CN
CountyNews

NACO SEEKS INPUT ON COSTS FOR NEW SAFETY RULES PG. 2

VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS ON OPIOID ABUSE TO BE HELD IN JUNE PG. 3

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY PLANS PREVENT DEATHS AND CONGESTION PG. 7

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES VOL.48, NO. 11 MAY 30, 2016

New overtime rule signals significant county impact

By Eryn Hurley
legislative assistant

The U.S. Department of Labor's final rule on overtime pay amends regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act governing the "white collar" exemption from overtime pay for executive, administrative and professional employees.

The final rule focuses primarily on updating the salary and compensation levels needed for executive, administrative and professional workers to be exempt from overtime requirements. Specifically, it sets the standard salary level at the 40th percentile of earnings for full-time salaried workers, which is $913 per week or

See OVERTIME page 6

Western Interstate Region conference attendees view the arugula riding on the carousel at Vertical Harvest, a public-private greenhouse in Teton County, Wyo. during a tour arranged by NACo's Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee May 25. The building, leased from the town of Jackson, is 30 feet wide and 150 feet long and the three-story carousels along the south side of the building help crops to balance natural light and artificial light. The greenhouse allows for a year-round growing season, and in a half acre, grows 5 acres worth of produce, roughly 100,000 pounds per year, which is sold to restaurants that don't have existing relationships with local farmers. Photo by Charlie Ban

HIDTA designation offers resources for counties' heroin fight

CountyNews HOT TOPICS

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

The country roads of West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle are carrying more and more heroin to markets far and wide.

Because those panhandle counties serve as a corridor for the drug trade, they qualify for federal aid to help fight the opioid epidemic, which has seen accelerated growth over the last four years. In Maryland, West Virginia and Virginia, heroin has been coming out of Baltimore and passing through dozens of counties along the way.

Jefferson County, population 55,073, is one of the latest to become part of a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), a designation that brings with it programmatic support and federal grants to disrupt the large-scale drug trade and aid in rehabilitation for county residents.

The fact that no interstates run through Jefferson County is one

See DRUGS page 4

Power of federal funding paints Infrastructure Week picture

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

Members of Congress don't need to look far to see the force that federal funding can add to local infrastructure projects. They don't even have to look beyond the Washington Beltway.

The Purple Line light rail project between Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's counties couldn't happen without the federal government's investment, Montgomery County Councilmember Hans Riemer said at a Capitol Hill briefing for Infrastructure Week, held by a coalition of local government and interest groups including NACo on May 19.

"There was a strong push in Montgomery County to abandon the federally funded Purple Line and substitute for it a locally funded bus rapid transit system," he said. "The rationale was that the federal government wasn't going to be there."

But the county made its case to the Federal Transit Administration in 2014 anyhow — from a position of faith, as Riemer put it — and came away with nearly $900 million in federal funding.

The federal funding convinced Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) to change his mind on supporting the project, to the tune of $168 million, to go with $217 million from

See FED PARTNERS page 3

Risk management rules may change

By Julie Ufner
associate legislative director

When the April 2013 West, Texas fertilizer explosion killed 15 people and destroyed or damaged over 150 homes, safety practices at chemical facilities came under almost immediate scrutiny. Four months later, on Aug. 1, President Obama issued Executive Order 13650 — Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security — which required federal agencies to tighten chemical security programs.

Subsequently, EPA has released proposed rules to tighten existing safety programs at chemical facilities that use chlorine, ammonia and various flammable chemicals. A number of industries are impacted by the proposal such as environmental quality programs, agricultural chemical distributors, utilities and water-wastewater treatment systems.

Local governments could be most affected on two fronts: First, as owners and operators of publicly owned water-wastewater treatment facilities, local governments would be regulated through new requirements on facilities. Second, since local governments often serve as the nation's first line of defense before and after disasters strike, changes to emergency protocols would directly impact them. Under the new rule, regulated facilities would be required to consult individually with emergency managers on a yearly basis for notifications and tabletop exercises, and every five years for field exercises.

The proposed rule would expand local government responsibilities without providing funding to implement the more complex requirements. Added compliance costs were noted in joint comments on the proposed rule, *Accidental Release Prevention Requirements: Risk Management Programs Under the Clean Air Act*, filed by NACo, the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors on May 13. CN

NACO NEEDS YOUR INPUT

Even though the public comment period for the proposed rule is closed, NACo, along with the National League of Cities and U.S. Conference of Mayors, plans to meet with the White House's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on cost implications of the proposed rule. NACo is interested in whether the proposed rule would impact your county. Specifically, ask your emergency manager whether the cost estimates listed in Slide No. 18 of the EPA presentation (see this article online for link to slide) are accurate for implementation. And, if not, why?

Some Things to Think About

- How many facilities within the county would be regulated under this proposal?
- If your emergency responders needed to be involved in each of these activities – notification and tabletop (annually) and field exercises (every five years) – would the emergency managers be able to comply with existing staff? If not, how many more staff would be needed?
- Estimated costs to comply (from an emergency manager perspective) with these rules?

SNAP/STATS

STATES WITH THE MOST NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

State	Plants
Illinois	6
Pennsylvania	5
South Carolina	4
Michigan	3
Florida	3
New Jersey	3

Source: Nuclear Regulatory Commission

House, Senate opioid bills headed for conference

By Jack Peterson
legislative assistant

House and Senate versions of legislation dealing with the impact of the opioid abuse epidemic are heading for a conference committee after the House passed its version of S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), May 13. The Senate's bill was passed in March.

The House measure bundles 18 bills — all passed individually — that represent its plan to address the growing prescription drug abuse epidemic.

The two versions of S. 524 contain more similarities than differences. For example, both permit the Departments of Justice and of Health and Human Services to make grants allowing communities to develop their own prescription drug abuse prevention strategies.

Also important to counties, the bills would authorize grants to purchase overdose reversal drugs, and train law enforcement officers and first responders in their use, as well as grants to local entities to develop, implement or expand treatment alternatives to incarceration.

There are a few key differences between the bills as well. Most notably for counties, the Senate version contains language requiring the Government Accountability Office to publish a report on the impact of the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion, and how it affects an individual's ability to access treatment.

The House version, however, does not include this requirement. Under the IMD exclusion, federal Medicaid matching payments are prohibited for Institutions for Mental Disease with populations ranging between the ages of 22 and 64.

> Easing the IMD exclusion would allow counties to provide much-needed inpatient and residential psychiatric services to their residents.

NACo policy supports amending the IMD exclusion to allow the use of Medicaid financing for non-hospital residential placements for hospital-based mental health and substance use care.

Easing the IMD exclusion would allow counties to provide much-needed inpatient and residential psychiatric services to their residents.

To view a more detailed side-by-side comparison of the two bills, as well as NACo's key priorities, please visit *http://www.naco.org/resources/opioid bills*.

Before going to a conference committee, each chamber must appoint designated conferees. As of this writing, the House had already selected its 35 members, including 21 Republicans and 14 Democrats.

The Senate is expected to name its conferees within the next week. After the two sides agree on a final version of the legislation, both chambers must vote to approve the final bill to send it to the president's desk. CN

CountyNews

President Sallie Clark
Publisher Matthew Chase
Public Affairs Director Brian Namey

Executive Editor Beverly Anne Schlotterbeck
Senior Staff Writer Charles Taylor
Senior Staff Writer Charlie Ban
Design Director Leon Lawrence III

ADVERTISING STAFF
Job Market/Classifieds representative
National Accounts representative
Beverly Schlotterbeck
(202) 393-6226
FAX (202) 393-2630

Published biweekly except August by:
National Association of Counties Research Foundation, Inc.
25 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
STE. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630
E-mail cnews@naco.org
Online address www.countynews.org

POSTMASTER: send address changes to County News, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Ste. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

(USPS 704-620) n (ISSN: 0744-9798)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACo

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) admonishes locals not to give up on the federal government as an infrastructure partner at the May 19 Capitol Hill briefing. Photo by Alix Kashdan

From FED PARTNERS page 1

Montgomery County and $120 million from Prince George's, plus in-kind contributions worth $10 million from Prince George's. That was the crucial moment for the project, illustrating what was possible beyond the go-it-alone approach that many advocated.

"You have a lot of 'widening an intersection' projects happen with local money, but you don't have projects that can move 70,000 people a day and transform a major part of the Washington region," Riemer said. "At the local level, we need a federal partner in order to think big about infrastructure. The reality is that we can't do that much, locally, with our dollars. That was a real dead end."

Though he criticized the small funding increase in 2015's FAST Act transportation reauthorization, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), a former Multnomah County commissioner and veteran infrastructure proponent, sees a lot of potential for a more active and sympathetic legislature in the next Congress because the public will come around to support spending that is a true investment in their communities.

"Don't give up on the federal government being a partner," he said. "(Infrastructure projects) are the things people think government can do something about. Is the drinking water safe? Does the storm water go away and be treated rather than polluting lakes and rivers and creating problems with flooding? Are roads and bridges falling apart? Can children get to school safely? These are things people have an expectation government could do something about and should do."

Sheryl Bailey illustrated the kind of support across the political spectrum that infrastructure projects receive in Chesterfield County, Va., where she is a deputy county administrator. The key is demonstrating need.

"Though a conservative community, Chesterfield residents overwhelmingly approved a bond issue for a $304 million school project, by 78 percent," she said. "As you can imagine, the community really wants us to upgrade those schools."

Bailey and Riemer defended the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, the main tool counties use to fund infrastructure improvements, but also perpetual low-hanging fruit for federal spending cut plans. An International City/County Management Association study found that 90 percent of state and local capital spending is financed by debt, mainly through municipal bonds.

"If you make financing more expensive, you will get less infrastructure," Riemer said, acknowledging the pressure Congress receives to get rid of tax expenditures but promising it was worth it.

