 and has also been spotted in **FRESNO, MERCED, STANISLAUS** and **TUOLUMNE** counties. Nutria destroy wetlands and grow to be about 2.5-feet long and nearly 40 pounds. The non-native species (it's originally from South America) was brought to California for the fur trade in the 1930s, according to the state department of Fish and Wildlife.

COLORADO

Ever lock yourself out of your car? How about inside your car? **BOULDER COUNTY** Sheriff's deputies recently responded to a call for an incident involving **a hungry bear** that broke into a vehicle looking for food and accidentally locked himself inside, a Sheriff's Office spokesman said. Deputies were able to get the bear out without anyone, including the bear, be-

ing harmed. The county posted a photo of the bear inside the car, along with some tips for keeping bears away — including locking doors and stowing bird feeders when bears are around and not leaving pet food outside.

DELAWARE

Dick Cecil, executive director, Delaware Association of Counties, was recently honored with a Distinguished Service Award from the National Selective Service System for his 14 years as Delaware's state director of the Selective Service System. Cecil recently retired from the volunteer position.

ILLINOIS

As gun control measures were being debated among state lawmakers at the state capitol, the **EFFINGHAM COUNTY** Board voted 8-1 recently to adopt a resolution opposing certain bills introduced in the state General Assembly that the Board views as violating the Constitution. The resolution states that if the state infringes on Second Amendment rights, that the county would declare the county a **sanctuary for gun owners**. Commissioner Karen Luchtefeld was the only member to oppose the proposal, saying "guns have changed

(since the Second Amendment was adopted), but our gun laws have not kept pace," WXE-FM reported. She noted the number of people that could be killed in a minute by a flintlock rifle as opposed to modern firearms.

- Drivers who are suspected of **driving drunk** in **McHENRY COUNTY** but who refuse to take a breath test could be taken in for a blood test under a new county policy, according to the *Northwest Herald*. The new measure began April 15 and allows officers to obtain a warrant for a blood draw for any DUI suspect who refuses a breathalyzer, according to the county state's attorney's office. Two-thirds of drivers pulled over for suspected DUI refuse such tests, the state attorney, Patrick D. Kenneally, said.

INDIANA

- LAKE COUNTY's court system plans to go paperless** by early next year, saving \$340,000 a year, according to *The Times of Northwest Indiana*. The state will provide software and new computers,

printers and scanners valued at up to \$400,000 to help implement the new system. The County Council voted in 2015 to approve the move to the new system. The public will be able to access court records online starting next month and attorneys will be able to file paperwork any time online.

KENTUCKY

JEFFERSON COUNTY is one of six counties where public health officials are recommending that all residents receive **a hepatitis A vaccination** after an outbreak resulting in 311 cases and one death; 214 of the cases were located in the Jefferson County/Louisville area. The other counties are **BULLITT, BOYD, CARTER, HARDIN** and **GREENUP**. Those considered at high-risk of contracting hepatitis A include those who travel to countries where hepatitis A is common, those who are being treated with clot-factor concentrates and those who have a chronic liver disease. Read more about hepatitis A on the CDC website: <https://bit.ly/2vFM17B>.

MARYLAND

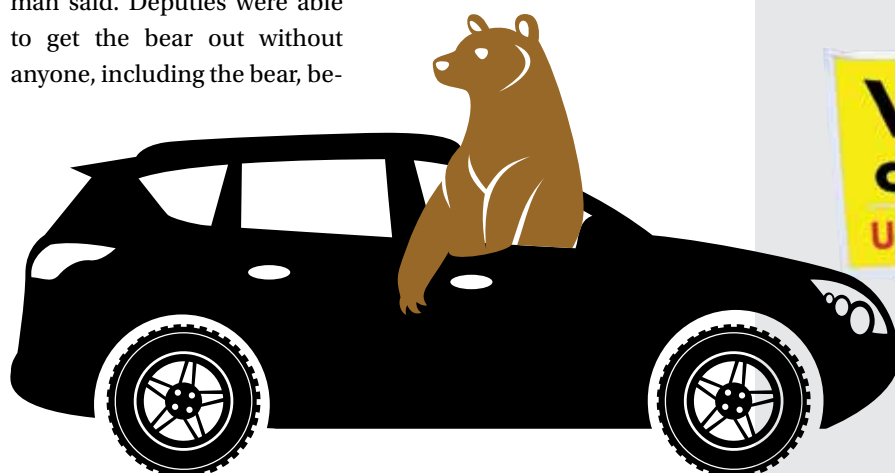
MONTGOMERY COUNTY residents are fed up with the **noise from jets** flying overhead and rattling windows as they head to Reagan National Airport. Some concerned citizens are asking the county councilmembers to budget \$150,000 for an "airspace expert" to address their complaints, *Bethesda Magazine* reported. County officials have asked the Federal Aviation Agency to come up with new flight paths after they were changed three years ago to reduce fuel costs and increase safety, the magazine reported. The county received 807 complaints about airplane noise in 2016.

