This Week

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COUNTY NEWS

"The Wisdom to Know and the Courage to Defend the Public Interest"

NACo

Washington, D.C.

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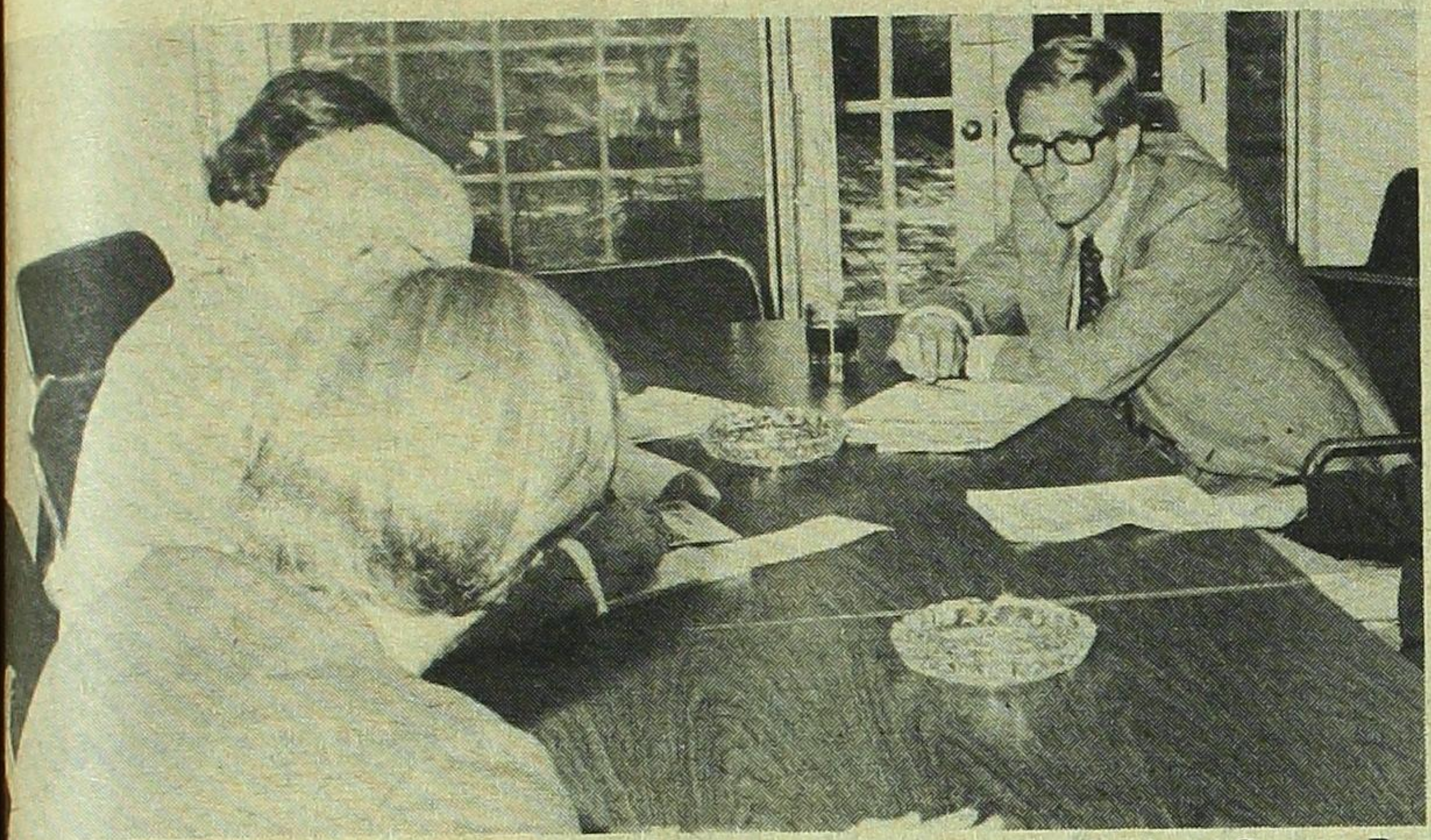
Oct. 9, 1978

Highway/Transit, CETA to Conference



RIDGE NEEDS EXPOUNDED—Robert Peirce, right, commissioner, Allegheny County, Pa., lks about the sad state of the country's bridges at a press conference at NACo's Commun-ations Center.

