

Stepping Up initiative turns 3

By Nastassia Walsh
program director

This month marks three years since the launch of Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails (Stepping Up).

Stepping Up was launched in May 2015 by NACo, the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APA Foundation) to mobilize local, state and national leaders to achieve a measurable reduction in the number of people in jails who have mental illnesses.

Since that time, more than 425 counties in 43 states, representing 40 percent of the U.S.

See **STEPPING UP** page 5



A fissure from Hawaii County's Kilauea volcano, which erupted May 3, spills lava across a neighborhood road. About 2,000 residents have been evacuated and 26 homes destroyed. Read more about the eruption in "News From Across the Nation," page 12. Photo by USGS

Capitol Hill works on opioid legislation

By Valerie Brankovic
legislative assistant

Congress continued work last week on a flurry of opioid-related bills in an effort to finalize a legislative package by the end of May.

Lawmakers in both the Senate and House are expected to devote the next three weeks of the congressional session to the consideration — and possible advancement — of multiple opioid measures.

In the Senate, lawmakers on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee considered sweeping opioid measures last month. The

Senate bill, S. 2680, the Opioid Crisis Response Act, would reauthorize funding outlined in the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255), which passed into law in 2016 with NACo's support.

The proposal also contains measures that would expand the ability of federal agencies to respond to the opioid epidemic, with an emphasis on research, treatment, recovery and prevention activities.

Members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health last month considered 34 separate bills

See **OPIOIDS** page 2

What's brewing? A daily town hall

By Mary Ann Barton
senior staff writer

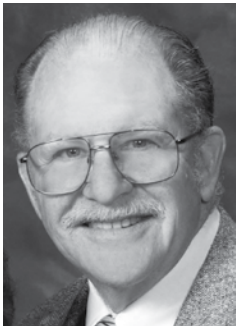
There's nothing like chatting with a friend over a cup of coffee. What about hashing out local issues with a constituent over a cup of coffee — every weekday morning?

That's what county supervisors are doing in Del Norte County, Calif.

With the constraints of the three-minute time limit for residents to discuss matters at county board meet-

ings, supervisors decided to expand their availability last year by starting daily weekday morning meetings at a local restaurant.

Del Norte County Supervisor Bob Berkowitz said the three-minute rule was always one of his pet peeves. "It was very frustrating for people to have to wait and then not get any reaction from supervisors," he said. "I saw a lot of frus-



Bob Berkowitz
Del Norte County,
Calif. supervisor

See **TOWN HALL** page 2

Committee Appointments Get Involved!

I am looking forward to my term as NACo president next year and to advocating on behalf of counties at the federal level.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with NACo, please apply to be a part of the committee leadership.

These appointments are for:

- Policy steering committee chairs, vice chairs, subcommittee chairs and subcommittee vice chairs
- Large Urban County Caucus (LUCC) or the Rural Action Caucus (RAC) chairs, vice chairs and members
- Standing committee chairs, vice chairs and members
- Ad hoc committee, task force and advisory board chairs, vice chairs and members
- At-large NACo Board Directors

To be considered for a presidential appointment to any of the committees listed above or as an At-large Board Director, you must complete the application before June 1.

Visit http://www.naco.org/presidential_appointments for the application.

I look forward to receiving your application and working with you during the 2018-2019 year.



Greg Cox

Greg Cox

SNAP/STATS

MOST RESIDENTIAL BUILDING 2017



2017 ANNUALIZED PERMIT ACTIVITY

METRO AREA

Dallas, Texas.....	47,244
Houston, Texas.....	42,673
New York.....	40,683
Phoenix, Ariz.	29,653
Austin, Texas.....	25,803

Source: Which cities did the most building in 2017, Feb. 21, inman.com

Supervisors hold daily coffee chats

From TOWN HALL page 1

tration from these people who weren't getting a response."

Dubbed the Daily Town Hall Meeting, one or two supervisors make themselves available each morning from 6 a.m.-7 a.m. at the Fisherman's Restaurant in Crescent City to meet with anyone about anything, he said. They're careful to keep it to just two supervisors so as not to break any rules.

"There's a back room at the restaurant, so that's reserved for us," Berkowitz said. "It's all free flowing because it's designed to allow them to express whatever concerns or ideas that they have — not coming from us but coming from them. It's their concerns, not our concerns."

Each supervisor purchases their beverage or meal so no cost to the county is involved,

and thanks to an agreement with the restaurant, they are under no obligation to buy anything at all. "They're civic-minded too," Berkowitz said.

They're often joined by other elected officials from the city or the state, and everyone gets in on the discussions. So far, the listening sessions have proved to be fruitful, touching on everything from marijuana to gas taxes to porta potties.

Residents asked that the county add porta potties to an annual Fourth of July celebration at a local beach. "It's simple issues, it's complicated issues, we never know from day to day what the issue will be," Berkowitz said. "Keep in mind this is at 6 a.m. in the morning so people have to be really concerned."

Last week, he said residents came to one of the meetings concerned about the tattered

American flags seen around town that should be replaced. The conversation continued on Facebook and there is now a veterans' group, Berkowitz said, that "wants to be a part of this and help replace the tattered flags."

Another hot topic discussed at the town hall meetings: term limits for county supervisors. It's now made its way onto the ballot for June 5, "and we'll see what they want to do," Berkowitz said. If it passes, supervisors will be held to three terms.

"Sometimes it's not in our purview but we can bring issues to the public's attention," he said. "People want to get involved if you give them a reason — if they feel it's worthwhile, they will," he said. "Like I say, they don't have to wait two or three weeks for a board meeting to talk about an idea." **CN**

Path unclear for opioid legislation

From OPIOIDS page 1

to address the opioid crisis via changes to Medicaid and Medicare. Most of the proposals were ultimately approved by the subcommittee and were slated to be considered during a full committee markup May 9. NACo has endorsed two of the bills set for consideration by the full Energy and Commerce Committee.

The first piece of legislation, H.R. 4005, the Medicaid Re-entry Act, would allow jail inmates to receive federal Medicaid benefits for the 30-day period prior to their release, rather than being removed

from the program while they are in jail.

The second bill, H.R. 1925, the At-Risk Youth Medicaid Protection Act, would allow for more timely provision of addiction treatment services for juveniles released from county correctional facilities, thereby reducing the risk of overdose death. These measures would help counties provide effective treatment and care coordination services pre-and post-release, allowing for smoother transitions to community care.

Congress' consideration of opioid legislation last week comes shortly after lawmakers authorized approximately

\$6 billion in funds to address the opioid epidemic over two years as part of the budget agreement approved in February. The FY 2018 omnibus bill, which passed in March, specifically allocated opioid funding across multiple federal agencies and programs, and contained a \$2 billion increase in federal funds to combat the epidemic above FY 2017 levels.

As of yet, the path forward for the House and Senate legislative proposals remains unclear. Furthermore, the political dynamics of passing a sizeable legislative package could be complicated by midterm elections later this year. **CN**

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Grants available for reducing diesel emissions

The EPA recently announced funding for the Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA), which aims to reduce emissions from diesel engines. The EPA plans to award \$40 million in DERA grants to regional, state, local, tribal agencies or port authorities with jurisdiction over transportation or air quality.

According to EPA, most highway freight trucks, locomotives

and commercial marine vessels moving the nation's freight tonnage are powered by diesel engines. NACo supports funding for DERA grants, which enables state and local governments to make investments that focus on reducing diesel engine emissions to improve air quality.

First launched in 2008, the DERA program has awarded funds to more than 730

SPEEDREAD

DERA Grant

The application deadline is June 5.


To apply, go to <https://bit.ly/2oPUGR1>

projects nationwide. Many of these projects focus on reducing diesel engine emis-

sions in economically disadvantaged communities with higher-than-average instances of asthma, heart and lung disease.

The \$40 million for DERA grants is expected to fund 20 to 80 projects. The EPA is specifically looking for eligible applicants proposing "projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, especially from fleets operating

at goods movements facilities in areas designated as having poor air quality."

In its announcement, the agency stated, "Priority funding will be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended." The application deadline is June 5. 

Counties increase disaster preparedness with NACo and IBTS

By John Losh
membership associate

County governments play an instrumental role in protecting communities before, during and after disasters.

NACo has formed a new partnership with the Institute for Building Technology and Safety (IBTS) to launch a new member benefit that will support disaster services for NACo member counties.

Currently, three counties have signed disaster service contracts with IBTS: Cleveland County, Okla., Freeborn County, Minn. and Powhatan County, Va.

In 2017, there were 16 disaster events across the United States that resulted in losses exceeding \$1 billion, including: eight severe storms, three tropical cyclones, two floods, an extreme drought, a freeze and a major wildfire.

In all, 815 counties declared major disasters last year.

To address these challenges, NACo partnered with IBTS to help member counties receive disaster planning and recovery expertise.

"They provide a toolbox of amazing services that are available without needing to figure out how to handle everything on your own," said Curt Nellis, Powhatan County emergency management coordinator. "IBTS provides a means of extending the quality of disaster response in my county without hiring additional staff. They become an extension of Powhatan County."