MINNESOTA

CHISAGO COUNTY is welcoming residents to spend the night in their **brand-new jail** to help deputies train before inmates arrive, KARE-TV reported. The new \$24 million jail is touted as being bigger, safer and more high-tech than the old jail. The county circulated a flyer advertising the May 5 overnight stay that reads: "Ever wonder what it's like to spend

INDIANA

- HAMILTON COUNTY's plan to ban signs** is running into some snags. A judge struck down the ordinance recently saying it had a chilling effect on free speech, *The Indianapolis Star* reported. The county had sought to ban signs on the right of way along roads to get rid of real estate and political signs they said impaired motorists' sight lines. A County Council candidate and his attorney filed the lawsuit saying it violated free speech. County Commissioner Steve Dillinger said the county will likely not appeal the decision but may try to pass a new ordinance after the May primary to satisfy the judge.



a night in jail? You don't even need to commit a crime to find out!" The post online was shared more than 1,000 times.

"What we are trying to do is test the facility so that when we do put inmates in here, it's safe, it's structured and operated as efficiently and safely as possible," said Chris Thoma, assistant jail administrator.

NEW YORK

Some **WASHINGTON COUNTY** employees are dangerously close to being too healthy and losing some of their earned **sick days** as a result.

They are allowed to save 205 days, but Treasurer Al Nolette called that situation unfair, saying that employees shouldn't lose the benefit just because they are reliable, healthy employees. County supervisors rejected a plan for a second bank of sick days that employees could use if they were struck with a weeklong illness.

NORTH CAROLINA

A few months after a ransomware attack froze dozens of its servers, **MECKLENBURG COUNTY** is spending \$2.3 million on **cyber security upgrades**.

Most of the funding will go towards prevention, network access policies, backup data and security operations. The commissioners have already invested about \$16 million for cyber security over the past three years, *Spectrum News Charlotte* reported. It took the county months to restore all of its servers after the December attack.

OREGON

State regulators are challenging **DOUGLAS COUNTY's** plan to allow more rural housing on **farmland and forestland**. The county opened about 22,500 acres to the development of 20-acre home sites on properties that it had found were of marginal value for agriculture and forestry.

The Department of Land Conservation and Develop-

ment and the Department of Fish and Wildlife have objected to the amendment of the county's comprehensive plan before the state's Land Use Board of Appeals, *The Capital Press* reported.

PENNSYLVANIA

- With a road repair wish list growing, **LUZERNE COUNTY** may add a \$5 **vehicle registration fee**. The county estimates that implementing the fee could generate nearly \$1.5 million a year, with the state department of transportation matching up to \$2 million for the first year, but the state won't commit beyond that.

- All counties must acquire voting machines that leave a **paper trail** by the end of 2019. Gov. Tom Wolf (D) has mandated the change in advance of the 2020 primary elections, to provide a backup of the votes cast.

Counties estimate that replacing the machines statewide will cost \$125 million, and Pennsylvania will receive \$13.5 million of the \$356 million Congress recently appropriated for election security, with the state adding a 5 percent match. The resulting \$14.1 million will be allocated to counties based on their population, *The Lock Haven Express* reported. Voting machines are projected to cost around \$5,400. The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania is working with the state to secure more funding for new voting machines.

UTAH

- **GRAND COUNTY's non-partisan council**, approved in 1992, has withstood efforts to change it in 2004 and 2012. But by 2020, it will have to comply with a new standard the Legislature passed recently, requiring counties to adopt one of four approved forms of government, all of which require candidates run on party tickets, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

- **SAN JUAN COUNTY** has **sued the federal government**,



WYOMING

The state Supreme Court has struck down a **TETON COUNTY** regulation prohibiting **shared ownership of campgrounds**.