"Our productive capacity as a country and as an economy is dependent on this infrastructure, and the state and local government infrastructure investments are pivotal," Bailey said. "There are other funding mechanisms, such as pay-as-you-go and public-private partnerships," she said. "They are effective for certain types of projects, but they're not a robust alternative for the vast majority of capital projects."

A public-private partnership is, however, appropriate for Maryland's Purple Line, which will be built with nearly $700 million in private money.

Riemer said, however, that there was a place for the federal government in infrastructure financing that was befitting of its spending power and appropriate in the grand scheme of public finance.

"There was political interest in other infrastructure projects," he said. "People repeatedly made the argument that the federal government wasn't going to be there for the Purple Line, and we should go it alone.

"I applaud those jurisdictions that decide to proceed on their own, but there's a cost to that. If you raise taxes for one project, you can't use that money for another," he added.

"If local governments have to take on major infrastructure projects, that's less money for teachers, libraries and parks. Things that only local governments can provide." CN

Opioid task force to hold Virtual Town Halls in June

By Hadi Sedigh
associate legislative director

NACo will convene a number of events related to its joint task force with the National League of Cities on the opioid crisis that has affected communities across the U.S.

In June, a series of Virtual Town Halls will bring together the task force's county appointees, NACo members and national experts on opioid and heroin abuse.

At NACo's Annual Conference in July, the task force will brief conference attendees on its discussions and hear from the membership on the impact of the opioid crisis on local communities. Based on these events and conversations — and the next meeting of the full task force, in Boone County, Ky. in August — NACo and NLC will jointly release a report featuring policy recommendations and best practices in October.

Each of the Virtual Town Hall call-ins, scheduled in June on Thursdays at 2 p.m. EDT, will target an aspect of local response to the opioid crisis. The first call, June 9, will focus on prevention and education measures that local governments can take to lower the rates of drug use in their communities. Representatives of affiliate organizations such as the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors will join NACo members to discuss effective prevention strategies.

The second Virtual Town Hall, June 16, will focus on the treatment of individuals struggling with opioid addiction. Leading the discussion will be representatives from the American Medical Association and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration. The discussion will cover Medication-Assisted Treatment facilities and the role that counties play in enabling — or discouraging — the establishment of these facilities in their jurisdictions.

The final Virtual Town Hall, scheduled for June 30, will cover public safety and community wellness. Many local law enforcement departments across the country have reassessed their approach to the enforcement of laws related to the use of heroin, but skepticism remains in regards to the effectiveness of this hands-off approach. Representatives from the National District Attorneys Association and Major County Sheriffs' Association will join to discuss public safety issues relating to the opioid crisis.

You can register for these Virtual Town Halls by visiting *www.naco.org/OpioidTownHalls*.

Annual Conference Events

Later this summer, NACo will continue these conversations on the opioid crisis at the NACo Annual Conference in Los Angeles County (Long Beach), Calif. A luncheon, scheduled for July 22 will feature remarks from task force members and a series of presentations from NACo partners involved in efforts to curb the opioid crisis. U.S. Communities, for example, will share information on Narcan — an overdose-reversal medication widely considered key to reducing rates of death related to opioid and heroin use

Due to limited capacity, you must RSVP to attend this session, and can do so by visiting *www.naco.org/events/luncheon-opioid-epidemic*.

Task Force Meeting

The Task Force will continue its work at a meeting in Boone County, Ky. on Aug. 19 and 20. It will begin to work towards finalizing a task force report to be published in October. The report will feature policy recommendations to local, state and federal leaders as well as examples of practices that have proven effective at decreasing rates of drug use and abuse. CN

Tri-state HIDTA counties nab drug dealers, rehab opioid abusers

From DRUGS page 1

reason Sheriff Pete Dougherty is seeing more heroin coming through.

"As interdiction gets better on (interstates) 81 and 70, drivers are looking for a good, quick alternative," he said. "That becomes crossing the Potomac River and coming through Jefferson County and on into Virginia."

By cooperating with its neighbors, Jefferson County is meeting another HIDTA criteria: participants must be willing to cooperate with other agencies, and state and federal agency sponsors.

"I have Loudoun County and Clark County in Virginia, Berkeley County in West Virginia on my borders and we're right across the river from Washington County in Maryland," he said. "We're used to working with our neighbors, and we're improving communication with them."

But that's something relatively new to law enforcement agencies, in Tom Carr's experience as the HIDTA director for the Washington-Baltimore region.

"Law enforcement, by its very nature, is competitive," he said. "Agencies aren't used to sharing, but problems aren't isolated to one county. Increased cooperation among county law enforcement agencies has been one of the biggest changes I've since since I started," as director in 1994.

The national HIDTA program, administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, paid out $250 million in FY16. Designations are renewed on an annual basis. More than 17 percent of counties are represented in 32 HIDTAs, which cover 60 percent of the U.S. population.

What Do They Do

Dougherty has a personnel shortage, with 25 deputies spread over 210 square miles and roughly 1,000 miles of public road. They handle everything from emergency calls to requests for livestock movement.

For Jefferson County, HIDTA is funding the purchase of license plate-reading cameras, which Dougherty sees as a way to free up his deputies and improve surveillance.

Sheriff Pete Dougherty, Jefferson County, W.Va., says working with police across state lines in Maryland and Virginia counties helps to combat opioid drug traffic and abuse. Photo by Charlie Ban

"It doesn't bring you more manpower, but this technology will give us the technology to work better and smarter with the deputies that we have," he said. "I'd like to be able to watch some of that traffic coming out of Baltimore, but following drug dealers is very time consuming and very difficult to maintain coverage without being spotted."

Instead, once the cameras are installed, Dougherty will be able to track travel patterns of cars suspected to be part of drug distribution operations. He can forward that information to his neighboring sheriffs — information sharing is another HIDTA requirement. And the lawmen can figure out the best way to spring their trap.

Most often, the driver makes a mistake and gives deputies a reason to stop the car and then give the department's drug-sniffing dogs a chance.

"They can smell a little bit of heroin like I can smell a pot of coffee brewing 10 feet away," Dougherty said. "And it's usually distracted driving, looking at their phone while they're driving, that gives us a reason to pull them over."

While Jefferson County just became HIDTA-designated in January 2016, Frederick County in Maryland, population 241,409, has been in the program for more than three years. Sheriff Charles Jenkins has seen HIDTA contributions increase as the county matures and demonstrates its capability, which can serve as a motivation to Dougherty's force.

Frederick now has personnel from the Department of Homeland Security operating out of its office and Jenkins is seeing the benefit that comes with his new coworkers.

"Homeland Security's involvement is increasing our capacity locally and bringing federal jurisdictional authority that we didn't have before," he said. "Our cases often go out of state and what starts as a small, localized complaint could take us up into New York, the Southwest, the Midwest, anywhere."

Adjacent to Jefferson County, Berkeley County, W.Va., which surrounds Interstate 81, immediately launched a wiretap effort after earning a HIDTA designation in 2014, which led to the dismantling of a drug ring.

"We don't want to measure in terms of individual arrests, we want the number of drug distribution operations disrupted," Carr said. "Every time we make a move, there's an opposite reaction. If we cut off a supply line, it increases the bad guys' search time for more drugs and more 'safe' routes."

More than Manacles

Though their counties are thoroughfares for drug shipments, their residents are getting hooked like nothing before.

"HIDTA isn't just enforcement, it's rehabilitation," Dougherty said. "That doesn't get as much attention, but that's a big part of it."

It's born of the realization and reality that law enforcement agencies can't arrest their way out of the drug trade. If the goal is to end the sale of illegal drugs, the demand needs to be addressed.

"There are market conditions at play," Dougherty said. "Arresting drug dealers is a good thing to do. We're going to do it, but if we arrest Johnny A., Johnny B. is going to take his job the next day because it's lucrative for him."

"We want to get to a point where there's not much of a market for dealers."

So counties are taking advantage of HIDTA's funding for rehabilitation services. For Jefferson County, it's the Day Reporting Center community corrections service. Dougherty hopes to adapt an adult version of the youth drug rehab model that has been successful.

"We put a lot of focus on the parents, keeping them in the loop," he said. "Counselors meet with the parents once a week and help them out, understand how to react to their child's recovery. There's a way to be firm with a child dealing with addiction that won't trigger them and make things worse."

Those rehabilitation efforts will need a boost to keep pace with the spread of drug use, which shows no sign of abating.

The typical Washington-Baltimore HIDTA drug user is a man in his 30s, with 10 arrests and six convictions, Carr said, which demographically gives the epidemic even more room for growth. Jenkins said most of Frederick County's users are in the upper middle class, with money to spend.

"And it's spread all over the county," he said. "It's no worse in one part than the other."

Dougherty said heroin use has moved out of the low-income areas of county seat Charles Town and into rural areas. "We're seeing three times as many overdoses as we did three years ago," he said. "It's not uncommon to have four in a 24-hour period, over two days."

And the sales are getting more brazen.

"One of my deputies was filling up his car at a gas station and saw a deal going down across the street, in open view," he said.

Meanwhile, Frederick County recorded nearly five times as many overdoses through mid-May 2016 than it did for all of 2012. Jenkins said he expects at least 280 overdoses by the end of 2016, which will double the 2015 total.

"I don't expect it to decrease any time soon," he said.

And, to his chagrin, some users are counting double, having survived thanks to the administration of anti-overdose drug naloxone.

"We revived one user three times in one year," he said. "It's great that we have this chance to give people a second chance, but they're not all getting the help they need."

Dougherty laments that there are few intensive therapy programs for youths nearby. Most are sent hours away.

And just as he has seen law enforcement change dramatically during his 22 years at the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA bureau, Carr has seen the epidemic change.

"Back when we started, in the '90s, it was all cocaine," he said. "Even a few years ago you wouldn't find any heroin in Northern Virginia — it was unknown. You had prescription drugs, then, a year later, when those supplies dried up, heroin moved in with cheaper prices.