At no initial cost, NACo members can sign a pre-disaster contract with IBTS, which is only implemented upon action by the county if it faces an emergency. IBTS provides services such as initial disaster response, active disaster recovery (including debris removal management) and disaster recovery administration.

Powhatan County was one of the first NACo counties to sign an IBTS contract. It selected all available disaster service options in order to bolster its disaster response capabilities. The Board of Supervisors was quick to support the disaster service contract with IBTS.

"We're a small county with about 28,000 residents, so we don't have a lot of resources to work with. The IBTS contract is an attractive option to counties like mine because they provide, effectively, a large county management operation on a small budget," Nellis said. "Since there was no initial cost to the county, they were happy to make the approval. From our elected officials' perspective, they see services with the NACo logo as high-quality programs for counties."

IBTS disaster services provide counties with access to experts in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) grant management, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) action plan services, Community Development Block Grant Recovery Program (CDBG-DR) and more.

HOW TO SIGN UP

The process for implementing a disaster contract is simple: Counties select the services they would like in the event of a disaster and IBTS provides a service agreement based on their selections. After the contract is signed, the county can schedule a two-hour consultation with IBTS to discuss the current state of disaster preparedness in the county. After the consultation,

IBTS will keep in contact with the county on a regular basis.

To learn more about how counties can strengthen their disaster response and preparedness with IBTS, contact Dana Johnston, IBTS development manager, at 571.305.3463 or djohnston@ibts.gov. Counties can also visit ibtsnhand.org for more information on disaster preparedness and response.

For many counties, disaster preparation and recovery are an ongoing challenge. Freeborn County, Minn. is a small county with a population of fewer than 28,000 residents. Freeborn has experienced 10 FEMA-declared disasters since 2000.

This figure doesn't include additional events like the tornado that hit Freeborn County in March of 2017, which didn't meet FEMA's damage requirements for a disaster declaration. During a single night in 2010, they experienced nine tornadoes and 23 "touchdowns."

"This storm included one of the rarer category F4 tornadoes to hit Minnesota. Later that year, we had a huge rain event impact the county," Freeborn County Board Chair Chris Shoff said. "[IBTS] will provide the relationships our staff needs to react and plan for these events."

Prior to the IBTS contract, Freeborn County has relied on existing staff to respond to di-

sasters and hazardous weather conditions. Seven years ago, the county transitioned their emergency manager from a part-time to a full-time position.

"Since we're a small county, we don't have a large staff. We've always done disaster recovery in-house. While we've done well navigating the process, there may be things we're missing. Our staff is already doing their jobs when they suddenly have to shift to extra work because of an event," Shoff said.

Due to the past experiences in Freeborn County, the Board of Commissioners was quick to implement the agreement after Commissioner Shoff learned of the benefit at a NACo board meeting.


"We signed onto all of their services. By signing this agreement, we are better equipped to respond when something happens. Notice I said when and not if, because it's bound to happen eventually," he said. "It's

a valuable resource that can be used to help the constituents we serve in their time of need."

Counties only incur charges in the event they implement the contract when a disaster hits. The majority of the services provided by IBTS are potentially eligible for funding through FEMA's Public Assistance program.

"If your hesitation to sign a contract is due to money, then it's because there isn't a clear understanding of the public assistance program," Nellis said. "IBTS can help counties understand how the system works and recognizes the lengthy process to get reimbursements. IBTS won't send anyone to collect like a private company, they'll work with you on the public assistance reimbursement process."

IBTS disaster response teams understand political and physical challenges to disasters, navigate post-disaster regulatory compliance demands, value the importance of maintaining community character, effectively implement preservation and restoration of treasured historical assets and understand benefit-management challenges of distributing relief funds to citizens.

In addition to these services, IBTS provides disaster preparedness planning and mitigation programs. Counties can benefit from services ranging from community outreach and counseling, environmental risk management and disaster planning. 

SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

More people than homes challenges Clark County, Nev.

Clark County, Nev. is much more than Las Vegas fun. In 2017, Clark County added more residents than all but one other county in America. In other words, the county has many more people than homes. Today in the county, a quarter of residents pay more than 50 percent in rent and over a third of residents feel there is a housing shortage.

The economy in Clark County is growing — not dangerously booming — but smartly diversifying through such commercial endeavors like super-computer companies and manufacturing, and a different type of gaming, as exemplified by the new NHL and NFL teams. A thriving economy equates to a growing workforce. But when you combine

this with rising costs to build homes stemming from higher material costs for lumber and steel; increased regulations, fees and financing costs; and a chronic shortage of skilled labor, especially in the construction industry, a housing shortage occurs.

The federal problems may not be solvable at the county level; for example the 26 percent tariff implemented last year on Canadian softwood lumber (used for house framing) has caused the price of lumber to rise over 30 percent and resulted in a cost increase of \$6,500 for an average single family home.

But solutions are on the horizon in Clark County. To meet the increase in demand and to do their part to




help keep housing affordable, the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association (SNHBA) is taking action to increase the number of skilled construction workers in Southern Nevada. The board of directors and Nat Hodgson, executive officer, have hired a community relations manager, Kristy Livingston, who will be focused on workforce development. Their training program will increase the number of available workers for SNHBA members.

"I am truly excited to bring

awareness of our industry to students and veterans," said Hodgson. "We want to make sure we share the bright opportunities the industry has to offer through the program we are developing."

Most of the costs for the training will be covered by housing industry companies but this public-private partnership will also pair the SNHBA membership with the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation and the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation for the New Nevada via certification and state grants. The SNHBA program will train more than 100 workers a year in various trades and place them in good paying jobs. To build a new single family home there are

over 25 different skilled trades involved. From architect to roofer and interior designer, the members of SNHBA need additional team members. The trainees will also receive an OSHA card, software training, and soft skill/customer service training in order to compete for top wages.

Housing market demand is far outpacing supply in southern Nevada but partnerships between business and government will increase the skilled labor workforce and help more residents of Clark County — and across America — say, "I am home." 

For more information please visit www.snhba.com/workforce-development and www.nahbhousingportal.org.

COUNTIES...

KEEP US MOVING

by building and maintaining the largest share of public road miles — 46 percent — and 38 percent of bridges in America. Counties also support 78 percent of all public transit agencies

KEEP US CONNECTED

by owning or supporting more than a third of America's public airports



KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES CLEAN

by investing almost \$22 billion in sewage and waste management annually

KEEP US SAFE

by investing in more than 870,000 justice and public safety personnel and supporting nearly 3,000 911 call centers

KEEP US HEALTHY

by supporting almost 2,000 local health departments and more than 900 hospitals across the country



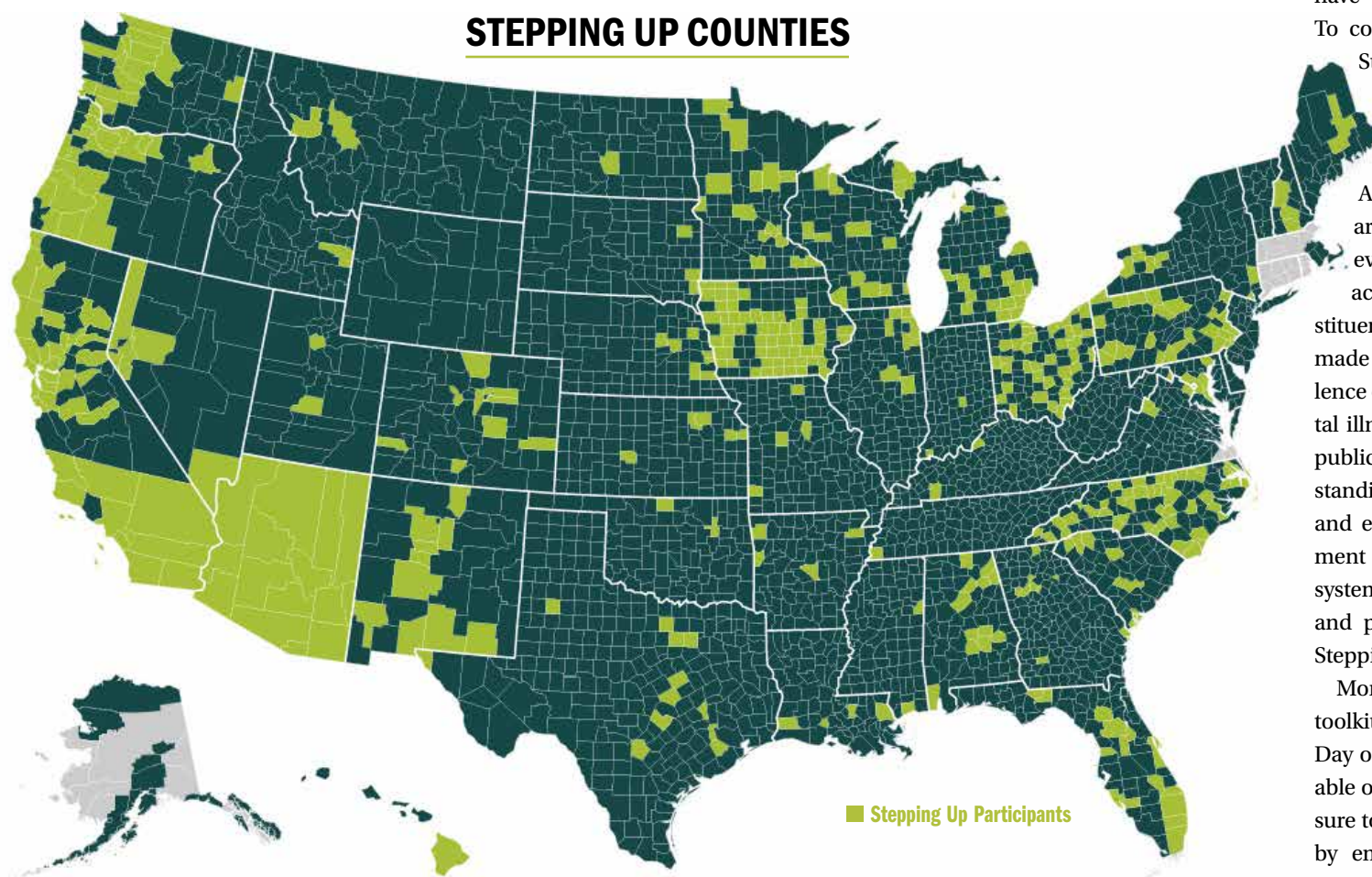
Add your voice to the Infrastructure Week conversation. Join us in building America's future.