Big Differences in Bridge Programs

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Allegheny County Pa.) Commissioners Jim Flaherty and Robert eirce were on Capitol Hill last week to docu-ent the need for federal assistance for bridge pair and replacement and to muster support mong House-Senate conferees who will iron t major differences in the highway and ansit legislation.

At a press conference at NACo's Commun-ation Center, Peirce, along with NACo Exec-tive Director Bernard F. Hillenbrand and ther NACo staff, responded to the "pork bar-l" charge which has been hurled at the bridge ogram in the House-passed highway and ansit bill. The House has recommended a .5 billion a year bridge program.

Peirce pointed out that it would cost an esti-ated $25 billion in 1978 dollars to repair or place the nation's deficient bridges.

"We cannot be patient with those who call is a pork barrel program," he said. "The ed for repair and replacement is massive and is documented. Local governments cannot the job by themselves. The technology of avel and commerce has altered bridge needs o drastically too quickly."

PEIRCE NOTED that "we must begin to isel away at our astounding bridge needs d must not wait for tragedy to motivate us."

Disaster first brought national attention to idge problems more than 10 years ago. For-six people died when the Silver Bridge connecting Ohio and West Virginia collapsed into the Ohio River.

Sen. Jennings Randolph (D-W.Va.) introduced the first federal program aimed specifically at avoiding future tragedy. The bridge program also required the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to start a national bridge survey. According to FHWA, there are currently 33,000 deficient bridges on the federal-aid highways which would cost an estimated $12.5 billion to replace.

The federal government's current bridge program, funded from highway users' money channeled through the Highway Trust Fund, is $180 million a year and is restricted to those bridges on the federal-aid highway system.

HILLENBRAND REFERRED to a NACo survey, released earlier this year, which documented the widespread problems of bridges off federal-aid highway system and under county jurisdiction. The survey identified 78,000 structurally deficient bridges and 88,000 functionally obsolete bridges.

He also pointed out that an estimated 72 percent or 407,000 bridges in the United States were built prior to 1935. In that year, the uniform design standards and construction material qualifications were instituted.

"Obviously, those 407,000 bridges constructed before 1935 are very likely to be unsafe by today's standards," he said.

See CONFEREES, page 5

What's at Stake in CETA Sessions

ANALYSIS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—House and Senate conferees were scheduled to meet to resolve about 300 differences between their versions of the four-year CETA extension Oct. 5-7. Successful completion of that task will mean approval of the compromise bill by both Houses this week and the President's signature later this month.

NACo has identified the following key issues for special attention by the conferees:

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

NACo supports the House language for Title VI income eligibility at 100 percent of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lower living standard income level, rather than 85 percent as it is in the Senate bill, because this more clearly reflects the countercyclical purpose of that title.

NACo supports the House language that would require at least half of all Title VI public service jobs to be in temporary projects. The Senate requirement that all Title VI jobs be in special projects is far too restrictive. The placement record in permanent employment after a public service job is far better for an individual coming out of regular public service employment than from projects outside of regular local government employment.

NACo supports the Senate language which allows for an average national wage of $7,800 for public service job holders. The Senate language permits the wage ceiling to be indexed based on the variation in average wages. The House amendments are far more restrictive at $7,000. This would force the public service employment program to become a minimum wage program in a couple of years. In high wage areas, the House average would result in severe limitation on the types of jobs public service job holders working in local governments could fill.

NACo supports the Senate language limiting the federal share for salaries for public service jobs to $10,000 a year adjusted upwards based on a wage index with the maximum limit set at $12,000. The House would limit the federal share to a flat $10,000.

Also supported is Senate language on supplementation which limits supplementation to 20 percent above the area's adjusted federal wage ceiling, i.e., a maximum $14,400 salary from any source in the highest wage areas. The comparable ceiling in the House bill would be $12,000.

PSE FUNDS

NACo prefers House language for Titles II and VI which provides that 90 percent of the funds be allocated by formula, as opposed to 85 percent in the Senate bill.

NACo has urged conferees to ensure that PSE funds could be used for training programs, if the county chose to do so.