The court ruled that the regulation requiring all campsites be owned by a single entity exceeds the county's zoning authority because it regulates ownership of land, rather than use of land. A developer transferred deeds to each campground to 21 separate LLCs, prior to attempting to sell them, according to *The Jackson Hole News and Report*. The developer challenged the county's regulation.

citing various historic records indicating the county maintained a "road" since 1886 on federally-managed land.

The Bureau of Land Management declined the county's long-standing request to authorize a motorized route there, a decision the state had challenged before the Interior Board of Land Appeals, according to *The Salt Lake Tribune*.

VIRGINIA

Gov. Ralph Northam (D) vetoed a bill that would have re-

duced the tax bills for two **golf courses** and cut \$1.5 million from **ARLINGTON COUNTY's** tax revenue. The General Assembly had passed a bill assessing the courses as open space, rather than at their current value, which is based on the surrounding developed land, *Arlington Now* reported.

"This is a local dispute over a local government's method of assessing land for property taxation," Northam wrote when announcing the veto. "As such, the solution to this dis-

pute should be reached on the local level without the involvement of the state."

WASHINGTON

- Suburban opposition to **safe drug consumption sites**, called Community Health Engagement Locations, has pushed **KING COUNTY** health officials to put the proposed pilot project outside of Seattle on hold. A plan presented by a county task force on heroin and opiate addiction recommended pilot safe drug sites for Seattle and one outside of the city in King County. The city allocated over \$1 million to fund a feasibility study for the project, *Seattle Weekly* reported.

Long employed in Europe and Vancouver, British Columbia, research has shown that the facilities prevent drug overdose deaths, reduce HIV infection rates among addicts who use needles and increase referrals to drug treatment.

- The stress on the power grid has prompted **MASON COUNTY** to place a moratorium on **new crypto mining operations**. The moratorium encompasses "computer or data processing loads related to virtual or cryptocurrency mining, bitcoin, blockchain or similar purposes." Applications that have already been approved are not subject to the freeze, officials stressed.

Commissioners are also concerned that mining operations are unsafe, *Coin Desk* reported. The process involves using computers to perform accounting functions for days at a time, which can overheat the computers and start fires.

CHELAN COUNTY passed a similar moratorium earlier this year, citing the electrical cost of mining and safety concerns as reasons for the prohibition.

News from Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Mary Ann Barton, senior staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please email cban@naco.org or mbarton@naco.org.



Advice from Grandpa's Appendix (condensed)

The most recent HR Doctor article described how a morning phone call can reflect the need for help in an urgent and horrific situation. In that case it was about the Parkland High School gun violence. Most phone calls, fortunately, are totally routine, if not also unnecessary. There are, of course, phone calls transmitting good or happy news. Such was the case recently when the HR Doctor's publisher called to report my new book, *Evie, the Star Princess*, was now "live."

The book follows the adventures of shy little Evie who discovers her passion and confidence during a summer visit to Grandpa's farm and his observatory. There she meets and becomes "friends" with Angelina, the Magic Telescope. As she grows and gains experience, knowledge and confidence, she is reminded of advice from Grandpa on how to live a successful and joyful life. At the end of the book, in "Appendix 3," Grandpa's advice is summarized.

This article shows you what Appendix 3 is all about and how that advice can apply as well to government officials and employees as it can to moms, dads, grandparents and kids. I hope you enjoy the advice, but more importantly, I hope you take it to heart and share it with others as they join all the rest of us in searching for fulfillment, joy and a legacy in their own lives.

1. Create your own army:

The friends you make throughout your life along with colleagues at work and members of your own family form a powerful group of people who can come to your aid if you ever need them. Sometimes members of your own army will help you in ways you may not even



realize or know about. The bigger your army, and the more it is filled with diverse people, the more successful you will be. In turn, you must be part of many other people's armies and stand ready to help them. Your army makes a difference in your own life and in the lives of others.

2. The importance of respect:

No matter who you are or how famous or successful you might become, your life will be enriched by always treating people you meet with respect and kindness. Whether they are rich or poor, tall or short, healthy or ill, no matter what their religion, race or gender, the most successful people treat others the way they would wish to be treated. It all begins

by learning how to spell "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!"

3. Arrogance — our biggest enemy:

Arrogance is what leads to great trouble and ultimately great failure for people, as well as for communities and countries. Arrogance means excessive pride. You think you are better than someone else, when you aren't; you think your athletic team is better than every other one, when it may not be. You become a bully in the sense that you don't listen to the opinions of others and you try to push your own thoughts and beliefs on others, even if they don't want to agree with you. Ancient Greek people called excessive arrogance "hubris" and felt that it was this arrogance that threatened and

harmed their whole civilization.