#CountiesBuild Visit www.NACo.org/CountiesBuild



More than 425 counties join Stepping Up initiative

STEPPING UP COUNTIES



From STEPPING UP page 1

population, have committed to building local leadership teams, identifying the number of people with mental illnesses who enter their jail systems, ensuring that those people are connected with services and developing a comprehensive plan for systems-level change.

May is also national Mental Health Month, providing an opportunity to raise awareness of mental health and the one in five Americans affected by

mental health conditions.

To commemorate three years of Stepping Up and show support for Mental Health Month, the initiative partners have planned several activities to raise awareness of this important issue.

Building on the success counties have seen as part of their local efforts, Stepping Up is expanding its work to provide them with the tools they need to systematically identify people with mental illnesses who enter local jails. Stepping Up



launched a national effort on May 1 to help counties collect accurate, accessible data on the number of people entering their jails who have mental illnesses. As part of the effort, seven rural and urban “Innovator Counties” have been selected as models for their expertise in accurately identifying these individuals and consistently collecting data on them.

Stepping Up’s seven Innovator Counties — Calaveras County, Calif.; Miami-Dade County, Fla.; Champaign County, Ill.; Douglas County, Kan.; Johnson County, Kan.; Franklin County, Ohio; and Pacific County, Wash. — have each implemented this approach and will be sharing their experiences identifying and gathering data on the people

who have mental illnesses entering their jails. Other counties that are already using or committed to using this approach are encouraged to become an Innovator County by contacting the initiative.

As part of this push, Stepping Up will provide technical assistance and resources to improve counties’ mental health screening and assessment processes, and strengthen their data collection and tracking so that they are better equipped to deploy strategies that create a system-wide impact.

Stepping Up Day of Action

Since joining the initiative, many counties have taken significant steps toward reducing the number of people who

have mental illnesses in jail. To continue this momentum, Stepping Up is organizing a national Day of Action on May 16.

During this Day of Action, county officials are encouraged to host an event or participate in local activities to share with constituents the progress they have made in addressing the prevalence of people who have mental illnesses in their jails, raise public awareness and understanding of this important issue and emphasize their commitment to creating data-driven, systems-level changes to policy and practice to achieve their Stepping Up goals.

More information and a toolkit for holding your own Day of Action events are available on StepUpTogether.org. Be sure to tell us about your event by emailing Nastassia Walsh at nwalsh@naco.org or using #StepUp4MentalHealth in your social media posts.

Livestream Event at NACo’s WIR Conference

On Thursday, May 24, at 12:15 p.m. ET, NACo will host a Stepping Up workshop at its Western Interstate Region Conference in Blaine County, Idaho. “Stepping Up: Collecting Accurate and Timely Data on People with Mental Illnesses in Your Jail,” will feature representatives from the three national Stepping Up partners, as well as presentations from Blaine County and three Innovator Counties: Douglas and Johnson counties, Kansas and Franklin County, Ohio.

The event will be livestreamed on NACo’s Facebook page, [Facebook.com/NACoDC](https://www.facebook.com/NACoDC). Join the conversation to hear about key strategies for accurately identifying people with mental illnesses coming into your jail and collecting consistent data on these individuals to better connect them to treatment and services and to inform strategic planning and funding to produce the best outcomes for your county.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The initiative will continue to host regular webinars to provide counties with the resources they need to be successful in their efforts. The next webinar is on June 7 at 2 p.m. ET and will focus on Key Measure #1 of Stepping Up: Strategies to reduce jail bookings of people with mental illnesses. Register for all webinars at NACo.org/webinars. NACo recently released three documents to assist county’s

implementing Stepping Up:

— County Elected Officials’ Guide to Talking to the Media and the Public About People with Mental Illnesses in their Jail

— County Elected Officials’ Guide to the Six Questions County Leaders Need to Ask

— Stepping Up Six Questions Case Studies

Keep an eye out for upcoming resources from Stepping Up!

EI-ISAC protects the nation's voting infrastructure

In March, the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC) opened for business to provide an elections-focused cyber defense suite to the nation's election offices and the partners that support them.

Since 2016, election security has been at the forefront of the national discussion. In January 2017, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) designated election infrastructure as a critical infrastructure subsector. This led to the formation of a subsector Government Coordinating Council (GCC) in partnership with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, the National Association of Secretaries of State and state and local election officials.

The GCC worked with the Multi-State ISAC (MS-ISAC) to conduct a four-month pilot program with election offices in seven states, aimed at identifying products and tools for improving communications and protecting against cybersecurity threats affecting the election community. The pilot has now expanded into a nationwide effort including nearly all 50 states and over 450 local election offices.

Funded by DHS and part of CIS, an independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization, the EI-ISAC builds on the MS-ISAC's model serving the cybersecurity needs of state, local, tribal and territorial governments. The EI-

ISAC brings together state and local election officials in a collaborative effort to prevent, protect, respond and recover from cyber security incidents.

As a federally funded organization, the EI-ISAC provides:

- 24x7x365 security operations center
- incident response and remediation
- threat and vulnerability monitoring
- election-specific threat intelligence
- training sessions and webinars, with discounts on training and other products
- security best practice recommendations and tools

The Security Operations Center, SOC, a centralized and coordinated command center with well-trained analysts, is available to respond to cyber threats

and questions surrounding security situations. Using a collection of tools, the SOC identifies threats and notifies election offices of cybersecurity threats affecting their jurisdiction.


Election officials and their staff have access to a range of focused products that address ongoing threats affecting the elections community and provide an understanding of the key cybersecurity issues and risks in the world today. Through a secure portal on the Homeland Security Information Sharing Network, EI-ISAC members can access documents and have an encrypted communication platform for discussing security issues.

CIS' *A Handbook for Elections Infrastructure Security* (available at <https://www.cisecurity.org/elections-resources>) allows election officials to directly address risks and challenges with actionable guidance to improve the security of state and local election infrastructure. Through the CIS Secure Suite membership offered to all state, local, tribal, and territorial government agencies, EI-ISAC members have the tools available to begin implementing these key risk mitigations.

By forging relationships with the DHS Election Task Force, other federal partners, and election organizations, the EI-ISAC is the premier clearinghouse for election-related cyber threat intelligence. It provides insights to

inform election officials' security decisions.

As a membership organization, EI-ISAC's partners have always said, its strongest part is the people. The ISAC's philos-

ophy is, "We can achieve more collectively, than we can individually." To join the EI-ISAC, simply complete the registration form at <https://learn.cisecurity.org/ei-isac-registration>. 

PROFILES IN SERVICE

JAMES GOLGART

NACo Board Member
Director of Veterans Services
Le Sueur County, Minn.



Goltart

Number of years involved in NACo: 6

Years in public service: 18

The hardest thing I've ever done is: See my youngest son being deployed to Iraq during the war.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy.

A dream I have is to: Travel to all 50 of the United States.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Have traveled to 46 of the 50 United States and I would venture to say most people can't guess which ones I am missing.

My favorite way to relax is to: Camp and spend time with my grandchildren.

I'm most proud of: Retiring from the United States Army and continuing to serve veterans by working as a county veteran service officer.

Every morning I read: Several local and national online news sites.

My favorite meal is: Steak grilled over an open fire.

My pet peeve is: People who abuse the system and believe they are entitled to everything.

My motto is: As President Kennedy once said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

The last book I read was: *Daring Greatly* by Brene Brown.

My favorite music is: Light rock.

My favorite U.S. president is: Ronald Reagan.

My county is a NACo member because: Of the opportunity to collaborate with other counties. NACo is a great resource for information.