If funds are transferred, for example, from Title VI to Title II under Section 609 to enhance job training, then those funds should be utilized under Title II restrictions and not limited by the "not less than 80 percent of the funds ... shall be expended only for wages ..." language of Section 603(a). This could be achieved by changing Section 609 and reinforced by conference report language.

In resolving the differences in authorization levels for public service jobs between the House and Senate bills, NACo has urged conferees to remember that this is a four-year bill and not to cripple CETA as a tool to respond to increases in the national unemployment rate.

See CRUCIAL, page 4

Interim CETA Still in Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Despite repeated delays, the Senate this week is expected to pass H.J. Res. 1139, which provides funds for the Defense Department, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and a number of other human resources programs, through March 31, 1979. Final approval by both Houses before the congressional adjournment is virtually assured.

As it passed the House last month, the resolution would provide funds for CETA either at the current level or at the House-authorized level, whichever is lower. This would mean a cut of about 100,000 jobs from CETA Title VI public service employment during the coming year. The final version will probably refer to the final CETA bill for determining what level of resources will be available.

The continuing resolution has been delayed as part of the House-Senate battle over a number of issues, including abortion and tuition tax credits. Now, there is talk of holding it for use as a vehicle to provide funds for the countercyclical fiscal assistance program to state and local governments' programs, assuming that legislation is enacted this week.

Bridges at a Glance

	Authorizations	Match	Off-System Bridges
House Bill	$1.5 billion a year over four years	Federal share, 90 percent; local share, 10 percent	35 percent maximum; 25 percent minimum
Senate Bill	$525 million a year over two years	Federal share, 70 percent; local share, 30 percent	25 percent maximum; 15 percent minimum

DISCUSSING SUGAR LEGISLATION—Representatives of the Hawaii State Association of Counties discuss with Rep. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii) the importance of sugar to the state's economy. From left are Clarence Garcia, director of research and development, County of Hawaii; Toshio Ansai, Maui County councilman; Tomio Fujii, Hawaii County councilman, president, Hawaii State Association of Counties and director, NACo Western Interstate Region; Francis Pacheco, chairman, Hawaii County Sugar Committee; Joseph R. Garcia Jr., Hawaii County councilman, and Rep. Akaka.

Congress Wrestles With Sugar Prices

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The House and Senate are considering different versions of legislation to establish a national sugar price stabilization act. Congress is considering this legislation because the current sugar price support law expires after the 1978 sugar crop.

NACo supports legislation in Congress that would assure adequate sugar supplies and fair and reasonable prices for both consumers and domestic producers, and would maintain a viable domestic sugar cane and sugar beet industry.

Last week the Senate Finance Committee approved a bill that would provide a basic 17 cents per pound market price for sugar cane, corn and beet producers. The Finance Committee also added a controversial amendment that would provide President Carter the authority he needs to finalize a new world trade agreement.

At press time, the House was considering adoption of a 16 cents per pound Agriculture Committee bill or a 15 cents per pound Ways and Means Committee bill. President Carter has indicated he opposes any bill with a price provision of more than 15 cents per pound.

Counties in Hawaii and 21 other states have economies largely dependent upon sugar cane, sugar beet and corn sweetener production.

Nearly 14,000 farm families in 1[illegible] states grow sugar beets and more than 5,300 farmers have an interest in the planting and harvesting of sugar cane in Florida, Louisiana, Texas and Hawaii. Approximately [illegible] percent of this nation's huge corn crop is used to make corn sweeteners. More than 100,000 employees work on these farms, in 51 sugar beet processing plants, 52 cane sugar mills and 21 corn wet milling plants and in sugar distribution. Together they produced some 6 million short tons, raw value, of sugar and over 1 million tons of high fructose corn syrup last year. This is equal to [illegible] percent of U.S. consumers' demand for sweeteners.

Deferred Comp Clears Finance

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Senate Finance Committee last week approved a measure preserving public employee deferred compensation plans which have been adopted by many county governments.

The measure, which is attached to the tax reform bill, is virtually identical to the House-passed version. It essentially reiterates the continuing and consistent treatment of deferred compensation plans by the Internal Revenue Service prior to Feb. 197[illegible] and, in effect, overturns a proposed Treasury regulation which would have the effect of eliminating these plans.

Counties are urged to contact their senators to ask their support on the Senate floor for the deferred compensation provisions of the tax reform bill. For further information contact Bruce Talley at NACo (202/785-9577).