"It's straining resources beyond just law enforcement — human services, for instances, taking care of children whose parents are locked up. It's not just the demand on deputies." CN

In California, Nevada County sees virtual greener pastures ahead

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

When the new Jason Bourne movie hits theaters this summer, think of Nevada County, Calif.

That's where the technology used for the still-untitled film's aerial shots was developed and manufactured at Gyro-Stabilized Systems.

The company is one of the first occupants of the Green Screen Institute, a county-supported technology accelerator, that aims to transform this rural county in the Sierra Nevada foothills into a hotbed of virtual- and augmented-reality companies.

"We're in this little area that some people call Video Valley, the Grass Valley area," said Jason Fountaine, Gyro-Stabilized Systems' managing director, in a nod to the area's history as home to broadcast- and media-related companies, dating back to the 1950s (see sidebar, page 6).

The Green Screen Institute is the brainchild of the Nevada County Economic Resource Council (NCERC) — the county's contracted economic development partner — county officials and consultants who helped NCERC find the right niche to pursue. Based on an existing concentration of broadcast and video companies in the county the consultants identified virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) as a sector with growth potential.

In July, the institute will launch a 10-week accelerator program for startups that will focus on content-creation for AR-VR platforms. Up to four participants will receive a $50,000 stipend and networking opportunities with the institute's advisory board and investors, among other benefits.

VR digitally recreates real-life settings, while AR enables virtual elements to be overlaid onto the real world. According to a recent report from Research and Markets, those sectors are expected to grow from a global market of $8.1 billion last year to $105 billion by 2020, increasing at a compound annual growth rate of 67 percent.

"Ultimately, it means more jobs and nicely paying jobs that bring good dollars into our community," said Supervisor Ed Scofield, who also serves on the economic development council's board.

> "Ultimately, it means more jobs and nicely paying jobs that bring good dollars into our community."
> — Supv. Ed Scofield

The project is indebted to the Board of Supervisors' willingness to try something new, said Alison Lehman, assistant county executive officer. In past years, the county gave "what little dollars we have" to a number of organizations throughout the county mainly to promote tourism," Scofield said, "and those entities were doing a fine job. But we made a major decision to take what money we had and put it into this one organization. And it was controversial at the time."

The county had been funding NERC to the tune of about $125,000 a year, but in 2015 the supervisors approved a $625,000, five-year contract with the economic development council, with the goal of "growing the pie" rather than slicing it up into smaller pieces, according to Jon Gregory, the Green Screen Institute's (GSI) managing director and executive director of the economic resource council.

An unidentified man at Nevada County Economic Resource Council's April 7 economic development summit tries out virtual reality via a smartphone attached to goggles. Photo courtesy of Nevada County ERC

It was a "game changer," Lehman said.

The county pledged an additional $50,000 in matching funds to help NERC go after, and win, a $500,000 U.S. Economic Development Administration planning grant to vet, plan and launch a digital media "science and research park." And the Green Screen Institute was born.

Such a "bet the farm" move seems to be paying off, at least in the institute's infancy. GSS and Traitware are the first two companies to move into the institute's leased, 27,000-square-foot building. Gregory said digital entrepreneurs from Los Angeles to Sacramento to Silicon Valley have shown interest.

Beyond the summer program, GSI will continue its business accelerator and investment program for startups year round. It will also provide a Co-Working Lab, set to launch July 18, for established companies and startups, and eventually, vocational training for jobs

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New rule affects 4.2 million workers

From OVERTIME page 1

$47,476 annually, starting Dec. 1. Previously, the threshold was $23,660.

Employees at the new salary level or below would be entitled to overtime pay.

Although the new salary threshold is lower than the originally proposed $50,440, it remains a substantial increase. Implemented over a one-year period it could present serious budgetary and administrative challenges to county governments, according to preliminary NACo analysis.

The new rule also establishes a mechanism for automatically updating the salary and compensation level every three years, beginning January 2020, to prevent levels from becoming outdated. The final rule does not change any of the existing job duty requirements, or duties test, to qualify for exemption. The rule would affect an estimated 4.2 million workers across the United States who are currently exempt from overtime requirements.

"While we support the Administration's goal to improve workers' lives, the rule does not take into account the wide fiscal and economic diversity of local communities across the country," said NACo Executive Director Matt Chase.

Employees at the new salary level or below would be entitled to overtime pay.

County governments are major employers and economic engines for workers across the United States. Today, America's 3,069 county governments employ more than 3.3 million people, providing services to over 305 million county residents. They are responsible for numerous public services that could face major hurdles as a result of DOL's rule, especially during disaster or crisis events.

The rule, announced May 18 by Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez and Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), also complicates post-recession recovery efforts for the majority of America's counties. According to NACo's 2015 County Economic Tracker report, only 214 county economies have fully recovered to their pre-recession levels.

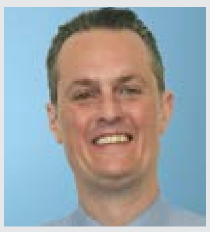
NACo is preparing to publish a detailed analysis of the Labor Department's action. CN

ON THE MOVE

NACO OFFICERS, COUNTY OFFICIALS

- President **Sallie Clark** represented NACo at the California State Association of Counties Legislative Conference, May 18.
- Congratulations to **James "Jim" Neal**, public works director, Charleston County, S.C., who was named to the 2016 Top 10 Public Works Leaders by the American Public Works Association. The Top 10 program focuses on outstanding achievements of individual public works professionals from both the public and private sectors in North America.

NACo STAFF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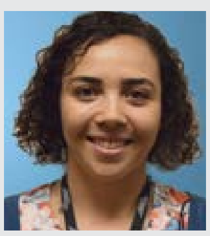

Mayfield

- **David Jackson**, Has joined the Public Affairs Department as communications director. Jackson manages and coordinates media relations, digital communications and social media. Prior to joining NACo, he was a senior communications advisor at The Brookings Institution where he formulated communications strategy and policy messages.
- **Adrian Nicholas** Moved from the health and justice program to join the digital communications team as Public Affairs' social media specialist. Nicholas has a background in policy and communications, and interned in the Broome County, N.Y. executive's communications office. He has a B.A. from the State University of New York at Cortland in communications, and a master's degree in political science from American University.
- **Luana Mayfield** will serve as an administrative assistant in the Executive Office, where she will perform a wide range of administrative duties. Prior to joining NACo, she was the program and event assistant at Giuffrida Associates, consultants in association management, conference and meeting planning. She holds a bachelor's degree in international affairs from Lewis & Clark University, and a master's degree in linguistics from the University of Murcia in Spain.

COMING UP

Matt Chase, executive director, and **Andrew Goldschmidt**, membership-marketing director, will attend the Colorado Counties Inc. Summer Conference in Routt County (Steamboat Springs), June 6–8.

20-member advisory board heading effort

From VIRTUAL page 5

in the digital media industry. It will operate on a subscription basis with memberships ranging from $25 per day to $500 monthly.

It's being guided by a 20-member advisory board that includes several heavy hitters from technology and media companies, including executives from the video gaming company Electronic Arts and Fandango, the online the movie-ticketing company.

Gregory hopes that the same natural and cultural amenities that attracted him to the Grass Valley-Nevada City area will appeal to digital entrepreneurs.

Gyro-Stabilized Systems' Fountaine was drawn to "a little nicer quality of life … close to Lake Tahoe, also lakes and lots of trails and mountain biking, and all that fun stuff that people like to do outside."

And culture-wise, "It's a small town, but it has a big town diversity vibe," he added. The annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival in Nevada City showcases films about nature, wildlife, environmental justice, agriculture and indigenous cultures. Grass Valley's California WorldFest music festival is marking its 20th anniversary this year.

Those assets also figure into the county's support of the Green Screen Institute, Gregory said. "Our objective over time — ideally sooner rather than later — is to become recognized as a global center of excellence in AR and VR, which has really unique linkages to artistic and filmmaking communities," he explained. "And we believe that also becomes a tourism attribute that drives people to visit Nevada County from California, across the U.S. and globally." CN

WHAT IS AUGMENTED REALITY?

For a rural county, Nevada County, Calif. certainly punches above its weight when it comes to the presence of digital media companies.

The new, county-supported Green Screen Institute (GSI) hopes to capitalize on a legacy of video and broadcast companies — dating back to the 1950s — by adding augmented reality and virtual reality companies into the mix.

As defined by Mashable, a digital media website, virtual reality replaces the real world with a simulated one. Augmented reality is a "live, direct or indirect, view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics or GPS data."

"There's a cluster of unique expertise of companies that have dealt with (movie) studios and media companies and content and video that goes back 50 years," said Jon Gregory, GSI's managing director.

Grass Valley Group (GVG) put Nevada County on the map back in the 1950s. Its first major media-related project, in 1959, was a panoramic movie sound system for Cinerama Inc.

The Grass Valley area became known worldwide for innovations in radio, television and film and became a magnet for young engineers from places like San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Looking to get closer to nature, entrepreneurs like Charles Litton and Donald Hare moved to Grass Valley from more urban parts of California to be near the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Litton would found Litton Engineering Laboratories; Hare founded GVG. Now known as simply Grass Valley, today it's a subsidiary of a Canadian company.

Other local technology companies include Telestream, AJA Video Systems and Ensemble Designs.

Local Road Safety Plans: FHWA offers implementation tips

By Rosemarie Anderson
Federal Highway Administration

An example of curve safety treatments: high-friction surface treatment provides vehicles more traction and chevron signs warn of dangerous curves ahead. Photo courtesy of Scott Davis, Thurston County, Wash.