LEARN MORE

To help county leaders and technology managers better understand this new initiative, the EI-ISAC will be present in Washington, D.C. at the National Symposium on Cybersecurity and Local Government on May 23 and in Nashville, Tenn. at NACo's Annual Conference from July 13-16.

For further information, please contact elections@cisecurity.org or visit www.cisecurity.org/ei-isac.

ON THE MOVE

NACo STAFF

• **Aaron Ridings** is the new program manager in the Counties Futures Lab. Ridings will be responsible for organizing high-level thought-leadership events, research projects in government innovation and research policy topics. Before joining NACo, he worked in the Ex-

ecutive Office of D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser as associate director. Prior to that, he worked as project director and senior fellow for the Western States Center. He also worked for the Center for American Progress and Multnomah County, Ore.

• **Emilia Istrate**, managing director, NACo Counties Futures

Lab, was a featured speaker at the Mid-Atlantic Statnet meeting in Prince George's County, Md. May 7.

• **Matt Chase**, executive director, and Istrate spoke on behalf of NACo at the Southern Counties Association Conference in Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas, May 8-10.



Ridings



Istrate

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:
Swim with stingrays in the Caribbean.



Bill would increase funding for Corps of Engineers

By Julie Ufner
associate legislative director

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development approved via voice vote on May 7 a \$44.7 billion appropriations measure that would fund the Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), nuclear weapons oversight and other federal energy and water programs. This represents a \$1.5 billion increase over FY 2018

funding levels and \$8.2 billion more than President Trump's FY 2019 budget request.

The Energy and Water appropriations bill is important to counties because it funds federal energy and water infrastructure projects that help counties build and maintain water infrastructure, and secure communities that have energy waste facilities.

The subcommittee's appropriation bill would increase funding for the Corps; overall, the Corps would receive \$7.28 billion, \$451 million above FY 2018 funding levels and \$1.48 billion more than the president's FY 2019 request. The increase in funding includes more than \$3 billion for navigation projects and studies, which include \$1.6

billion from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and full use of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund.

The DOE would receive \$35.5 billion in overall funding, an increase of \$1 billion despite the Trump Administration's proposal to significantly cut the DOE. The bill includes funding for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), which works to develop and promote clean, affordable and secure energy. Under the bill, EERE would receive \$2.1 billion, which is a \$200 million decrease from FY 2018. The Trump Administration proposed to cut the program by \$1.4 billion, to \$696 million for FY 2019.

The bill also includes \$267

million for the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada, \$100 million more than the president's FY 2019 request. This provision is relevant for those counties that have nuclear waste facilities within their boundaries, most of which were not designated to house spent nuclear fuel indefinitely. NACo supports construction of a suitable permanent nuclear waste repository, as well as the use of a central interim storage facility until such a site can be completed.

In addition to setting funding levels, the bill also includes a rider that would repeal the Obama Administration's 2015 "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rule. The provision could potentially expedite the Trump Administra-

tion's efforts to withdraw the 2015 rule, which is currently being challenged in federal district courts. If included in the final bill, the rider could clear a path for the Trump Administration to quickly withdraw and rewrite a new WOTUS rule.

The bill is scheduled to be considered by the Appropriations Committee and marked up by the end of June. Once it passes the committee, it will advance to the House floor for consideration

NACo will continue to track this legislation, as well as the broader appropriations process, and engage with appropriations leaders to ensure that federal spending priorities reflect the needs and interests of America's counties. **CN**



BUTLER COUNTY, Ohio

Butler County was formed in 1803, named after Richard Butler, a major general in the American Revolutionary War. The new seal, developed after extensive research by the current Board of Commissioners, is part of ongoing efforts from county officials to brand the county and will be transixed on water towers and buildings alike. "Our county is thought of as a place of infinite



opportunity including growth in development, business, government and the overall lifestyle for residents," said Mandi Cardosi, Communications Specialist.

Would you like to see your county's seal featured?
Contact Charlie Ban at cban@naco.org.

DHS wants to boost cybersecurity, shrink FEMA programs

By Jacob Terrell
associate legislative director

In testimony before Senate appropriators on homeland security, May 8, DHS Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said the Trump Administration's FY 2019 budget request includes \$158 million to protect the country's interoperable emergency communications systems and shore up DHS protection for the nation's election systems.

"We know that a sophisticated adversary can put the foundations of our democracy at risk through cyberattacks, which is why our request for FY 2019 would make sure DHS is positioned to counter foreign meddling by supporting state

and local election officials in defending the integrity of elections systems," Nielsen said.

"The budget also would provide \$158 million to secure the nation's interoperable emergency communications capabilities that enable first responders and government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural or man-made disasters," she added.

The administration's budget proposes \$47.5 billion in net discretionary funding for DHS, and an additional \$6.7 billion for the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) for response and recovery to major disasters.

And while NACo applauds DHS and the administration for

an increased focus on cybersecurity and more funding for responding to natural disasters, it remains uneasy about other provisions in the budget request that include significant cuts to programs important to local governments. These include:

- Reduced federal funding for five specific preparedness grant programs (the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) and Public Transportation Security Assistance (PTSA) by a combined \$471.7 million, or 29 percent.

- Reduced federal funding for FEMA's budget for educa-

tion, training, and exercises by \$129.2 million, or 47 percent.

- Reduced federal funding for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program by \$61 million, or 61 percent.

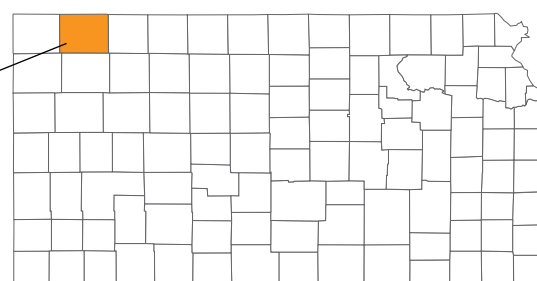
- The elimination of FEMA's budget for the Emergency Food and Shelter program, a cut of \$120 million.

NACo, along with the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), has advised the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of their concerns in maintaining funding for items important to local governments. **CN**

New NACo★
Member

**GET TO
KNOW...**

**Rawlins
County, Kan.**



Welcome, Rawlins County, Kan.

Rawlins County was named for John A. Rawlins, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's chief of staff during the Civil War. Sadly, Rawlins passed away only a few months after accepting the position of secretary of war in Grant's first presidential administration in 1869. Rawlins County is the birthplace to at least two famous Kansans — Gov. Mike Hayden, who served as the Kansas governor from 1987-1991 and **Rudolph Wendelin, who created the character "Smokey the Bear" for the Park Service.**



BRIGHT IDEAS | SUTTER-YUBA counties, Calif.

Teamwork shrinks mental health patient wait times at ER



Sutter-Yuba Behavioral Health Department staff members pause for a photo. The mental health clinic works with a local hospital emergency room to help speed up psychiatric evaluations. Photo courtesy of Susan Redford

By Mary Ann Barton
senior staff writer

At the Sutter-Yuba Behavioral Health Department, a mental health clinic run by both Sutter and Yuba counties in northern California's Central Valley, patients often showed up and waited for hours before they were seen.

"We would have people coming in, in true distress, sometimes under the influence, sometimes with true psychiatric disorders," said Susan Redford, psychiatric emergency supervisor for the county-run Sutter-Yuba Behavioral Health clinic in Sutter County, Calif.

"We saw it all," she said. "One of the difficulties is, when a person is placed on a '51-50' (an involuntary psychiatric hold) we would send them to the ER to get medically cleared and then bring them back to our tiny facility. We would have families and children and people who were psychotic or under the influence all crammed into our waiting rooms and spilling onto our lawns and literally on our roof.

We had reached critical mass."

In addition to people coming to the mental health clinic and being sent to the ER and then returning to the mental health clinic, the ER was seeing a lot of walk-ins of people with mental health problems, who likewise were waiting hours for treatment.

"That's what happens across the country," Redford said. "They sit in the hallways and nothing happens."

Nationwide, visits to the emergency room by people experiencing mental and substance use disorders climbed 56 percent from 2006 to 2013, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Yuba and Sutter counties have devised something of a solution, Redford said, by providing 24/7 psychiatric services at the emergency room at the local hospital. The new program is reducing by half the number of people who must be placed in involuntary psychiatric holds, she said.

The program launched when the counties turned

what was once an adversarial relationship between their mental health clinic and the local hospital into one of collaboration, she said. "We truly had the poster child model for an adversarial relationship."

Redford described the relationship between hospital ERs and mental health clinics, and their relationship in particular, saying: "It's like 'No, it's your person because they're psychotic. No, it's your person because it's a true medical emergency.' There was a lot of pushback with a lot of people being angry."

Redford said the breakthrough came about two years ago, after a meeting that included the Behavioral Health Department director and the hospital CEO.

After the meeting, the county's then-Mental Health Director Tony Hobson came to Redford on a Friday afternoon and said she needed to have a behavioral health specialist report to the hospital ER that coming Monday morning. Redford sent one staffer over. "It was not enough, I promise

you, but we had to start somewhere."

The program works like this: Anyone who is placed on an involuntary psychiatric hold is taken to the ER where their physical health is evaluated by the ER and their mental health is assessed by the county behavioral health specialist; a third component is for the patient, if necessary, to see an emergency psychiatrist via video conference.