Pension Reform Bill Introduced in House

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On Sept. 20, the "Public Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1978" was filed in the House and referred jointly to the House Education and Labor, and Ways and Means Committees.

H.R. 14138, filed by Reps. John Dent (D-Pa.) and John Erlenborn (R-Ill.), proposes federal standards for retirement plans of states and localities, in the areas of reporting, disclosure, fiduciary responsibility and plan administration.

NACo is currently analyzing the bill. For further information, watch *County News* or contact Bruce Talley of the NACo staff, 202/785-9577.

COUNTY NEWS

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EFUGES, INACTIVE MILITARY LANDS

Additions to Payments-in-Lieu Pass

ASHINGTON, D.C.—Congress passed legislation, considered d for this session, which will inase payments to more than 200 nties in the payments-in-lieu of es program. The bill awaits ature by President Carter.

n a series of congressional moves, s to add fish and wildlife refuges l inactive military lands to the ments-in-lieu program were comed and passed by both Houses.

he original bill, H.R. 8394, titled Refuge Revenue Sharing Act of 8, passed the House in May. Its nsors were Reps. Bo Ginn (D-Ga.) and Bill Steiger (R-Wis.).

Under the proposal, a county containing fish and wildlife refuge acreage would receive an annual payment of the greater amount of either 75 cents per acre; .75 percent of market value; or 25 percent of federal oil and gas leases on wildlife refuges.

It is estimated that the additional cost of the program will increase from $3.5 million in fiscal '79 to $14.6 million in fiscal '83.

In the Senate, provisions of Sen. Dale Bumpers' bill, S. 74, which added inactive military lands to the payments-in-lieu program, were incorporated into H.R. 8394. The combined bill then went back to the House where no objections to the Senate amendments were raised.

The addition of lands that are designated by the Army as semiactive or inactive installations include over 1.09 million acres at an estimated cost of $313,000.

The revamped legislation also authorizes payments for lands acquired for federal parks where the state and local governments, in effect, act as agent for the federal government. Counties containing such lands were denied payment in 1977 because of a provision that prohibits payments for federal lands once in state or local government ownership. The overall impact of this change would be to add approximately 2.5 million acres of entitlement lands at an estimated annual cost of $1.9 million.

County officials attending a NACo rally last month to generate support for these bills were told by their congressional delegations that S.74 appeared doomed in the House this year.

However, with NACo's encouragement, Sen. Bumpers amended it to H.R. 8394 after House Interior Committee Chairman Morris Udall (D-Ariz.) and House Merchant Marine Committee Chairman Robert Leggett (D-Calif.) worked out procedural steps for House concurrence.

County officials are now urged to send mailgrams to President Carter urging his signature on H.R. 8394. The Administration had earlier opposed some of the provisions in both bills.

fforts Mount or Passage of efugee Aid Bill

ASHINGTON, D.C.—A comation of scheduling, jurisdictional d technical difficulties has prevend passage of a bill to continue full deral assistance to Indochinese ugees admitted to the United ates under the Indochinese fugee Assistance Program RAP). It appears that agreement s been reached on a suitable use-passed immigration bill to ve it to the floor for Senate ssage and House concurrence.

At press time, efforts were under y in the Senate Foreign Relations mmittee, the Judiciary Commits of both Houses, and with the dership, to clear the way for ssage of the bill before Congress journs.

Although authorization for the ecial program expired Sept. 30, partment of Health, Education d Welfare (HEW) sources indicate t sufficient funds are available to ntinue 100 percent reimbursement a period of time. County officials uld clarify this availability with ir state or HEW regional offices ore terminating aid to refugees.

The Administration's bill, S. 3309, igned to pay 100 percent for new ugees only and to phase down istance to states and counties for se already on welfare, was amend to include 100 percent federal ding for all refugees through al '79. Thereafter, the special eral assistance program would minate, except for refugees who ered the United States after Oct. 1977. For these refugees, the gram will continue for two extra rs at a 100 percent reimbursent level. Other refugees who cone to require public assistance d social services would be aided der the states' and counties' ular welfare programs, including eral assistance.