4. Humility in your life:

Humility is the opposite of hubris. Being humble in the way you behave toward other people means acting so that other people regard you as being willing to listen to their viewpoints. They have confidence in what you are saying. People who are humble do not brag and do not treat other people with disrespect. They are kind and caring. Humility is a behavior that other people want to be associated with.

5. Get by with help from your friends:

People who have friends and family to be around them and to spend time with them tend to be

healthier and enjoy life more. You may not have a large family. In fact, you may have no brothers and sisters, and maybe even no parents. However, you can still make friends at school, at work and by joining civic groups and service clubs in your community. "Friends" also include our animal friends. People who have pets, especially dogs and cats, exercise more and feel less lonely. They have another creature to cuddle with and to share fun and sadness. Having friends will make you healthier, happier and more successful.

6. The paralysis of inertia:

The great scientist Sir Isaac Newton described laws of motion. His First Law of Motion tells us that an object will keep standing still or moving along in the same direction and speed unless some outside force moves it in a different way. The same is true of people. A person who keeps to a fixed opinion or way of acting and living will continue to do that same behavior unless some outside force affects them.

Inertia is a form of paralysis. It is hard to move forward when you never want to move at all. It is hard to change direction if you keep moving in only one way, even when circumstances all around you change and you should be adjusting. Without change — without overcoming inertia — the full potential of your life will never be realized. We overcome inertia by being willing to try new things and to adjust how we think and act as circumstances and needs change.

When we spend too many hours doing only one thing, like watching television or staring at screens of our smart phones or tablets, we miss out

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on a lot of other opportunities to learn new skills and meet new people. Never fall victim to the paralysis of inertia.

7. Become a renaissance person: The Renaissance in history was a time of renewal, rebirth, and reemergence of learning, experimenting and thinking about all the ways that things could be, rather than just how things were. It was a time, in other words, when the human spirit overcame inertia and created a more exciting future for itself. You can do that in your own life. In fact, you have to do that for your life to be as successful as you want it to be.

A renaissance person enjoys learning and practicing different skills. You may like science, for example, but you might also think about the arts. You may enjoy dance, drawing or music, but also learn about history and nature. You may want to be a teacher in your career, but also take up hobbies so you can do many other things you enjoy.

When you look at the totality of your life, you will see that a renaissance person with many different interests is a far more enjoyable friend to be with and certainly a better person to have on your team and in your life.

8. Find thyself a teacher: This is one of the very most important keys to being successful. Always look for ways to learn from other people and take advantage of opportunities to learn.

9. Seek out challenges: Challenges help us do things we might not otherwise do. If we are paralyzed by inertia, it may be a great challenge to learn how to play the violin, how to swim, or how to cook spaghetti. We may not be willing even to try. However, we miss out on great possibilities when we let inertia win. The most enjoyable life is a life full of challenges that we have learned to overcome. Chal-

lenges certainly come to each of us, whether we want them to or not. We might become ill or injured and we have the challenge to heal and to regain the strength in our arms or legs. It is not only possible but very rewarding to seek out challenges and overcome them.

You may find it challenging to learn to speak Spanish or to enjoy the night sky, like Evie did. You will find your own challenges to overcome in life. When you do, you will be well on your way to becoming a renaissance person. Don't be afraid of challenges. See them as opportunities to learn and grow. While you are there, remember that if you are nervous about some new challenge, that is the perfect time to find yourself a teacher or call out a member of your army to help you.

10. Loving nature: Respect is something that goes far beyond how we behave with other people. It also means how we find beauty and amazement in the world around us. It means going out early in the morning and watching the sunrise or watching the sunset at the end of the day. It means learning about animals, the climate, mountains, rivers, the sky, and the valleys all around us. Smelling and feeling the beauty all around us, whether we live in a city or on a farm, can bring us not only a sense of amazement at the world, but also give us the time and the inner peace to relax our minds. Then we can begin that imagining and dreaming process that we know is so important to our success.

11. Confidence and bravery: We overcome problems and meet challenges first by learning about what those problems and challenges are really all about. Then it is very important to take what we've learned and the advice and help we get from our friends, and mix that information with confidence in ourselves. We have to know in our hearts and in our minds that we can overcome obstacles. A bit of brav-

ery and confidence is available to all of us and can help in everything we do.