Those psychiatrists are available 24/7, with the hospital bearing the cost for the service, Redford said. Other than its use in jails, seeing a psychiatrist by video conference was "primarily unheard of for your regular community member" in the county, she noted.

Now the county mental health clinic sends all of their patients who report with involuntary psychiatric holds to the ER, where there are now up to three behavioral specialists embedded at the ER at all times. The ER was able to get Medi-Cal (the federal Medicaid program in California) certified so the county could

bill the hospital for the county behavioral health specialists.

Redford said today, there is a good relationship between the county mental health department and the hospital, with constant communication. "We decided to make a bigger team," she said. "The emergency department treats us as part of their team. We treat them as part of our team. We talk almost every day." The two go to each other's parties and awards dinners and are learning to "talk the same language."

"I have been in this field for almost 30 years and I've done it all," Redford said.

"And the feedback we get from the people who have been long term in our system — they are emotional, they're tearful, they say this is the best they've ever been treated." 

The program has earned a Challenge Award from the California State Association of Counties. For more information about the program, contact Redford at sredford@co.sutter.ca.us.

Submit your resolutions now for Annual Conference

NACo members are invited to submit policy resolutions and platform changes to be considered at NACo's Annual Conference in Davidson County/Nashville, Tenn. July 13-16.

The NACo resolutions process provides members with the ability to participate in national policy decisions affecting county governments. During the Annual Conference, NACo's 10 policy steering committees, Board of Directors and the general membership consider policy resolutions that will guide NACo advocacy until the NACo Annual Conference in July 2019.

The American County Platform and the association's policy resolutions are carefully considered statements of the needs and interests of county governments throughout the nation. These policy statements serve as a guide for NACo members and staff to advance the association's federal policy agenda before Congress, the White House and federal agencies. Please refer to the comprehensive overview of NACo's policy resolution process here.



NACo members take part in the resolutions process.

How to submit and format resolutions

When submitting resolutions and platform changes, please work with the appropriate steering committee staff liaison to adhere to the following guidelines:

All resolutions and platform changes must be submitted electronically (preferably as a Word document) via email to resolutions@naco.org by June 13. Submissions MUST identify the title and issue area in the email subject line (e.g. Social Services Block Grant, Human Services and Education).

Go to <https://bit.ly/2KD-pIXM> to see a sample resolution.

Resolutions should be concise and no more than one page in length. The standard format includes:

- **Issue:** Short sentence stat-

See **RESOLUTIONS** page 11

WORD SEARCH

BUTLER COUNTY, Ohio
Created By: Mary Ann Barton

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS
FEATURED COUNTY IN
'BEHIND THE SEAL'.

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

AMISH: An Amish-Mennonite settlement existed in the county in the 19th century. Today there are nearly 60,000 Amish in Ohio.

BOEHNER: The former speaker of the House, John Boehner is a native of the county.

BROADCASTING: The National Voice of America (VOA) Museum of Broadcasting is located in Butler County. The museum is housed at the Bethany Station ground radio station, the first to broadcast overseas shortly after Pearl Harbor.

BUTLER: The county is named for Revolutionary War Major Gen. Richard Butler. He died in Ohio fighting Native Americans.

CANAL: The Miami-Erie Canal operated in the county from 1825 to 1929.

CINCINNATI: The county is about 45 minutes north of Cincinnati.

COURTHOUSE: The Butler County Courthouse was completed in 1889 by architect David W. Gibbs; it is a registered historic building in the National Register.

FAIR: The Butler County Fair dates back to 1836, according to the *Journal-News*. The first fair featured farm tools and displays of produce and livestock.

FLOOD: The Great Flood of 1913 killed more than 100 people in the county.

FLUBS: Flub's Dari-ette is a family-owned soft-serve ice cream stand, in the county for more than 50 years.

GLASS: The county is home to the oldest continually operating stained glass studio in the U.S., the Beau-Verre Riordan Stained Glass Studio.

HAMILTON: The county seat.

HOSPITALS: The county is home to six hospitals.

RICHTER: Charles Francis Richter, the scientist who devised the Richter scale for earthquakes, is from the county.

TRAINS: The county is home to EnterTRAINment Junction, the world's largest indoor train-themed entertainment center.


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U.S. Counties

REFRESH YOUR **LIVE HEALTHY PROGRAM** WITH NACo'S ONLINE MARKETING TOOLKIT

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- Update your county's contact person
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Disaster Recovery and Reform Act attached to FAA reauthorization

By Jacob Terrell
associate legislative director

The Disaster Recovery and Reform Act, passed by the House April 27 as part of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 4), would implement new reforms to the Robert T. Stafford Act, which outlines many of FEMA's key roles in disaster response.

New provisions included in the Disaster Recovery Reform Act important to local governments include measures that would allow the federal government to provide direct funding to local governments to pay for base and overtime wages for new employees who implement or enforce

building codes that reduce the likelihood for damages to structures due to natural disasters.

The bill would also direct FEMA and the Federal Highway Administration to develop and issue guidance for local governments regarding the identification, design and construction of evacuation routes to help move residents and workers away from hazardous areas that have been impacted by disasters.

Additionally, the bill would direct FEMA to provide guidance to state and local governments, first responders and utility companies on the need to prioritize assistance to hospitals, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities

to ensure they continue to function during power outages caused by natural disasters.

NACo supports many of the key reforms included in the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act that would benefit local governments; however, we have our own concerns with how portions (section 609 in particular) would redirect funding from the Disaster Relief Fund, which is intended to support post disaster recovery efforts.

The Senate has not acted on the House-passed bill to date, however NACo will continue to work with members in the upper chamber to ensure that key reforms that benefit local governments are not stripped. [CN](#)

A resolutions 'how to'

From RESOLUTIONS page 9

ing the purpose of the resolution and how the issue impacts counties

– **Proposed policy:** Concise statement specifying a position or action by NACo and/or other entities

– **Background:** A one- or two-paragraph statement clearly outlining the county interest in the particular issue

– **Fiscal/urban/rural impact:** Short statement addressing the potential impact(s) for counties in the specific issue area

– **Sponsor:** Name and contact information of NACo member sponsoring the resolution. It is important to include contact information so that the NACo staff can follow up if there are any questions or additional information required

Important reminder: If you

plan to submit a policy resolution, you (or a designated representative) must appear in person at the steering committee meeting at the 2018 Annual Conference to introduce and explain the resolution.

Platform changes and existing resolutions

Platform changes are considered only at the Annual Conference. Also, all resolutions previously passed at last year's 2017 Annual Conference or at NACo's 2018 Legislative Conference, expire at this conference and must be resubmitted as either a resolution or platform change in order to continue as NACo policy. [CN](#)

For questions, please contact Deborah Cox, legislative affairs director: dcoc@naco.org; 202.942.4286.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2018 NACo ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS!

615 WINNING ENTRIES IN COUNTIES ACROSS 29 STATES

BEST IN CATEGORY WINNERS

ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy uses the Arts to Raise Awareness About Addiction
Harford County, Md.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Early Intervention Autism Clinic
Henrico County, Va.

CIVIC EDUCATION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Community Immunity Honor Society-Improving Immunization Rates in Schools
Alameda County, Calif.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Growing Pontiac
Oakland County, Mich.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Neighborhood Actions Teams
Montgomery County, Md.

COUNTY RESILIENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental Stewardship Collaborative
Summit County, Utah

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Dakota County Community Corrections Whole Family Approach at the New Chance Day Treatment Program
Dakota County, Minn.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES

Financial Life Skills Training with Inmates
St. Lucie County, Fla.

HEALTH

Brenda's Casamia Restaurant and Catering
Ventura County, Calif.

HUMAN SERVICES

Baby Steps
Wilson County, N.C.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

BIM360 Collaborative Hub
Montgomery County, Md.



LIBRARIES

Fresh Ideas for Growing Community
Gwinnett County, Ga.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Adaptive Crossfit and Yoga
Mecklenburg County, N.C.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Person Centered Service Coaching
San Diego County, Calif.

PLANNING

Regional Housing Strategy
Boulder County, Colo.

RISK AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

At-Risk Resident Weather Radio Distribution Project
Henrico County, Va.

TRANSPORTATION

Edgewater Drive Phase II
Charlotte County, Fla.

VOLUNTEERS

Love Where You Live: Keep Mercer Clean
Mercer County, W.Va.

www.naco.org/achievementawards

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

COLORADO

BOULDER COUNTY is stepping up its presence at **privately-run halfway houses** after state inspections found that problematic inmate behavior was not being properly documented, the *Times-Call* newspaper reported. A Boulder County staffer was assigned to spend more time on-site at each halfway house to implement the desired changes to the behavioral violation sanctioning process, the newspaper reported.

DELAWARE

Last year, **NEW CASTLE COUNTY** police received 760 calls from people struggling with **mental health issues**. Licensed professional counselors are now riding along in police cars, responding to calls where a person may be in crisis and benefit from a mental health professional, *The News Journal* reported.