NACo supports continuation of l federal funding until the flow of ugees into the country stops and IRAP welfare caseload begins to line.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP—Participating in a workshop on County/Federal Partnerships for Health Care were, from left: Christopher B. Cohen, HEW official, and Mark Ravenscraft, commissioner, Summit County, Ohio.

Health Workshop Hears HEW Plans

CHICAGO—An HEW regional officer told county officials meeting here Sept. 25 that it is no news that the "feds" too often pass them over in planning and implementing programs. Direct channels of communication between counties will be established and at least one federal regional office will be built, he said.

Speaking was Christopher B. Cohen, a former county official, now principal regional officer for Region V of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Cohen described his program of outreach to counties and assured the group that he and his staff will continue meeting with county officials to learn firsthand about their problems, concerns and need for information about HEW programs.

The workshop, titled "County/Federal Partnerships for Health Care," was sponsored by NACoR's health services project and chaired by Mark Ravenscraft of Summit County, Ohio. A group of elected county officials, health officers and planners heard regional officials discuss their priorities and regulations for funding health services.

Representatives from Hennepin County, Minn. and Cincinnati, Ohio described ways in which they had combined local resources and federal programs to build primary health care systems for the needy and the underserved. Their message to counties was that being a federal grantee for providing comprehensive health services isn't easy, but the payoffs are great if federal and local priorities can be reconciled.

—Donna Brown, NACoR

Rural Health Care Centers A Priority, Says Mondale

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Improving health services for rural citizens is the first goal in a series of Carter administration efforts aimed at reversing the neglect of rural areas.

Vice President Mondale announced last week at the White House plans for joint activities by the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Labor, and Agriculture to develop rural health care centers. Funds already budgeted will be targeted to rural areas with inadequate health services. Through these cooperative efforts, 300 new centers are expected to be developed over the next four years.

HEW will continue its existing Rural Health Initiative, which combines funds for rural health centers with training and recruitment of health professionals to work in them. These resources will be supplemented by Farmers Home Administration loans for construction of clinic facilities. The Labor Department will train workers funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act for nonmedical jobs in rural health centers and place Job Corps health workers in rural sites.

NACoR's health services program continues to provide assistance to rural counties seeking to develop health centers.

For information, contact Tony McCann, director of the health services program at NACoR.

Focus on Work Assistance

MILWAUKEE COUNTY, Wis.—Milwaukee County's welfare reform seminar Oct. 26 and 27 will feature on-the-spot workshops and discussions with staff and clients of the county's work relief program.

County Executive William O'Donnell, who has organized the program, has extended a special invitation to elected officials to participate in learning about the county's innovative approach to getting general assistance recipients into the work force.

Complete the registration form below for additional information or call Ello Brink of Milwaukee County at 414/278-4071.

Rules Panel Holds Up Noise Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Noise ntrol Act of 1972 established eral standards for controlling se at the source while leaving immentation and enforcement to al governments. The program is e to expire and the reauthorizing islation is languishing in the use Rules Committee. Without e reauthorization, local governnts will not be able to enforce ndards and the program will eftively come to an end.

The bill, H.R. 12647, is a one-year uthorization of the Noise Control t with particular emphasis on se abatement research and hnical assistance for state and al efforts to control noise.

The senate has already approved the bill and added a new section entitled the Quiet Communities Act of 1978. Both House and Senate Authorization Committees have acted and have approved $10.6 million for the program. Consequently, this will not occur unless the Rules Committee grants a rule and allows a vote.

The problem in the Rules Committee does not seem to involve opposition to the bill. Rather, it appears that in the crunch of business at the end of the legislative session this bill is being overlooked in favor of seemingly more important legislation. In order for this bill to be reported this session, it is important for counties to contact every member of the Rules Committee and call their attention to the importance of this bill to counties. A list of Rules Committee members is provided.

The House Rules Committee includes:

DEMOCRATS: James J. Delaney (N.Y.), Richard Bolling (Mo.), B.F. Sisk (Calif.), John Young (Tex.), Claude Pepper (Fla.), Gillis W. Long (La.), Joe Moakley (Mass.), Lloyd Meeds (Wash.), Shirley Chisholm (N.Y.), Christopher J. Dodd (Conn.), and Morgan F. Murphy (Ill.).

REPUBLICANS: James H. Quillen (Tenn.), John B. Anderson (Ill.), Delbert L. Latta (Ohio), Del Clawson (Calif.), and Trent Lott (Miss.).