WATCH LOCAL ROAD SAFETY WEBINAR JUNE 30

As part of NACo President Sallie Clark's presidential initiative, Safe and Secure Counties, NACo partnered with the FHWA Office of Safety to offer a series of *County News* articles highlighting steps counties can take to promote transportation safety. The first and second articles in the series are available online. Also, join NACo and FHWA for a webinar on June 30 to learn more about local road safety plans. Registration information is available in the Events section, under Webinars at *www.naco.org*.

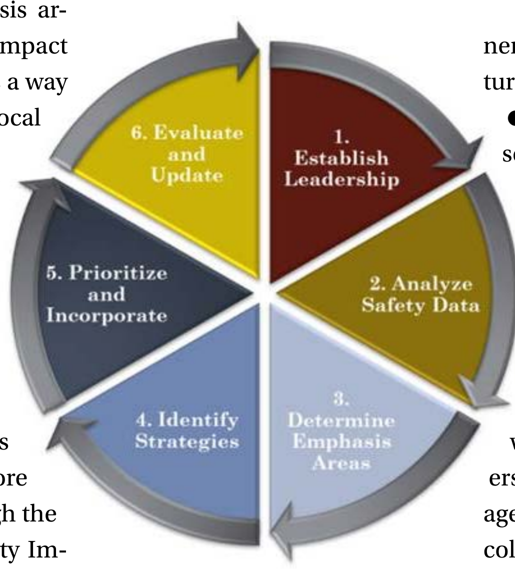
Why Develop Local Road Safety Plans

The State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) can assist local leaders in addressing safety on local roads but a locally focused plan is often needed to address the unique conditions in each community. Local road safety officials play a critical role in addressing crash risks and may be able to identify the specific conditions that contribute to crashes in their jurisdictions. A Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP) offers a foundation for consensus and focus.

It defines key emphasis areas and strategies that impact local roads and provides a way forward to save lives in local communities.

With the passage of the transportation legislation in 2005, Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Safety was established as a new core funding program through the then-new Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

The HSIP was structured and funded to reduce highway fatalities and required states to develop a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), focusing on results. The SHSPs are statewide-coordinated safety plans that provide a comprehensive data-driven framework for reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. Local Road Safety Plans (LRSP) are based on the same concept as the state SHSPs.



Benefits Realized

Recognizing the benefits of LRSPs, Minnesota was the first state to complete plans for all of its 87 counties using HSIP funds. These were completed in 2013. According to Rick West, Otter Tail County engineer, "LRSPs provide practitioners with a detailed, prioritized county-wide, safety plan to guide and support future safety investments. The benefits far outweigh the challenges and have resulted in a safety culture change in Otter Tail County."

The state's plan may provide inputs to the local plan. Likewise, the local plan can feed the state's process.

Some benefits realized in the LRSP development process:

- promoting road safety awareness
- developing lasting partnerships that may benefit future projects
- instilling or enhancing a sense of collaboration among different disciplines, and
- assisting local agencies to better leverage funding.

LRSP provides local agencies an opportunity to improve relationships with the public, stakeholders, and across governmental agencies by working through a collaborative process. Improving road safety is a benefit for everyone involved.

Iowa is one of the states that have since adopted the Minnesota approach. "As I learn how to better utilize it, I will appreciate it more," says Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County engineer. "I feel I know my most hazardous locations and this generally confirms it. It also identified a stretch of roadway that is an issue that I was unaware of. Every day is a learning experience."

Ingredients for Success

The success of an LRSP is dependent on five critical components:

- Having a champion: A champion advocates for the LRSP and gathers the political support to assist in its implementation.
- Developing a clear vision and mission: A strategic vision and mission unite all stakeholders with a common goal.
- Assembling collaborative partners: Partners collaborate to implement the plan.
- Allocating appropriate resources: Manpower and management are essential for ensuring a plan's success, and
- Establishing open communication: The LRSP owners should foster open and frequent communication with stakeholders, community partners and citizens as they develop and implement the plan.

In 2014, the State of Washington required county governments to develop a LRSP to access HSIP funds for safety projects. The basic requirements for the LRSP were: focus on low-cost, widespread projects that would reduce the risk of fatal and serious-injury collisions on county roads, based on the priorities in the county's LRSP. Thirty-one of the 39 counties in Washington completed LRSPs and were successful in acquiring HSIP funds.

Thurston County, one of the local pioneers in risk-based safety at the local road level, has decided that for 2016 it will develop a more comprehensive LRSP than its current one.

According to Scott Davis, traffic engineer, Thurston County Public Works, "We cannot end fatalities and serious injuries if we keep waiting for something to happen. The LRSP provided Thurston County with a proactive and forward-looking approach to traffic safety.

"Through the development of the LRSP, we identified horizontal curves as a system-wide priority and have been a focus for investments since. Traditional practices may not have identified this system-wide need and, as such, missed an opportunity to make a widespread safety impact."

Several local agencies throughout the nation have taken the initiative to develop their own LRSPs and have seen the changes they have made to their road safety program. Clackamas County, Ore. de-

See SAFE ROADS page 8

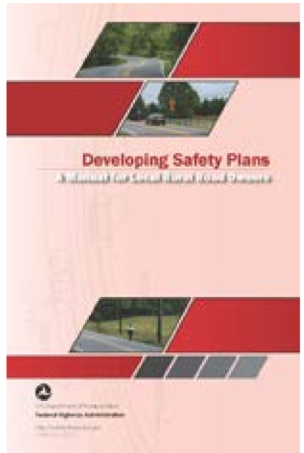
From SAFE ROADS page 7

veloped and adopted its transportation safety action plan in 2012. Its plan included roadway safety elements and also examined a broader view on traffic safety including safety culture and the linkages between public health and safety. The county is currently developing a concept to incorporate health and safety into all policies.

Resources

When developing a LRSP, agencies may confront challenges such as a lack of personnel or adequate data. Various organizations and agencies may be able to assist in the creation of an LRSP — Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Centers; Regional Planning Organizations; State DOTs.

Additionally, the FHWA Office of Safety created *Developing Safety Plans: A Manual for Local Road Owners,* an easy to read step-by-step guide to developing LRSPs with templates, tables and other resources.



Guide available from FHWA to develop road safety plans

The manual can be accessed for download: *http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/fhwasa12017/.* Hard copies are also available. Visit the FHWA website for additional safety resources:

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/

Conclusion

Many state DOTs are now embarking on a comprehensive approach to the development of local road safety plans whereas in other states the local agencies are taking the initiative to develop these plan with the DOT having a seat at the table. Regardless of who takes the lead, the ultimate goal of developing a LRSP is to save lives and prevent injuries in local communities. CN

(Anderson is the Local and Rural Road Program manager in FHWA's Office of Safety.)

NACo election credentials process now underway

Credentials and voting information for NACo's 2016 election were mailed May 20 to the chief elected official (CEO) and clerk of each member county. Registered attendees for the Annual Conference also received a link to credentials information via email.

In order to vote, a county must have paid its 2016 dues and have at least one paid registration to the Annual Conference. The CEO must indicate on the credentials form, the names of the voting delegate and an alternate who is authorized to pick up a county's voting materials. There can only be one alternate designated on the form.

This year's election will be held on Monday, July 25 at 10 a.m. during the Business Meeting at the NACo Annual Conference in Los Angeles County.

State association of counties presidents will pick up unclaimed ballots on the evening before the election unless a county's CEO indicates on the credentials form that the state association president cannot pick up the ballot. A county may also choose not to cast its ballot.

Each member county must return a form, signed by the CEO, in order to vote. In addition to being mailed, the credentials form is also available via a link on the NACo website at *www.naco.org/credentials.* The deadline to return the form is Friday, July 1.

Counties will vote on resolutions that set NACo legislation and association policy for the coming year. Delegates will also elect NACo officers for the coming year. The position of second vice president is typically contested.

The county must be a NACo member "in good standing" in order to vote, meaning that a county's dues for 2016 must be paid before the voting occurs. Also, the county must have at least one paid registration for the Annual Conference and have proper credentials.

The credentials form attests to a county's eligibility to vote. The form contains information on the number of votes a county is eligible to cast, as well as the identity of the delegate who is authorized to cast the county's vote.

The number of votes per county is determined by the amount of dues it pays.

Dues are based on population.

Counties with dues of $450 to $499 receive one vote

Counties with dues of $500 to $999 receive two votes

Counties with dues of $1,000 to $1,499 receive three votes, and so on.

The maximum number of votes a county can receive is 121. CN

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AND OTHER ELECTION OFFICIALS

The Credentials Committee ensures that all member counties participating in the election process, either for NACo officer or policy, are able to do so in the most efficient and fair manner. The committee confirms requests for credentials pick-up, helps guarantee that the process runs smoothly, resolves credentials disputes and assists during the election itself.

The 2016 Credentials Committee includes Alisha Bell, commissioner, Wayne County, Mich., chair; and members, Tony Hyde, commissioner, chair, Columbia County, Ore; and Robert Thomas, commissioner, Franklin County, Pa.

The NACo bylaws also provide for a parliamentarian, reading clerk and tally clerk to aid in the election process. These include: Dan Chadwick, executive director, Idaho Association of Counties, parliamentarian; Buddy Boe, councilman, St. John the Baptist Parish, La., reading clerk; and Tracey Johnson, commissioner, Washington County, N.C., tally clerk.

If you have any questions, please contact Alex Koroknay-Palicz, membership coordinator at *akpalicz@naco.org* or 888.407.NACo (6226) x291.

PROFILES IN SERVICE

LEN C. HUMPHRIES

NACo Board of Directors
Sheriff
Fremont County, Idaho

Number of years active in NACo: 5

Years in public service: 24

Occupation: Fremont County Sheriff

Education: Electrical Engineering Technology

The hardest thing I've ever done: Run for public office.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: George Washington, Porter Rockwell, Ronald Reagan.

A dream I have is to: Learn to play piano.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Speak Portuguese fluently.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Learn to rappel.

My favorite way to relax is: Read a good book.