The partnership between the county police and Connections Community Support Programs is the latest way the county is working to combat mental health issues in the community.

"I really feel like we're making a difference," Officer Colleen Kearns said. "We're just not going there putting a Band-Aid on it. We're putting people in connection with services that are going to make a difference."

FLORIDA

— Under a new law signed by Gov. Rick Scott (R), counties are required to hire **armed security guards** on every school campus. The new mandate leaves nearly all the state's counties scrambling to fund the new position. At least two counties — **MONROE** and **HERNANDO** — are consid-

ering raising their local property taxes to pay for the costs, the *Tampa Bay Times* reported. **PUTNAM COUNTY** has put together a 21-person task force to figure out what type of armed security the district will choose.

Some counties including **HILLSBOROUGH, POLK** and **DUVAL** are considering hiring ex-police officers or retired military.

The new law prohibits full-time teachers from being armed but allows other employees such as coaches to take the required 132 hours of training if the county approves. Some county officials say they are worried that there will be a shortage of personnel to hire for the armed security positions.

— **BROWARD COUNTY** has filed a lawsuit against Gov. Rick Scott (R) over a state law that **preempts counties from passing tighter restrictions on firearms**, the *Miami Herald* reported. The county said it took action after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and mentioned that "repeated, horrific, mass shootings have devastated American communities."

Broward County Commissioner Nan Rich, a co-plaintiff, said "it is very important for our county to take a stand on this because it affects our ability to keep people safe in our communities."

— **SANTA ROSA COUNTY** will charge an annual \$500 fee for the use of its **tourism logos and slogans**, the *Pensacola News Journal* reported.

The slogans and logos are part of the county's \$700,000 ad



GEORGIA

CHATHAM and **EFFINGHAM counties'** emergency responders were on the scene May 2 after a military C-130 plane carrying members of the Puerto Rico Air National Guard 156th Airlift Wing crashed killing all nine aboard after crashing onto Chatham County's Highway 21, moments after takeoff from Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport. The Chatham County coroner was on the scene as emergency crews began recovering bodies. Effingham County Sheriff's spokeswoman Gena Bilbo said no cars were hit in the crash. Photo courtesy of Savannah Professional Firefighters Association

campaign with a Florida ad agency. Copyrighted slogans "Navarre Beach, Florida's Most Relaxing Place" and "Navarre Beach, Florida's Panhandle" were popular picks. Requests for use go through the county attorney and county commission for final approval.



HAWAII

Triggered by a series of small earthquakes and later a 5-magnitude quake, Hawaii's **Kilauea volcano** erupted May 3, rolling lava into the streets of a subdivision and forcing 2,000 people to evacuate the area, about 220 miles from Honolulu, according to the Associated Press. **HAWAII COUNTY** Civil Defense and the entire county emergency response team was on high alert around the clock after the eruption. The county warned citizens to be on alert for lava, fire, smoke, methane gas, earthquakes and poor air quality.



IDAHO

ADA COUNTY Highway District has begun a \$61 million **road construction** season, starting nearly 90 projects, the *Idaho Statesman* reported. The projects include widening roads, repairing bridges, add-

ing and improving sidewalks, putting in bike lanes, installing pedestrian ramps, improving curbs and storm drains and sealing cracked pavement.

A bigger infusion of developer fees is helping fund what the district is calling “Constructionmageddon.” The “impact fees” help offset the future traffic impact of buildings on local roads. The region’s rapid growth is fueling a projected \$20 million in fees this year.

ILLINOIS

EFFINGHAM, IROQUOIS, SALINE, JEFFERSON and PERRY counties have declared themselves to be ‘**sanctuary cities**’ for gun owners. The five counties recently passed resolutions to provide sanctuary for gun owners from any state legislation that would place restrictions on gun ownership.

“It’s a buzzword that really gets attention. With all these sanctuary cities, we just decided to turn it around to protect our Second Amendment rights,” said David Campbell, vice chairman of the Effingham County Board, in a *New York Times* article.

He said at least 20 Illinois counties and local officials in Oregon and Washington have asked for copies of Effingham County’s resolution.

MARYLAND

The state’s most populous county may follow in the footsteps of other local jurisdictions across the country and dedicate funds to **help defend undocumented immigrants** facing deportation.

At a packed public hearing May 1, **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** Council members got an earful from both supporters and opponents of a controversial plan to set aside \$374,000 in legal aid money for low income residents facing removal from the country. A vote has not yet been scheduled.

Montgomery County has nearly 1 million residents, one-third of whom are foreign-born.

MICHIGAN

OAKLAND COUNTY will add **42,000 jobs** by 2020, according to a new report out by the University of Michigan. Many of the jobs will pay \$75,000 or more, an economist who worked on the report said. The job market continues to grow due to economic diversity, a highly educated labor force and policy initiatives that focus on future growth sectors. Oakland County has added more than 119,000 new jobs since 2010, and its average growth pace of 2.6 percent “well outpaced” the nation, the report said. The only problem the county faces: the possibility of a labor shortage in the next few years.

MISSOURI

JACKSON COUNTY voters may be asked in November to approve a 5 percent property tax increase to raise roughly \$5.3 million a year to help **fund programs for senior citizens**, *The Kansas City Star* reported. The county would levy a countywide tax at the rate of 5 cents per each \$100 of assessed valuation. The funds would be used to provide programs for the health, nutrition and quality of life for those 60 and older. An oversight board would be appointed to sort through grant requests from agencies serving the elderly. The Jackson County Legislature passed the ordinance April 30 with eight votes (and one member absent) and the measure will be on the ballot come November, according to Jackson County Legislature Chairman Scott Burnett.

MONTANA

A proposal to **create a new county** in Montana is being considered by **GLACIER** and **PONDERA** county commissioners, the *Missoulian* newspaper reported. A state lawmaker plans to ask the counties to chip in for a feasibility study that would look at the costs of creating and running the state’s 57th county from Blackfeet Reservation. The proposal comes after a

long winter when residents on the reservation were stranded for weeks due to deep snow drifts. Pondera County Commissioner Janice Hoppes told the newspaper the neighbor county has no authority to plow roads on the reservation.

She said she’s open to the idea of creating a new county. “This is the first I’ve heard of this concept and I’m anxious to hear more,” she said. Harold Blattie, executive director of the Montana Association of Counties, estimates that the cost of transcribing records would be exorbitant. Montana’s original counties were created between 1865 and 1923. Meanwhile state Rep. George Kipp III, whose district includes Glacier and Ponderosa counties, is still interested in exploring the idea and a new name is already being discussed — Pikuni or Pikini, one of the three branches of the Blackfeet Nation.



NEVADA

— There’s a distinct difference between a baseball game and a protest, and **CLARK COUNTY** may act accordingly, **banning potential weapons** — like bats — from demonstrations within the county.

The long list of items that would be banned includes torches, bricks, knives, ice picks, bats, slingshots, shields and nunchucks. Stun guns and pepper spray containers larger than a half-ounce would also be banned. Small sticks and pipes used to hoist signs and flags would be allowed at pro-

tests. Larger sticks and pipes would not, according to *The Review-Journal*.

— **WASHOE COUNTY**’s Recorder’s Office is testing a blockchain-based system for the **digitization of certified marriage certificates**. Residents currently have to call the clerk’s office to get a certified copy of their certificate mailed to them, which takes 5–7 business days to arrive. The pilot program uses blockchain-based tools — which will prevent certificates from being deleted or changed — to allow the recorder’s office to offer expedited certified copies of marriage certificates, *News 4* reported.

Gov. Brian Sandoval (R) signed a bill last year integrating companies that use blockchain technology into the state’s infrastructure, prohibiting taxation and regulations regarding the use and implementation of the technology.

NEW JERSEY

— PILT issues aren’t only confined to public lands counties. On the East Coast, specifically **ATLANTIC COUNTY**, a **PILT** (they call it “PILOT”) settlement with the state over Atlantic City casinos will eventually steer 13.5 percent of the money the casinos pay in lieu of property taxes to the county, according to *The Press*.

The 10-year casino payment-in-lieu-of-taxes program, or PILOT, was passed into law in 2016. It required casinos to collectively pay \$120 million in its first year in 2017, with amounts in subsequent years determined by how well the casinos do financially.

— **OCEAN COUNTY** has adopted a resolution of protest against a state Senate bill that would **force counties to change the name of their freeholder boards** to boards of commissioners.

It is a change from an earlier draft that, like the state Assembly’s version, allows counties the choice of what to call their legislative bodies.

MONMOUTH COUNTY Freeholder Director Thomas Arnone said the bill would be an unfunded mandate because counties would have to change their names on literature and signage, the *Asbury Park Press* reported.

Bill sponsor Sen. Joseph Pennacchio has said the title of freeholder needs to be changed because the name is a vestige of 18th-century civic life in New Jersey, before there was universal suffrage. In 18th century New Jersey, only a freeholder, a male who owned land free of debts or legal claims, could be elected or appointed to serve on the Chosen Freeholders Board.

OHIO

CUYAHOGA COUNTY’s Department of Consumer Affairs can now **investigate and enforce consumer laws**.