—Mark I. Croke

Crucial Issues Face CETA Conference

Continued from page 1

TITLE II STRUCTURE

NACo has endorsed the Title II structure of the House bill, which in the first year allows for a maximum of 50 percent of Title II funds to be spent for public service job wages. Given the variety of unemployment conditions in CETA prime sponsor areas around the country, the more flexible option of allowing each local prime sponsor to determine the amount of money to be spent on training vs. public service jobs within the 50 percent guideline is preferable to the Senate bill, which allows for separate appropriations for training and public service jobs.

This decision on structure of Title II leads to the simplicity of one allocation formula for that title. We can support any allocation formula for Title II that does least disruption to the current pattern for distribution of funds under current Titles I and II of CETA.

In regard to the formula allocations, counties feel strongly that the definition for an area of substantial unemployment (ASU) should be based on the high three consecutive months of the most recent 12 months of available data rather than a 12-month average. A three-month definition far better responds to the seasonal unemployment problems experienced by so many counties. It also responds to the needs of those communities that are dependent on a few major industries that periodically lay off employees when there are downswings in the economic cycle. Thus, NACo supports the House three-month definition for an ASU throughout all titles for the term of the act.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The House bill rules out uniform national performance standards. It requires local governments to develop their own standards and gives the Secretary, in reviewing the prime sponsor plan, ample opportunity to approve or disapprove the local performance standards, based on local economic conditions. To date NACo has seen no acceptable basis for determining national performance standards, as required in the Senate language, that can be applied to a variety of economic conditions and to the varying job training and placement resources throughout the country. Thus, NACo urges adoption of the House language.

NACo also supports House provisions requiring the publication of all necessary guidelines before grant applications are due and limiting rule changes during the year and opposes the extensive paperwork and reporting requirements inherent in the Senate bill and the amendments of Rep. Millicent Fenwick.

Further, NACo supports the House language requiring the Secretary to report regularly on efforts taken to reduce paperwork and reporting requirements.

COUNTY ROLE

NACo has urged the conferees to adopt the Senate language [Section 101(d)] mandating state coordination with local governments in balance of state areas. This language was supported by the Risenhoover/Hawkins colloquy on the House floor and would ensure that small counties have a voice in the programs planned in their areas.

For more information, call NACo's employment team or our Hotline: 202/785-9591.

REP. BRECKINRIDGE HONORED—A reception was held in Washington Sept. 27 in honor of Congressional Rural Caucus Chairman John Breckinridge (D-Ky.). The reception was hosted by the caucus and national organizations, including NACo. Rep. Breckinridge has chaired the caucus, which is composed of 101 congressmen, for four years. He will be retiring from Congress at the end of the current legislative session. Pictured, from left, are: Rep. Ed Jones (D-Tenn.), Elliott Alman of the NACo staff, Breckinridge and his wife.

CONFEREES MEET ON DEREGULATION

Local Airline Decision Near

WASHINGTON, D.C.—This week House and Senate conferees will consider differences in the airline deregulation bills which allow increased airline competition for passengers by lowering fares and providing better airline service.

A key element of the legislation centers on airline service to small communities with two issues important to counties:

- Maintenance and development of small community air service at the least cost to the federal government;
- Creation of a new partnership between the federal government, the states and the affected local governments.

Of the two versions, the Senate bill generally provides for air service needs of small communities more effectively than does the House bill.

THE SENATE BILL provides for simplified certification of existing or new commuter airlines as local transport carriers. This streamlined, easier to obtain certification process would benefit local communities by increasing airline competition. Under Senate provisions, subsidies paid to local service carriers would be reoriented to meet community needs and not air carrier needs.

The House-approved McHugh amendment, which NACo supports, will assure continuous essential air transportation if air service is interrupted during the 10-year guaranteed service period of the legislation. The Senate provisions combined with the McHugh amendment will ensure better service at lower cost by encouraging frequent service by community-oriented, certified, efficient air carriers.

Other provisions of the legislation:

The House bill provides for one new airline route to be added in the first year following enactment of the law without prior Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) approval. The Senate bill allows each airline authority to add one new route a year for two years, and two routes a year thereafter without CAB approval.