I'm most proud of: My wife Johanna who is a registered Nurse-Case Manager.

Every morning I read: My emails.

My favorite meal is: Thanksgiving dinner.

My pet peeve is: Meetings that run long.

My motto is: Be prepared

The last book I read was: *And the Good News is* by Dana Perino.

My favorite movie is: *Battleship.*

My favorite music is: James Taylor.

My favorite president is: Ronald Reagan.

My county is a NACo member because: It helps our small voice get out to a larger audience.

The most *adventurous* thing I've ever done is: Learn to rappel.

MONEYMATTERS

Money & Politics: a Necessary GOOD?

By Joel Griffith
program manager, NACo FSC

Do campaigns with more access to cash enjoy an insurmountable advantage over competitors? Are incumbents and entrenched politicians the sole beneficiaries of large flows of political donations? Does the Constitution have anything to say about it? You may be surprised.

A look at the 10 most expensive U.S. Senate races of the 2014 election cycle is revealing. Candidates who found themselves at a spending disadvantage actually won six of the 10 races. And don't be tempted to chalk those six victories up to incumbency. Not a single one of those six underdog wins went to an incumbent.

In two of those six states, the seat was open (Georgia and Iowa). And in four of those six underdog wins, the victor unseated an incumbent (Louisiana, North Carolina, Colorado and Arkansas). Yes, each of the four incumbents booted out of the Senate lost his or her seat to a competitor who spent less.

The most shocking well-funded incumbent loss in 2014 — and possibly of the past century — was not a sitting U.S. senator in general election; instead, it's the defeat of House Majority Leader Eric Cantor to an underfunded challenger — David Brat, an economics professor at Randolph-Macon College in Virginia — in a primary. In fact, this marked the first time in U.S. history that a sitting House majority leader lost a primary election. According to *opensecrets.org*, Cantor spent $41 for every $1 spent by Brat in the 2014 primary leading to Cantor's defeat. A shock-and-awe financial war chest does not guarantee victory, even for the most able of politicians.

Which brings us to the current presidential campaign season fixating the public today.

How is it that Donald Trump came to dominate the 17-person Republican Party field despite being greatly outspent individually by other nomination contenders? The spending totals aren't even close when accounting for campaign committee and outside group spending. Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and Ben Carson each outspent Donald Trump by a wide margin. In aggregate, spending on behalf of these four candidates totaled $10 for each $1 spent in furtherance of the Trump campaign.

Surely, some of this success by the grossly outspent Trump reflects the enormous twin benefits of celebrity status and free media attention. Often, these are the types of advantages enjoyed by incumbents — advantages typically overcome only by the expending of financial resources by political challengers.

As it so happens, Trump as a newcomer to the political world possesses a celebrity appeal and the ability to dominate the news cycle unknown even to most politicians. But incumbent politicians typically do enjoy these advantages on a smaller scale. Think about the free media — as opposed to paid media — generated by town halls, constituent outreach, legislative initiative, news show appearances and op-ed columns.

In addition, members of Congress employ communications directors and legislative correspondents and photographers to spearhead this outreach — all on the taxpayer's dime. Often, lesser-known political challengers rely upon campaign spending to penetrate a media market dominated by the presence of the incumbent.

With this in mind, it's no surprise that some of the most outspoken advocates of political campaign spending and contribution limitations are incumbent politicians — the very people standing to benefit the most by the voices of opponents being hushed.

Fortunately, the Founders — quite familiar with attempts by the British Crown to silence critics — ratified the First Amendment of our Constitution:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

This freedom of speech guaranteed in the Bill of Rights does not merely protect one's ability to espouse an opinion. The U.S. Supreme Court has long recognized that spending of financial resources on election campaigns or issue advocacy is also a form of free speech.

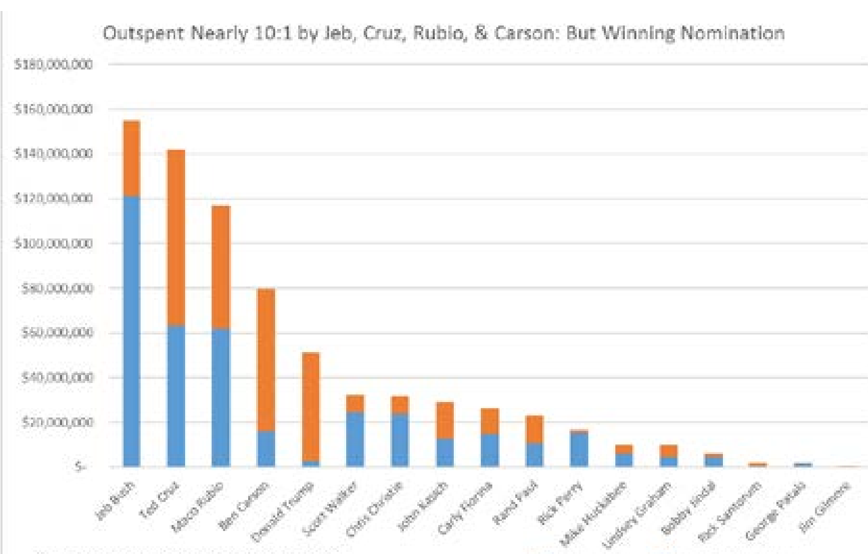
The seminal case on this topic was decided in 1976. In *Buckley v. Valeo*, the Supreme Court struck down certain limits on campaign expenditures imposed by the Federal Election Campaign Act. The court stated that, "A restriction on the amount of money a person or group can spend on political communication during a campaign necessarily reduces the quantity of expression by restricting the number of issues discussed, the depth of their exploration and the size of the audience reached.

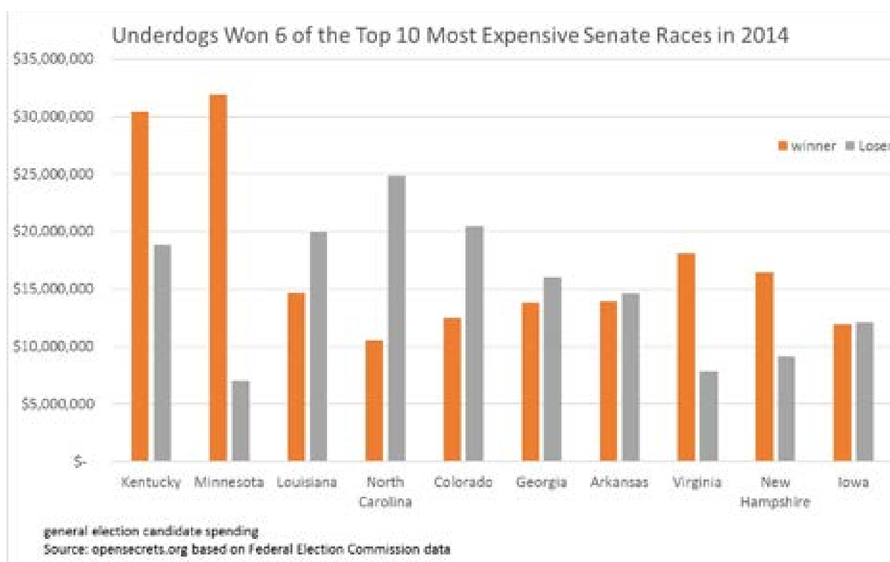
"This is because virtually every means of communicating ideas in today's mass society requires the expenditure of money.…The electorate's increasing dependence on television, radio, and other mass media for news and information has made these expensive modes of communication indispensable instruments of effective political speech."

The court continued, "Although the Act's contribution and expenditure limitations both implicate fundamental First Amendment interests, its expenditure ceilings impose significantly more severe restrictions on protected freedoms of political expression and association than do its limitations on financial contributions."

And as the Supreme Court recognized in 2010 (*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*), the right to engage in this form of political speech is not extinguished once you choose to exercise that right as part of a group of people rather than individually. As Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the majority, "If the First Amendment has any force, it prohibits Congress from fining or jailing citizens, or associations of citizens, for simply engaging in political speech."

The constant appeals for political donations, the seemingly incessant barrage of campaign ads and the plethora of special interest groups attempting to influence your vote may be tiring. But as Winston Churchill observed, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others." CN





Join the Rural Impact County Challenge

In February, NACo and the White House Rural Council launched a new initiative to support counties in combating chronic rural poverty.

The initiative calls on any and all counties interested — or currently engaged — in combating chronic rural poverty to share their stories and successes. Participants also receive technical assistance and additional resources from initiative partners to help implement effective policies and practices to address this pressing issue.

To sign up to participate in the initiative, please visit the Rural Impact County Challenge page at *http://www.naco.org/rural-impact-county-challenge-national-effort-combat-rural-child-poverty*. There you'll find additional information on the initiative including a draft resolution, which counties are using to begin taking steps towards tackling rural poverty.

The Rural Impact County Challenge will unite county leaders from across the country to examine contributing factors to chronic rural poverty. Through this initiative, participants and partners will examine programs and initiatives designed to help address the needs of rural Americans living in poverty including early childhood development, food and nutrition, drug and substance abuse, and workforce training and development.

> "Rural America provides the vast majority of food, energy and environmental benefits for the rest of the country."
> – Sec. Tom Vilsack

"Rural America provides the vast majority of food, energy and environmental benefits for the rest of the country, and is the source of nearly 90 percent of renewable water resources, while serving as home to important service sectors and manufacturing hubs," said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack.

"Eighty-five percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America," he added. "Lack of opportunity for rural kids and families is often compounded by other challenges, including distance from health and early learning programs, lack of access to public transportation and higher rates of substance use disorder, among others."

For more information, please contact Arthur Scott, associate legislative director, at *ascott@naco.org* or 202.942.4230. CN

WORD SEARCH

CAMPBELL COUNTY, TENN.