12. Have a sense of humor and a sense of fun: To be serious all the time is very unfortunate and does not make you the kind of person that other people want to be around. A speaker named Michael Josephson once said, "Some people brighten a room when they enter it; others, when they leave!" If you have humor and a positive attitude it will be contagious. Other people will think of you as someone they want to listen to and want to follow.

13. Don't postpone joy: Find things that you really enjoy doing. Find hobbies you enjoy and charities you want to support. Then figure out how to get involved with them. Evie enjoyed knitting and music. These hobbies helped her relax even though she faced many pressures. Our lives are full of opportunities to do things and see things that make us smile and make us happy. We should not waste those opportunities. Figure out how to add a strong dose of joy into your life every day.

14. Saying thank you: When something wonderful happens to you or to someone else, take the time to thank the person who cared enough to do that wonderful thing. There are many ways to say thank you. People enjoy being thanked and it encourages even more wonderful behavior. We don't say thank you enough in the world, but you can make a difference and change that.

You can surprise someone by doing a kind thing as a way to thank them. In turn, they will thank you. Bring a flower to your teacher or to someone you work with. Take your mom or dad out for ice cream or do something they don't even expect. A gesture like holding a door open for someone may seem like a small thing. Your kindness defines the kind of person you are for others. **CN**

PROFILES IN SERVICE

KATHRYN DODGE

Board Member

Assembly Presiding Officer
Fairbanks North Star Borough,
Alaska



Dodge

Number of years involved in NACo: 6

Years in public service: 15

Occupation: Economic development professional

Education: Ph.D. human and organizational systems; M.A. human development; M.A. organization design and effectiveness; B.A. organization management; A.A.S. electronics technology

The hardest thing I've ever

done is: Decide it's time to euthanize a beloved pet.

Three people (living or dead)

I'd invite to dinner: Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Dan Ariely and Dahlia Lithwick.

I dream I have is to: Write a book.

You'd be surprised to learn

that I: Drove the unpaved AICan Highway (more of a collection of potholes connected by pieces of gravel) from Dawson Creek, Canada to Delta Junction, Alaska in an orange MG Midget, by myself, at 18.

My favorite way to relax is to:

Soak in the hot springs while watching the Aurora Borealis.

I'm most proud of (and

humbled by): Being elected to public office.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:

Move to Alaska on my own at 18.

Every morning I read: My

Apple newsfeed— I try to read broadly (Politico, Slate, Buzzfeed, CNN, Fox, *Washington Post*, Business Insider, Axios, *The New York Times*, Newsweek, *The Wall Street Journal*, National Geographic, Fast Company, *Los Angeles Times*, Reuters, BBC, etc.)

My favorite meal is: Most anything Thai. If pushed to choose... Thai Sidewalk Soup.

My motto is: "Be Curious."

The last book I read was:

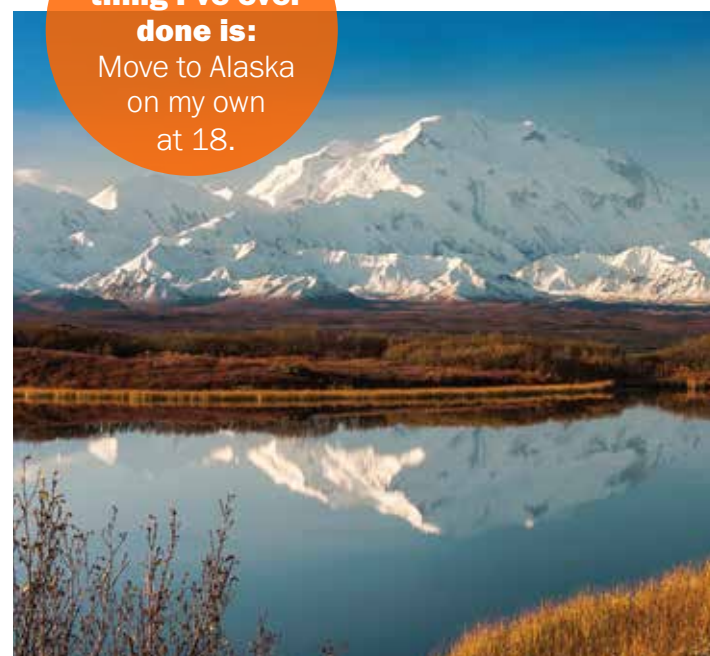
Braving the Wilderness by Brene Brown

My favorite U.S. president is:

Barack Obama.