Before the County Council approved legislation for a new section in the county’s code to that effect, investigators with the department could attempt to mediate a resolution to a complaint against a business, but were unable to pursue legal action, instead referring the cases to the appropriate agency. **SUMMIT COUNTY** also has a similar setup, *The Plain Dealer* reported.

OREGON

Women and minorities entering the construction trades will get a boost from a new fund set up by the **MULTNOMAH COUNTY** Board.

It will fund small business development, providing technical assistance, mentoring, association sponsorships and other support to certified disadvantaged, minority and female-owned small businesses. It will also support worker retention, to increase the number of apprentices who continue onto journey-level work.

The Construction Diversity and Equity Fund will draw 1 percent from county remodeling projects with budgets above \$200,000 and new con-

the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkler

Cell Phones: Three-Pronged Problem for Employers

In the 2018 Budweiser Super Bowl commercial, “Stand By You,” the general manager of the Cartersville, Ga. plant gets called in to work in the middle of the night to make and deliver canned, clean drinking water to a community impacted by a natural disaster. The commercial begins with a cell phone vibrating on a nightstand.

Twenty years ago, such a call out would have rung a landline on a nightstand, but today, fewer and fewer people have a landline. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which tracks phone usage, states that “the second six months of 2016 was the first time that a majority of American homes had only wireless telephones,” while the percentage of households with a landline as their only phone communication device was 6.5 percent.

The shift from landlines to cell phones creates better connectivity for employees and employers. Employers are able to get in contact with employees more quickly and easily than ever before, while employees are able to receive calls, emails and texts about emerging issues while out of the office. Employees traveling for work, or working in the field, have a way to call for help in an emergency, such as being broken down on the side of the road.

And the convenience is in no way limited to employees outside of the office. A receptionist can text a staff member in a meeting that their next appointment arrived early, rather than walking a note into a meeting or knocking on a door and interrupting.

According to a *textrequest.com* article:

- Over 6 billion texts are sent every day in the United States.
- 97 percent of American

adults text weekly.

- Americans text twice as much as they call, on average.
- Nearly 70 percent of employees think text should be used for interoffice communication.
- 33 percent of American adults prefer texts to all other forms of communication.
- Texting is 10 times quicker than phone calls.
- 95 percent of texts will be read within three minutes of being sent.
- Average response time for a text is 90 seconds.

So if cell phones represent an increase in communication and customer service, what could possibly be the down side?

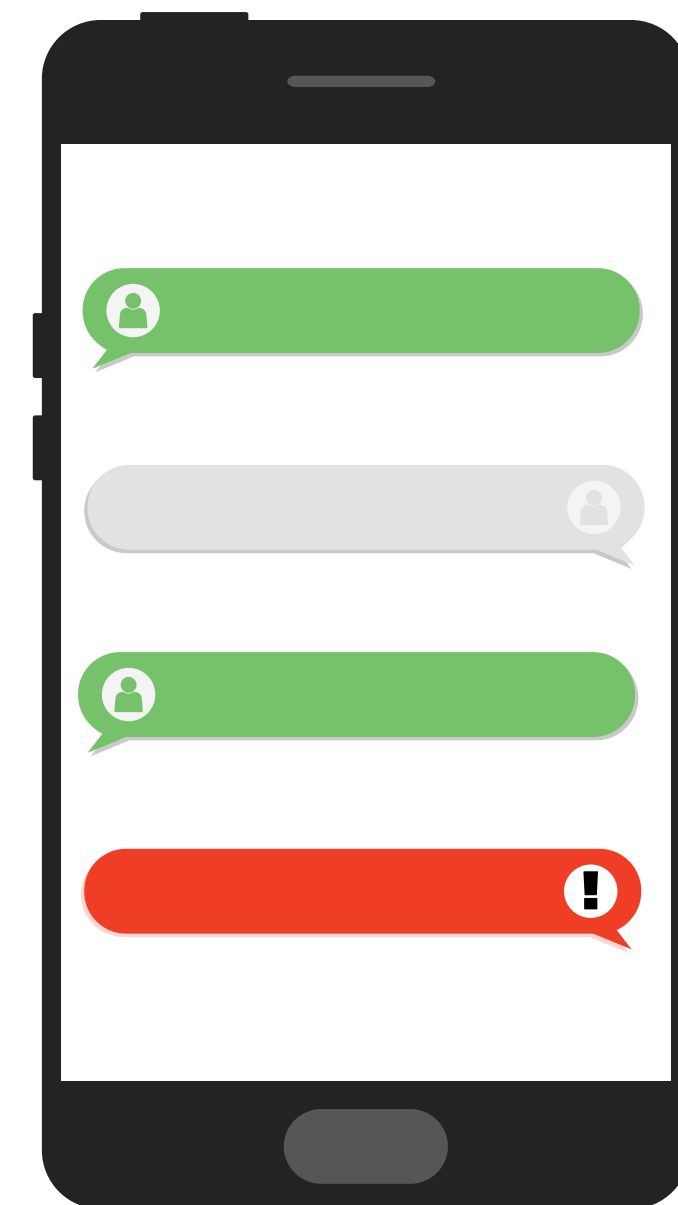
In 2015, a case out of the State of Washington crystallized the problematic nature of using text messages in the course of conducting official public business. In *Nissen v. Pierce County*, 183 Wash.2d 863, the Washington Supreme Court found that “text messages sent and received by a public employee in the employee’s official capacity are public records of the employer, even if the employee uses a private cell phone.”

In the case, the Pierce County prosecutor used his personal cell phone in the course of his official duties.

In considering whether the text messages exchanged using his personal phone were public records, the court found that text messages sent or received in the employee’s official capacity as an elected prosecutor “can be public records of the county, regardless of the public or private nature of the device used to create them.”

Subsequently, the public official was ordered by the court to “obtain, segregate and produce those public records to the county” to comply with the Public Records Act (PRA).

The ruling went on to say, “if the PRA did not capture records



individual employees prepare, own, use, or retain in the course of their jobs, the public would be without information about much of the daily operation of government.”

In the interest of transparency, business messages must be produced as public records, even if the records were created on a personal device. And in order for a public entity to produce such records, they must be retained and maintained.

The ruling considered not just the language of Washington’s Public Records Act, but also noted three local government policies advising employees that public business on a personal mobile device is subject to the state public records act.

Each example includes lan-

be approved in writing by a department head or elected official and must be coordinated with Central Services in order to “effectuate the archiving of such text messages.”

Providing company cell phones doesn’t solve the problem either, as text messages must be archived according to applicable records retention laws.

In November 2017, the *Tallahassee Democrat* newspaper filed a lawsuit against the City of Tallahassee for failing to produce text messages belonging to the city manager, alleging the city violated state public records law by failing to preserve text messages.

The text messages had been deleted from the city manager’s personal phone.

The city does not dispute that the messages are public records and intends to use the litigation to create policies and procedures for archiving and producing text messages that will ultimately be approved by the state court.

And while some technology companies are seeing opportunity in this emerging area, many organizations have not moved quickly to adopt any new technology.

Additionally, even once they obtain the necessary technology, their policies may still be out of date or may make the technology ineffective.

To avoid burdening their officials with multiple cell phones — the work phone and the personal phone — many counties have policies that provide a cell phone reimbursement or a cell phone allowance that is paid to an official to compensate for use of his personal phone for public business.

But allowing officials and employees to use their personal phones for public business takes

language about retention of information on a mobile device. One of the examples referenced by the court, the Thurston County Administrative Manual, Personal Mobile Device Policy, states, “Employees shall not use texting for any County business.”

While some local government agencies, like Thurston County, prohibit all texting for business, regardless of whether the device is employer-owned or private, other organizations have decided to allow limited texting. MRSC Rosters, a directory for public agencies and businesses in the state of Washington, lists Benton County as such an example.

The county’s policy generally prohibits texting. Exceptions, however, “are allowed but must

From HR DOCTOR page 14

the control of public records out of the organization's hands. No matter what technology the county has in place, it's quite unreliable if employees are expected to self-manage their texts.

Ultimately, it sets the entity up to be the next city of Tallahassee, acknowledging that the requested message is a public record, but having no ability to retrieve it before the employee deletes it.

(Not to mention the cumbersome nature of these policies, and their potentially subjective and inconsistent application between departments or between employees. That's a whole other article.)

As your organization or department considers revising your cell phone policy to keep up with the increasing use of texting, don't forget to consider the following questions:

- 1) Should the organization prohibit texting?
- 2) Should the organization provide employer-owned cell phones for business so as to prevent personal cell phones from creating public records?
- 3) How will the organization retain the information from cell phones according to the public records law applicable to your jurisdiction?

An elected official with many field employees shared that her department previously had county cell phones available for employees going into the field, and over time, fewer and fewer of the organization-owned phones were being used.

Employees preferred to use their own mobile devices. As employees begin to better understand that their personal devices may be exposed to public records scrutiny, though, perhaps they will no longer want to use their personal phone for business.

Perhaps carrying two phones will become the more convenient option.