Created By: Charles Taylor

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ALDER SPRINGS Unincorporated community

ANDERSON One of two counties from which Campbell was formed

ARTHUR CAMPBELL Revolutionary war officer, county's namesake

CLINCH RIVER Impounded to create Norris Lake

FIFTEEN Number of county commissioners

GRACE MOORE Actress and operatic soprano who resided in county

JACKSBORO County seat

KENTUCKY State line forms county's northern border

KNOXVILLE 25 minutes south via Interstate 75

LAFOLETTE City near the county's geographic center

LOUIE BLUIE Annual festival honoring musician and artist Howard "Louie Bluie" Anderson who grew up in the county

NEW MAMMOTH CAVE Federal wildlife sanctuary for bats

NORRIS DAM First project of the Tennessee Valley Authority

NORRIS DAM STATE PARK Partly located in Campbell County

WHITLEY Kentucky county to the north

NOBCO encourages HIV testing

The National Organization of Black County Officials, Inc. (NOBCO) is highlighting National HIV Testing Day, June 27, as a reminder that knowing one's status is important for living a long life. It is estimated there are 50,000 new incidences of HIV each year, and southern states and counties are the most effected by high HIV rates.

"We can all do our part by spreading the word, by getting tested and knowing our status. It's a wonderful way of leading by example," said NOBCO Chairman Roy Charles Brooks, commissioner, Tarrant County, Texas.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated that early testing, linkage to care and retention of care could prevent 90 percent of new infections in the United States for those who are HIV positive. HIV is no longer the death sentence of the pas,t and early diagnosis is the key to living a healthy life with HIV.

The CDC has suggested sharing the following information:

- Use the site locator at *https://gettested.cdc.gov* and enter your ZIP code, and the locator will find a testing site near you.
- Text your local ZIP code to KNOWIT, and you will receive a text back with a testing site near you.
- Call 800.CDC.INFO (800.232.4636) to ask for free testing sites in your area,
- Contact the local health department, and
- Post pictures of what your county is doing to fight HIV on NOBCO's social media sites: Facebook: *https://www.facebook.com/NOBCOINC*; Twitter: *https://twitter.com/NOBCOINC*; and p: *https://www.instagram.com/nobco1982/* CN

BRIGHT IDEAS | CUMBERLAND COUNTY, Maine

Coalition 'CAN' Reduce Teen Substance Abuse

PROBLEM: 23 percent of county youths are under age 18; few alcohol and drug prevention resources were available to kids in the region.

SOLUTION: Create a coalition that plans, assesses and strategizes to address youth substance abuse, and achieves positive results.

Participants in Project Sticker Shock in Cumberland County, Maine, while distributing stickers to alcohol retailers that remind adults not to enable underage drinking. Photo courtesy of Casco Bay CAN

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

Cumberland County, Maine's high school kids were above average, but not in a good way.

A 2013 statewide survey showed that by 12th grade, students' rates of marijuana and alcohol usage — and misuse of prescription drugs — surpassed the state average: For the towns surveyed in Cumberland County, 42 percent of high school seniors had used alcohol within the past 30 days. Statewide, it was 37 percent.

Because of Casco Bay CAN (Create Awareness Now) that's changing. CAN is a coalition of schools, county and local law enforcement, parents, youth organizations, health care and treatment providers, religious leaders and volunteers. It's funded by a federal Drug Free Communities (DFC) competitive grant.

"It's a collective of so many sectors in the community that come together to work and effect change … and building partnerships that maybe they never thought of before," said program director Beth Blakeman-Pohl. (The Casco Bay region comprises several coastal Cumberland County towns; Portland is the county seat.)

CAN approaches underage drinking and drug use as a public health problem. It reinforces positive messages adults can give kids about avoiding alcohol and drugs by focusing on changing local rules and regulations, media messaging, and accessibility to drugs and alcohol, she added.

Its efforts have included youth volunteers working with local alcohol retailers in Project Sticker Shock, an awareness campaign that sends the message, "Because You Care about Teens, Don't Provide the Means."

"As far as our retail establishments," Blakeman-Pohl explained, "they have done more around training…. They have compliance checks by law enforcement on a regular basis. So they understand that that's going to happen, and they might be held accountable should they fail one of the compliance checks.

"It's the kind of system that builds on itself. Hopefully, we can continue to see positive change, as we have been seeing," she said.

Since CAN's inception, the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey showed that the percentage of seventh-through-12th graders who had used marijuana in the past 30 days had dipped to 14 percent in 2014, down from 16 percent in 2011.

And the number of minors possessing alcohol dropped to 44 in 2014, down from 68 in 2011. Instances of illegal transportation of alcohol fell to 14, down from 16 over the same period.

Achieving such results in Maine can be a challenge, Blakeman-Pohl explained. Medical marijuana is legal, and a November 2016 ballot initiative could legalize pot for recreational use. In addition, under state law 16-year-olds can legally drink at home under parental supervision. Golf courses are permitted to have "mobile service" bars — golf carts or similar vehicles that sell malt liquor beverages.

It's an environment can send mixed signals to impressionable kids.

"They say how conflicting messages are — when they hear that this is not good for the developing brain … and then they hear, however, you can have medical marijuana," Blakeman-Pohl said. "So it's a lot of education, a lot of law enforcement and parent work in schools and communities that have different youth groups that are trying to get the message around delaying use.

"The longer we can delay use and have kids get older, it's been proven that the potential for long-term addiction is decreased."

With opioid drug abuse much in the news, Blakeman-Pohl said it is also a concern. Maine has a large elderly population. "Not that that is exclusive to having more prescriptions around, but it is a contributing factor.

"We're really trying to educate our grandparents on how they can track their medications, encouraging them to lock them up and then also to dispose of them properly."

CAN was funded in 2010 by a $625,000 five-year DFC grant, providing for the program's $125,000 annual budget. On the strength of its performance, the program received another five-year grant in September 2015 to continue its work.

Cumberland County government serves as the fiscal agent for CAN's federal and state grants. It also provides in-kind staff support from its human resources, financial, management and IT departments. CN

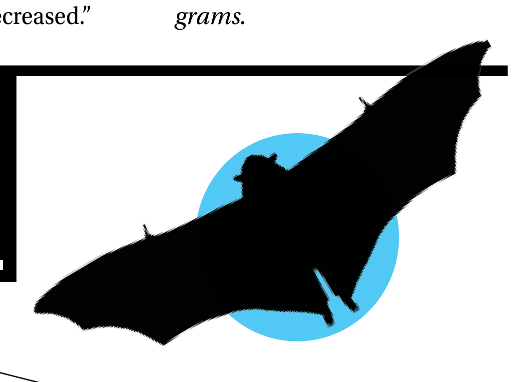
Bright Ideas features noteworthy and award-winning programs.

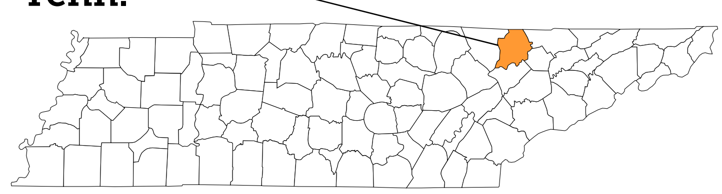
CASCO BAY ALCOHOL VIOLATIONS 2011-2014

Number	2011	2014
of minors in possession of alcohol	68	44
furnishing alcohol to minors or a place to consume alcohol	6	6
of illegal transportations of alcohol	16	14

GET TO KNOW…

Campbell County, Tenn.





Welcome, Campbell County, Tenn.
Things can get a little batty in Campbell County, Tenn. The New Mammoth Cave, first mined for saltpeter — the main ingredient in gunpowder — during the War of 1812, now **provides sanctuary for the Indian Bat, a federally endangered species.** Formed in 1806, the county named in honor of a Revolutionary War officer, is north of Knoxville between the Cumberland Plateau and the Appalachian Ridge. **It backed the Union during the Civil War, bucking the state's secession ordinance and forming the state's first Union Army unit.**

the HR DOCTOR

With Phil Rosenberg

Getting to Great in Human Resources (HR)

Ours is a very complicated and sometimes hard to understand society. We have both inherited it and further compounded matters by our own behaviors. In such a situation, we need great local government more than ever before. This is especially true when nature and our fellow humans regularly create serious trouble for us. Local government must be at its best when things are at their worst.

However, there cannot be great county, city or school district governance without great HR. Without great human resources management the liabilities of a local government will grow continuously. The best employees will leave, and the poorest behavior and weakest performance will dominate the reputation of the agency.

So, what does a local government need to make HR great? Here are the major requirements. Note that these requirements do not cost gigantic amounts of money. They are not complicated. They do require commitment, a sense of personal and professional responsibility, and accountability — no small challenge in organizations that crave excuse-making and shifting or avoiding direct responsibility in many cases. A sense of humor helps too!

1 R-E-S-P-E-C-T is the foundation of great HR. Identifying who is affected by HR activities (i.e., who are the stakeholders?) is the start of improvements in this key area. Stakeholders in a government HR function include citizens who may apply for a job. This means designing the entire recruiting and selecting system based around respect for the customers' time and expectations. An efficient system will use, but not overly depend on technology.

It will ask every employee involved in recruiting and selecting to remember clearly the days when they, too, were unemployed or applying for their first job. They need to remember their own hopes and dreams as they applied for a promotion and imagined how that new job might allow them to finally get health insurance for their family or their first home.

Reviewing and enhancing the processes of recruitment and selection is a great first step in enhancing HR organization-wide. This can be done quite simply — conduct a facilitated workshop on process improvement involving the staff of the HR function as well as key users.

Within one day (yes, really one day!), you can identify process improvement opportunities and prioritize those opportunities. Within a day thereafter, an HR business plan can be drafted with specific accountability laid out for the achievement of milestones in the process improvement. This "How many? By when?" business plan can be presented to the elected officials and the internal leaders of the organization for review and approval. Once that happens, HR process improvement is officially underway.