My county is a NACo member

because: It keeps us connected to and informed about public policy and advocacy for counties at a national level.



Apply now: Your county can host a solar energy expert

You've heard the news: Solar energy is more affordable and more accessible than ever before. The solar industry has created over 250,000 jobs for communities across the nation while helping homes and businesses save on energy costs. What you may not know is that county governments have a huge role to play in bringing solar energy development to a community. The decisions made at the county level can go a long way toward encouraging — or discouraging — solar energy development for local homes and businesses.

SolSmart is a program funded by the Department of Energy that provides official recognition to local governments that encourage solar energy growth. It is led by The Solar Foundation, the International City/County Management Association, and a team of partners including NACo. The program offers expert technical assistance at no cost to help communities evaluate their current programs and processes that influence solar development and adopt national best practices. To date, more than 200 communities have achieved SolSmart designation of Gold, Silver, or Bronze, including 37 counties.

This spring, counties can apply for a special opportunity through SolSmart. The program is now accepting applications to host a SolSmart Advisor — an experienced professional who will work in a community for approximately six months. SolSmart Advisors provide intensive technical assistance to help a community reduce obstacles to solar energy development and ultimately achieve SolSmart designation.

Advisors can boost efforts by counties interested in accelerating the advancement of solar energy. Previous SolSmart Advisors have assisted communities in launching Solarize campaigns, modeling solar installations on government buildings, or streamlining solar permitting processes (if applicable). You can learn more

about previous advisors and the communities they served through the SolSmart website <https://bit.ly/2HNWXZQ> or by speaking with SolSmart representatives.

There are two pathways that counties may use to obtain an advisor: 1) a community-based pathway or 2) an organization-based pathway. The appropriate pathway is determined by the lead applicant.

Through the community-based path, local governments would apply and be selected to host advisors through a competitive application process. All counties and municipalities in the United States are eligible to apply, but SolSmart only plans to award up to five advisors. The most competitive applications will include a partnership between two or more communities (a "cohort"), with a larger number of communities being preferable. Here are several potential structures for a cohort:

- A group of counties and cities in a metropolitan area can co-host an advisor to spur solar energy growth in the entire region.
- A county could host an advisor for itself and the municipalities within its boundaries.
- A group of counties with an interest in similar topic areas, such as resilience, storage, or land use, could apply together. There are no geographical restrictions, so counties could partner with peers outside of their region or state.

Counties also have an opportunity to work through third-party organizations to obtain advisor services. Through the organization-based RFP pathway, organizations such as councils of government, regional planning commissions, community organizations, and environmental organizations could apply to serve as an advisor to a group of communities.

To be competitive under this application, organizations would need to demonstrate a record of working with communities, relevant sub-




County officials shine as they accept awards for their leadership in deploying solar use in their communities. Some of the winners are pictured here. (L-r): Commissioner Lenny Eliason, Athens County, Ohio; Supervisor Connie Rockco, Harrison County, Miss.; Board Member Denise Winfrey, Will County, Ill.; Commissioner Casey Tighe, Jefferson County, Colo. Back row (l-r): Chris Somers, Arlington County, Va.; Supervisor Mike Carberry, Johnson County, Iowa; Commissioner DeWayne Mareck, Stearns County, Minn.; Chip Taylor, Colorado Counties, Inc. (representing Clear Creek, Delta, Pueblo counties).

ject-matter expertise, and existing staff capacity. The most competitive applications will include the greatest number of communities, but will be bal-

anced with feasibility. Organizations interested in applying will need to receive written commitments from local government staff, so be prepared

for inquiries.

Applications for a SolSmart Advisor through both pathways are due by June 4. Learn more at SolSmart.org. 



Oakland County, Mich. Commissioner **Helaine Zack**, who has been a social worker and active in the employee assistance field for over 35 years, served as a panelist at an educational panel discussion April 12, hosted by The Greater Detroit Area Health Council and the Tri-Community Coalition. The discussion centered on the current opioid crisis and how employers can help support impacted employees and their families. "Opioid abuse is a public health crisis that impacts all of us," Zack said

NACo STAFF



Hurley

Eryn Hurley, associate legislative director, spoke at the Idaho Association of County Recorders and Clerks Social Services Conference, held April 17–19 in Bonneville County (Idaho Falls).



Walsh

Nastassia Walsh, program manager, conducted a training session on state and local justice system collaboration with the National Criminal Justice Association in Hillsborough County (Tampa), Fla. April 26 – 27.