Or, rather, public entities will determine they can no longer value what is "convenient" for employees over the risk of civil liability and the erosion of the public trust. **EN**

From NEWS FROM page 13

struction over \$1 million, and it will benefit organizations that provide pre-apprenticeship training to young people who often come from minority and low-income families with no connection to the trades.

TENNESSEE

On primary election night, a **distributed denial of service attack** crashed **KNOX COUNTY's** election website.

Such an attack overwhelmed the website with an unsustainable amount of internet traffic. Though the website was down for roughly an hour, CNET reported, it only affected public viewing of results, because the voting machines themselves are not connected online.

TEXAS

Three border counties are joining a lawsuit against the federal government's inclusion of a **citizenship question** on the 2020 census, concerned that the question could dissuade residents from participating and causing their population count to be inaccurate. That would affect congressional representation and reduce federal funding for the counties.

HIDALGO, CAMERON and EL PASO counties joined 31 other plaintiffs in an amended federal lawsuit filed against the U.S. Department of Commerce, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur L. Ross Jr., the Census Bureau and its director, Ron Jarmin. All three counties have similar demographics, with a large percentage of residents who are foreign-born, Hispanic or undocumented, *The Monitor* reported. At least 18 states, Texas not included, and a number of other governmental jurisdictions have joined the lawsuit.

VIRGINIA

— **LOUDOUN COUNTY** is considering offering its employees **paid family leave**.

The Board of Supervisors passed a measure directing the

county to study and develop family leave options and to research their costs, including whether to start with just maternity leave.

County workers can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave under the federal Family Medical Leave Act, and Supervisor Ron Meyer said family leave could make the county more competitive when hiring, WTOP News reported,.

— A recycled materials manufacturer of wood-alternative outdoor items has pledged to give **YORK COUNTY** free benches if **500 pounds of plastic bags** are collected for recycling within six

months.

If the county collects the 500 pounds multiple times, the York County Beautification Committee plans to donate the benches first to county schools and then place them in other public areas.

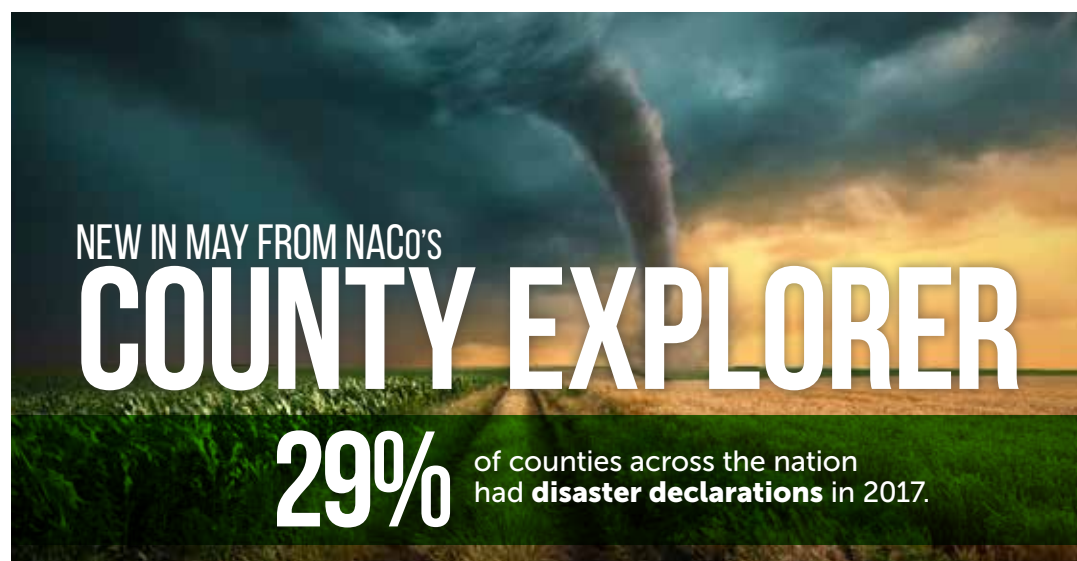
The county will hold collections during farmer's markets and at the waste management center for plastic bags and other plastic materials that can-

not be included in curbside recycling, *The Williamsburg Yorktown Daily* reported.

Plastic film products can't be processed like other plastics and end up harming the recycling machinery when they are mixed with regular recycling. The Trex Company, which will supply the benches, will accept the unusable plastics.

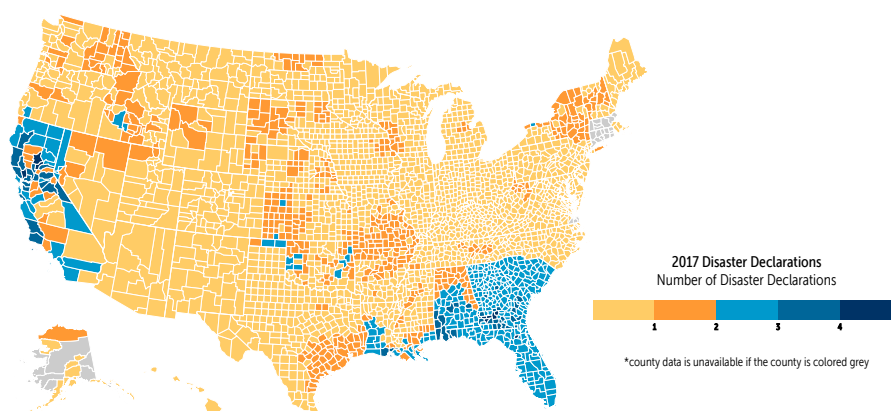
News from Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Mary Ann Barton, senior staff writers. Bev Schlotterbeck, executive editor, also contributed to this report. If you have an item for News From, please email cban@naco.org or mbarton@naco.org.

ACROSS THE NATION



38% of counties had median home values of less than \$100,000 in 2016.

66% of counties invested nearly \$10.7 billion in housing and community development in 2015.



Source: NACo Analysis of the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency 2017 Disasters data, as of March 18, 2018.

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE (full schedule available online)

THURSDAY, JULY 12

- 8:30 a.m.** CIO and Technology Leadership Forum
- 1:00 p.m.** Smarter Counties Summit: Technology Driving Innovation, Day 1
- 2:00 p.m.*** **Mobile Workshops** – choose from:
- Cumberland River Compact
 - Nashville's Barnes Fund and Housing Incentive Pilot Program (HIPP)
 - Resilience & Disaster Tour
 - Oasis Center Tour on Youth Resiliency
- *approximate start time*
- 4:00 p.m.** Documentary Screening and Discussion: Heroin(e)
- 5:30 p.m.** Smarter Counties Summit: Technology Driving Innovation – Reception

FRIDAY, JULY 13

- 7:30 a.m.** First-Time Attendees Orientation
- 9:00 a.m.** Policy Steering Committee & Business Meetings (*open to all conference attendees*)
- 12:00 p.m.** Healthy Counties Roundtable
NextGen Community Service Project – Oasis Center
Smarter Counties Summit: Technology Driving Innovation, Day 2
- 4:00 p.m.** Exhibit Hall Reception
- 6:00 p.m.** NACo Opening Reception – a **“Taste of Tennessee”** event you won't want to miss!

SATURDAY, JULY 14

- 8:30 a.m.** Standing, Ad Hoc, Advisory and Task Force Meetings
- 9:00 a.m.** Exhibit Hall Open
- 10:00 a.m.** Crisis Communication Strategies for County Officials (*separate RSVP and fee required*)
- 12:00 p.m.** Resilient Counties: Leveraging New Technologies to Build More Resilient & Sustainable Communities
- 1:45 p.m.** NACo Board Forum
- 2:00 p.m.** Engaging Artists, Building Community: A Meeting of the NACo Arts & Culture Commission
- 3:15 p.m.** General Session

SUNDAY, JULY 15

- 9:00 a.m.** Affordable Housing Forum (*separate RSVP required*)
Exhibit Hall Open
Educational Workshops
NACo Board of Directors and Resolutions Committee Meeting
- 10:30 a.m.** Educational Workshops
- 12:00 p.m.** NACo Achievement Awards Luncheon sponsored by Aetna
- 2:15 p.m.** Educational Workshops
Essential Practices in Technology Leadership for County Officials (*separate RSVP and fee required*)
- 3:45 p.m.** Educational Workshops
- 5:30 p.m.** A Night in Downtown Nashville
Experience the heart of Nashville! NACo will provide looping roundtrip transportation for all conference attendees from the Gaylord Opryland to downtown Nashville for you to explore on your own.
- 7:00 p.m.** LUCC/RAC Reception (*invitation only*)

MONDAY, JULY 16

- 8:00 a.m.** Educational Workshops
- 9:30 a.m.** NACo Annual Business Meeting and Election
- 11:45 a.m.** Regional Caucus Meetings
- 1:30 p.m.** General Session
- 3:45 p.m.** NACo New Board of Directors Organizational Meeting
- 6:30 p.m.** NACo Closing Celebration Event

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Marian Wright Edelman
Founder and President,
Children's Defense Fund



Eddie George
NFL Legend, Entrepreneur
and Renaissance Man



Full schedule of events now available at www.NACo.org/Annual