> Local government must be at its best when things are at their worst.

2 Every manager is not only an HR manager but also, unfortunately or not, a security manager. A thorough security review in the organization is very much a part of HR improvement. Once again, this is not a subject only for the HR department, but for every manager and every employee.

In a great many private and public organizations, the security function has migrated from the law enforcement department or public works to HR. Security is no longer a matter of locks and keys, gates and fences, guard stations and ID cards.

It includes human logistics; that is, understanding the interaction between human behavior and physical security activities. It involves behavioral assessments of applicants as well as developing rapid response "HR ER" capabilities within the organization. In the majority of cases, all of this can be managed and developed with internal resources. Nonetheless, much more is needed to strengthen security at work and in the community than the ready and responsive law enforcement group.

Once again, this area of process improvement can begin with something on the order of a brief, one-day facilitated review of how well the organization is prepared for the most likely security problems — whether the result of poor behavior, mechanical failure or natural disaster. Thereafter, it is a matter of assigning responsibilities and developing and applying our new friend, the "How many? By when?" program management philosophy.

3 Every current policy in the organization that touches on human resources needs to be reviewed and, as necessary, enhanced or supplemented with new policy as needed. A classic example is the job descriptions.

Keeping these documents up-to-date may seem like an annoying bureaucratic requirement. There may well be hundreds of these things. However, the reality is that a job description is a core document to hold people accountable, and for a county to be able to defend itself against legal challenges. Unfortunately, the sense that job description maintenance is a low priority, and frankly just annoying, limits the resources devoted to this form of maintenance. It is really a form of infrastructure maintenance.

Sooner or later the staff will wake up to realize that the last time the job descriptions were reviewed was prior to the

Spanish-American War. Job requirements and "essential functions" are no longer valid or cannot be meaningfully used by defense attorneys to support the organization. On the other hand, plaintiff lawyers orbiting around the local government parking lots looking for business will smile broadly at the thought of an outdated HR system.

The same is true of reviewing the organization's policies on acute liabilities such as nondiscrimination, behavioral propriety, anti-bullying and ensuring that disabled employees have the opportunity and the accountability shared by everyone else. Policy review is a spectacular subject for internal work and does not require the use of outside consultant resources, except perhaps for the initial determination of what work needs to be done, how to get it done and how to measure progress.

4 The final item to be mentioned is the importance of training and employee development. Helping all employees realize they are essential to the agency's success does not happen by itself. Nor does it happen if employees are dragged kicking and screaming into a 19-hour seminar with 4,000 PowerPoint slides full only of words in tiny fonts. Short, compelling and meaningful training activities are required. Most can be developed in-house by members of the very competent staff, which I know exists in organizations throughout the country.

Sometimes presentation skills will require an outside facilitator or trainer but this need not be and should not be an ongoing huge line item in the budget. It is also possible to work well and cost-effectively with local resources such as universities and state colleges.

The training needs begin with top management. If top management is not convinced that compelling training is a requirement for anything else to be improved, there is an even more fundamental problem in the organization that sooner or later will require more of elected officials' time and lawyer bills to pay.

The elected officials and the top administrators need to understand and "sign on" to the idea that you can't hold people accountable for policies or behaviors that they don't know about. Instead, training excellence will result in a "take excuses away" approach to increasing accountability that will improve behavior and performance in the workforce. It will guide considerations about which employee should be promoted or recognized in positive ways. Frankly, it will also make it easier to effectively take corrective action or disciplinary action if necessary when failures occur.

The four key ingredients in this recipe represent "big HR." They are strategic and have organization-wide impacts. Unfortunately, organizations that are not living in this century spend most of their money and focus on "little HR." They ensure that every period is placed on the piece of paper properly and all 5,000 procedures are rigorously adhered to.

Certainly, the best, the brightest and the most innovative HR staff members don't want to work in a place that is essentially a giant filing cabinet. Soon after their employment they will come to recognize this and begin planning for their honorable exit to a place that better appreciates the value of their profession and their personal skills.

A final note: Employees who are skilled, knowledgeable and respectful of each other and of the citizens they serve — and who support the vision of their leaders — will propel a local government to more success than it has ever had before and a better ability to defend itself against the evils of our "age of liability."

Your mission, dear readers, is to go forth and make HR spectacular in the organization. Know that you don't have to spend a lot of money or double staff size to make all of this happen. CN

On the road in Iowa for county innovations in transportation

By Jenna Moran
program manager

SPEEDREAD

Exchange explores evolving transportation technologies

Counties encourage testing autonomous vehicles on local roads

Johnson County, Iowa, a transportation research hub

Over the past few years, technological innovations in transportation have accelerated at a rapid pace, from connected and autonomous vehicles to open data sourcing to smart transit.

Manufacturers, federal government leaders, software developers, auto companies and universities are currently imagining and testing new ways to optimize transportation systems with this integrated technology.

County governments are no exception. Counties across the country have begun to take steps to prepare for these changes.

In 2014, Johnson County, Iowa and Fayette County, Ga. passed separate resolutions encouraging the testing of autonomous, or self-driving, vehicles on county-owned roads. Both saw an opportunity to court manufacturers and software developers not only to prepare their roads for the future but also to boost their local economies.

Other counties across the nation have taken the initiative to implement their own connected and autonomous vehicle test beds such as Contra Costa Transportation Authority's GoMentum Station in Contra Costa County, Calif. and the Anthem Connected Vehicle Test Bed in Maricopa County, Ariz. Both seek to develop safer, more reliable transportation efficiency by reducing congestion.

On May 12 and 13, NACo gathered county elected officials, county professional staff, state association staff, federal and state agency officials, and industry experts from across the country in Johnson County, Iowa, to explore counties' role in leveraging technological and data innovations to improve local and regional transportation planning and operations.

Matt Smith drives a mini-simulator, under the instruction of Tim Brown, a University of Iowa researcher. Photo by Jenna Moran

Attendees learned about the rapidly changing field of smart technologies and began to get a sense of what next steps might be good to take. Speakers included representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation and Maricopa County, Ariz., Fayette County, Ga., and Contra Costa County, Calif.

Brian Desloge, NACo first vice president, remarked, "It's always beneficial for county elected officials and staff to learn about what is going on in other parts of the country. This focus on lessons learned and best practices is something I want to continue in my presidential year."

Iowa was the ideal location to hold a peer exchange, since the Iowa Department of Transportation, under the guidance of Iowa DOT Director Paul Trombino, is pursuing a wide range of strategies to improve operations and promote Iowa-based businesses. These range from analyzing global economic and shipping trends as they affect Iowa farmers and manufacturers, to rethinking how new vehicle technologies can improve residents' daily lives.

Johnson County is also home to the University of Iowa's National Advanced Driving Simulator, which researches transportation safety and human behavior using a suite of driving simulators and instrumented vehicles.

"By staying ahead of these trends, county leaders can better align strategic county investments in local transportation systems to improve both goods and passenger movement and to support local and national economic competiveness," said Bill Peterson, Iowa State Association of Counties executive director.

The peer exchange was developed with the support of the Federal Highway Administration. As part of this work with FHWA, NACo recently released a publication, *Connected Counties: Tech Innovations in Transportation*, as well as offering a webinar, Keeping Counties Moving: Technological Innovations in Transportation.

Through case studies, both of these resources give an overview of how counties are using new technologies to improve transportation systems and ready them for the future. CN

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

ALASKA

Villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, site of a proposed gold mine, are considering whether to become the **state's 20th borough**.

The delta area in southwest Alaska is among the state's poorest regions, according to *Alaska Dispatch News*. The Donlin Gold Mine project would become the borough's economic engine, say those helping to draft a borough charter. A confederation of 10 Alaska Native villages owns the land.

Supporters say one benefit of forming a borough would be local bonding authority, making the area less dependent on state funding for new schools.

It could take developers up to three years to decide whether to build the mine.

ARIZONA

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has approved **PIMA COUNTY** for a Section 10 (**endangered species incidental 'take'**) permit for the county's species conservation plan.

Under the Endangered Species Act, it's normally illegal to take — that is, "harm, harass, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect" — threatened and endangered species. However, the FWS does in limited cases, issue Section 10 permits to take federally listed and candidate species that are "incidental to, but not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities."

"The permit provides the county with a streamlined procedure for compliance with the Endangered Species Act," County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry said. It relies on conservation measures the county has taken over the past 15 years, such as the acquisition and management of working ranches and county parks.

The permit covers up to 36,000 acres of impacts to nine currently listed species and another 35 species that could become federally protected during the next 30 years.

CALIFORNIA

● A federal appeals court has overturned a lower court ruling, subsequently allowing a lawsuit to proceed that challenges **ALAMEDA COUNTY**'s **gun control ordinance**, which bans gun stores from opening within 500 feet of residential neighborhoods, Reuters reported.

"Alameda County's ordinance may very well be permissible," wrote Judge Diarmuid O'Scannlain in the court's 2–1 opinion. "Thus far, however, the county has failed to justify the burden it has placed on the right of law-abiding citizens to purchase guns."

Dissenting from the majority, Judge Barry Silverman said, "What we're dealing with here is a mundane zoning dispute dressed up as a Second Amendment challenge."

● Voters in San Francisco will get to decide this fall whether to **lower the voting age to 16** for local elections. The **SAN FRANCISCO** Board of Supervisors voted 9–2 to place a charter amendment on the November ballot, sfgate.com reported.

Supervisor John Avalos, a proponent of the measure, said, "Regardless of whether this measure is approved or not, [San Francisco] is starting a trend that will happen across the country, where cities like ours will consider whether young people can vote."

If the amendment passes, San Francisco could become the first major U.S. city to lower its voting age.

COLORADO

PUEBLO COUNTY continues to use legalized **marijuana-related revenue** to address social needs. First there were college scholarships funded by pot tax revenues. Now the county has awarded a $25,000 grant to help the homeless, using funds from fines assessed against marijuana growers and sellers.

The grant went to the Pueblo Area Law Enforcement Chaplain's Corps to provide free bus vouchers to homeless people in the county.

Pueblo County Commissioner Sal Pace said the corps isn't "just putting people on a bus and sending them 300 miles away from here. They are working with stranded individuals to help reunite them with family members that have the

MICHIGAN

Vroom, vroom…. A rare 1991 GMC Syclone pickup truck with fewer than 14,000 miles on it sold for $23,500 at this year's **OAKLAND COUNTY** auction. Enthusiasts call it the "**quickest truck ever built**," according to the *Detroit Free Press*. Fewer than 3,000 were ever built.

Also for sale, a low-mileage 1980 Camaro with a Corvette engine; it went for $9,300. Both were both were used for years in the county's DARE drug-prevention program and for parades.

COLORADO

Earlier this month, **EL PASO COUNTY** Parks unveiled the Bear Creek Dog Park Memorial at a ceremony in Bear Creek Regional Park, home to a county dog park. The Bear Creek **Dog Park Memorial** will provide the opportunity for dog owners to memorialize their best friend at one the pet's favorite places.

The memorial consists of a granite monument with steel dog silhouettes on top, located near the main entrance. Dog owners can purchase personalized plaques to be placed on the monument in memory of their deceased canine companions. Money raised from the plaques will fund improvements to the dog park.

"The memorial is a unique amenity that adds to the overall quality of the dog park," said Dana Nordstrom, El Paso County community outreach coordinator. "It's a special touch for all of the people and pets who come and play."

Jamall Martin beams at his good luck. His was the winning bid for a rare GMC Syclone pickup at Oakland County, Mich.'s annual auction. Photo courtesy of Oakland County, Mich.

"Car enthusiasts love to try to get a good deal to add to their collections," County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said of the annual event. "Plus, there's something for everyone from electronics to power tools."

The event wasn't all muscle cars and trucks. Dozens of former police cars and county utility vehicles were also on offer, including a front-end loader. Bidders also vied for a mountain bike and a pair of Ralph Lauren boots.

The auction brought in over $500,000, county officials said.

resources to support them and get them back on their feet."

MINNESOTA

DOUGLAS COUNTY is loosening its **restrictions on lakeshore development**, in line with a state law passed last year that eliminates more restrictive local laws to protect lakes.

"With the passage back in July, we can no longer administer the minimum setback where it's beyond the state minimum setback," county Zoning Director Steve Rannenberg told the *Duluth News Tribune*.

The new standards would reduce setback restrictions on most lakes in the county, allow smaller lot sizes and could lead to additional development pressures, he added.

NEW JERSEY

A one-person division of the **UNION COUNTY** Department of Human Services will become the **Office on Women**, connecting local women with government services.

The office will promote services and programs throughout the county that are aimed at women's education, employment, social life, health care, addiction, aging and sexual violence, the *New Jersey Advance* reported.

NORTH DAKOTA

MCKENZIE COUNTY, currently the top oil-producer in the state, has pushed for state health officials to consider **opening a satellite office** in the county to more closely monitor the oil and gas industry, according to the *Dickenson Press.*

The issue was prompted by continuing concerns about disposal of radioactive byproducts of oil production in the state's first landfill, located in the county.

OHIO

● Hoping to draw some of its residents to use its services, **CUYAHOGA COUNTY** is adding **auto title transfer** services to one of its driver's license bureaus next year.

The *Plain Dealer* reported the county loses roughly $800,000 a year in title fees because its residents opt to go other counties' transfer offices that offer better customer service.

● Hopes to merge Dayton and **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** have been dashed by a new city line.

The city recently annexed land in **GREENE COUNTY**, and state law would make it very **difficult to pull off a merger**, now that the city spans two counties. The group Dayton Together has withdrawn its proposal.

Merging jurisdictions that span multiple counties is especially difficult and complicated and essentially would require a municipality to detach itself from the overlapping county territory, the *Dayton Daily News* reported.

OREGON

● Voters in **HOOD RIVER COUNTY** blocked a $50 million Nestle plant on the Columbia River Gorge by approving a **ban on commercial water bottling** with 69 percent of the vote.

The measure restricts the production and transportation of bottled water to less than 1,000 gallons a day from any Hood River County water source. Nestle's plant was projected to bottle more than 100 million gallons of water a year, OPB FM News reported.

● **GRANT** and **KLAMATH county** voters rejected ballot measures to overturn the counties' bans on **recreational marijuana cultivation, processing and sales**.

When the state legalized marijuana in 2014, counties and cities were given the option to ban marijuana production and sales if at least 55 percent of the voters opposed legalization.

WISCONSIN

COLUMBIA COUNTY may take control of its **veterans services** from the state's Department of Veterans Affairs.

The County Board of Supervisors has approved two resolutions asking the Legislature to clarify state law to ensure that county Veterans Service Offices (VSO) are under the auspices of counties.

Board members also want state lawmakers to restore the original intent of a 1973 measure that had offered counties state aid to help pay for the salary of a VSO, the *Portage Daily Register* reported. CN

OREGON

● Thirteen Oregon counties will receive $129,664 from the Oregon Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance County Block Grant Program, administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

The money will reimburse ranchers for **losses due to wolf predation**. **WALLOWA**, **UMATILLA** and **BAKER counties** see the most wolf activity in Oregon and receive about 78 percent of funds awarded, the ag department said, and this year **KLAMATH COUNTY** joined Wallowa and Umatilla as the only counties filing claims for confirmed or probable livestock losses in 2015.

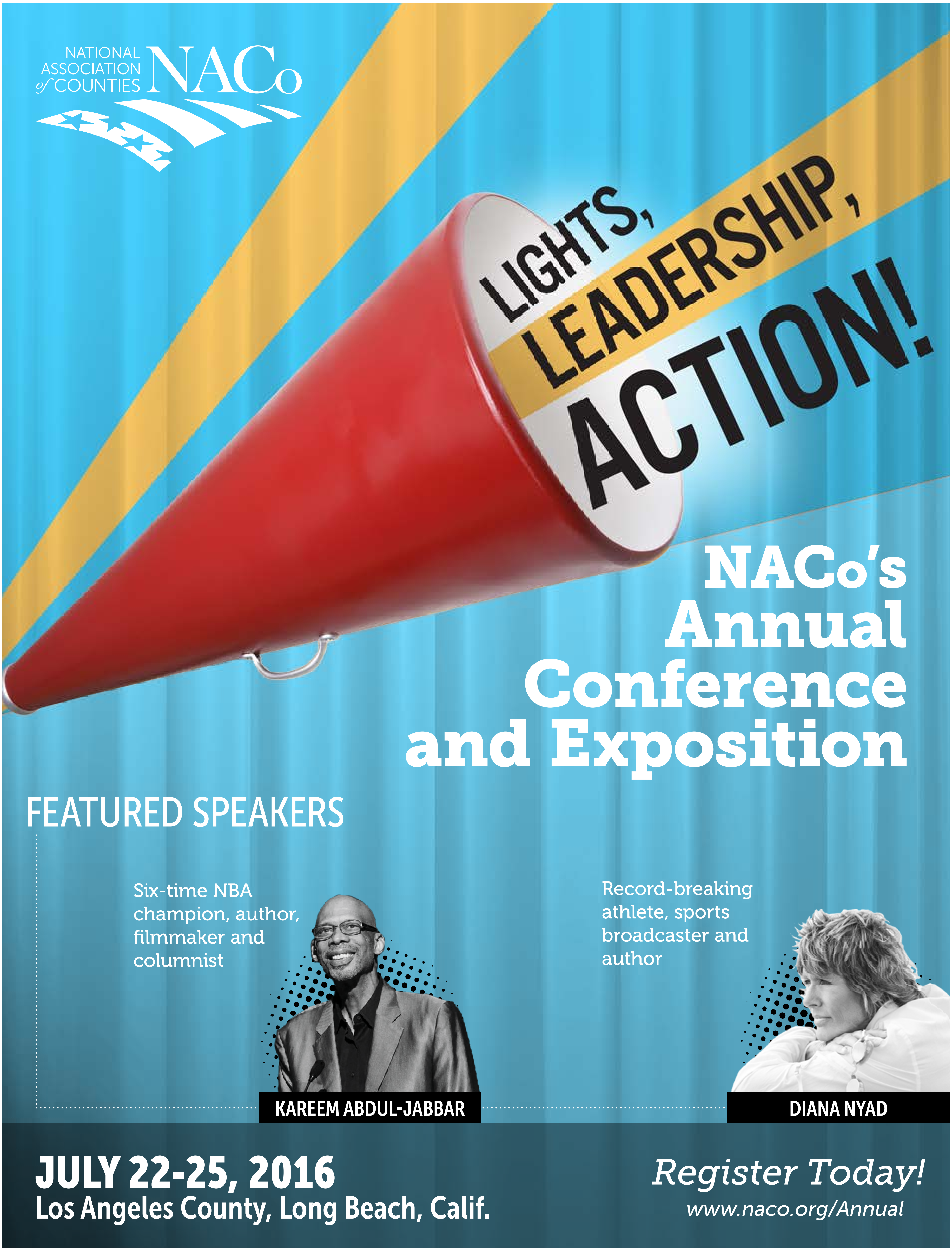
Despite no reported livestock losses, **MALHEUR COUNTY** was awarded $495. **JACKSON COUNTY** received the same amount.

NEW YORK

The **WYOMING COUNTY** Rural Arts Initiative's Microenterprise Program is offering **grants to county artists and artisans** establish or enhance their businesses.

Grants can be used to help pay for the cost of studios or "maker spaces," rent for gallery space or other display venues, art supplies and equipment, access to e-commerce opportunities and other costs involved in creating art for the commercial market.

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