The Senate's version allows the airlines to reduce fares as much as 35 percent. The House bill would allow airlines to cut fares as much as 25 percent the first year of the law and as much as 50 percent the second year without CAB approval. Both bills would allow increases of up to 5 percent without CAB approval.

—Gary Raush

House-Senate Conferees

House		Senate	
Harold T. Johnson	(D-Calif.)	Howard Cannon	(D-Nev.)
Glenn M. Anderson	(D-Calif.)	Warren Magnuson	(D-Wash.)
Elliott H. Levitas	(D-Calif.)	Wendell Ford	(D-Ky.)
Ray Roberts	(D-Tex.)	Adlai E. Stevenson	(D-Ill.)
Teno Roncalio	(D-Wyo.)	Ted Stevens	(R-Ark.)
William Harsha	(R-Ohio)	Harrison Schmitt	(R-N.M.)
Gene Snyder	(R-Ky.)	John C. Danforth	(R-Mo.)

Improved County Corrections Purpose of Training Workshops

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Elected county officials and their sheriffs in 60 counties will be taking part in a management training program to help them deal with what corrections experts are calling a growing "jail crisis."

Three separate training sessions will be conducted by the Jail Center of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) with the assistance of the criminal justice project of NACo's Research Foundation (NACoRF).

The program is designed for counties with populations of 100,000 or more; 20 counties will be selected to participate in each session. Priority will be given to counties with an inmate population of 100 or more and a jail staff of 20 or more.

The premise behind the training program is that most elected county officials and sheriffs are expected to share the responsibility of financing, operating and evaluating county jails. However, because jail operation is not only costly, but likely to be surrounded by political and administrative controversy, relationships between county commissioners and their sheriffs or jail administrators can easily become an adversary, rather than a cooperative, effort.

TO HELP COUNTIES in this respect, NIC has developed its "Counties and Corrections" program through which county board members and their corrections administrators can develop an agenda to address jail problems in their own county.

Nearly 50 county officials from 25 counties were involved in two pilot training sessions last year. Objectives were to reduce the perceived distance between calculations managers and local elected officials in their beliefs about their respective roles, to develop familiarity with each other's daily routine, and to introduce management tools and techniques to help them in accomplishing objectives and tasks identified by those participating in the session.

Participants rated the training sessions highly, noting that an improved relationship with their partner was a primary result of the week-long program.

Counties selected for the upcoming sessions will be required to nominate two participants: one county board member who has a policy role in local corrections and one corrections administrator or sheriff.

Dates for the training sessions are: Jan. 21-26, April 29-May 4 and Aug. 12-17. All training sessions will be held at the NIC Jail Center in Boulder, Colo. Travel and per diem expenses will be provided under the NIC grants.

For more information, contact Nancy Dawson at NACoRF, 202/785-9577.

—Nancy Dawson
NACoRF

Getting the Most From Federal Aid

WASHINGTON, D.C.—County officials trying to understand the new federal Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures will find help at the Fourth Annual NACo/CIC Federal Aid Conference.

At a workshop titled "The EEO Compliance Jungle:Coming to Terms with the Uniform Guidelines," Dr. Kenneth A. Millard, chief of the State and Local Section of the Personnel Research and Development Center, U.S. Civil Service Commission, will give a general overview and outline the basic technical requirements of the new regulations.

William Mitchell, chief of the Employment Section of the Prince George's County Personnel Department, will also participate and will respond briefly to Dr. Millard. Questions from the audience will be answered.

The guidelines, which went into effect on Sept. 25, supersede all previous regulations on employeee selection procedures issued independently by federal agencies having civil rights enforcement responsibilities. They govern the use of employee testing and selection procedures by county governments and all other employers subject to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The new regulations will be applied by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Civil Service Commission, the Justice and Labor Departments, the Office of Revenue Sharing and by any other federal agency which adopts them.

Further information on the workshop, to be held on Oct. 24, 11 a.m.-noon, may be obtained from Chuck Loveless, NACoR labor-management relations specialist.

PARTICIPANTS CAN look forward to a number of other panels important to counties.

A two-hour session on grantsmanship will be conducted by senior county grant coordinators from around the country. Topics to be covered are building citizen participation into the county budgeting process, building a liaison with community-based groups for program planning, establishing internal county grant clearance processes and suggested models for developing a county grant coordinating unit.

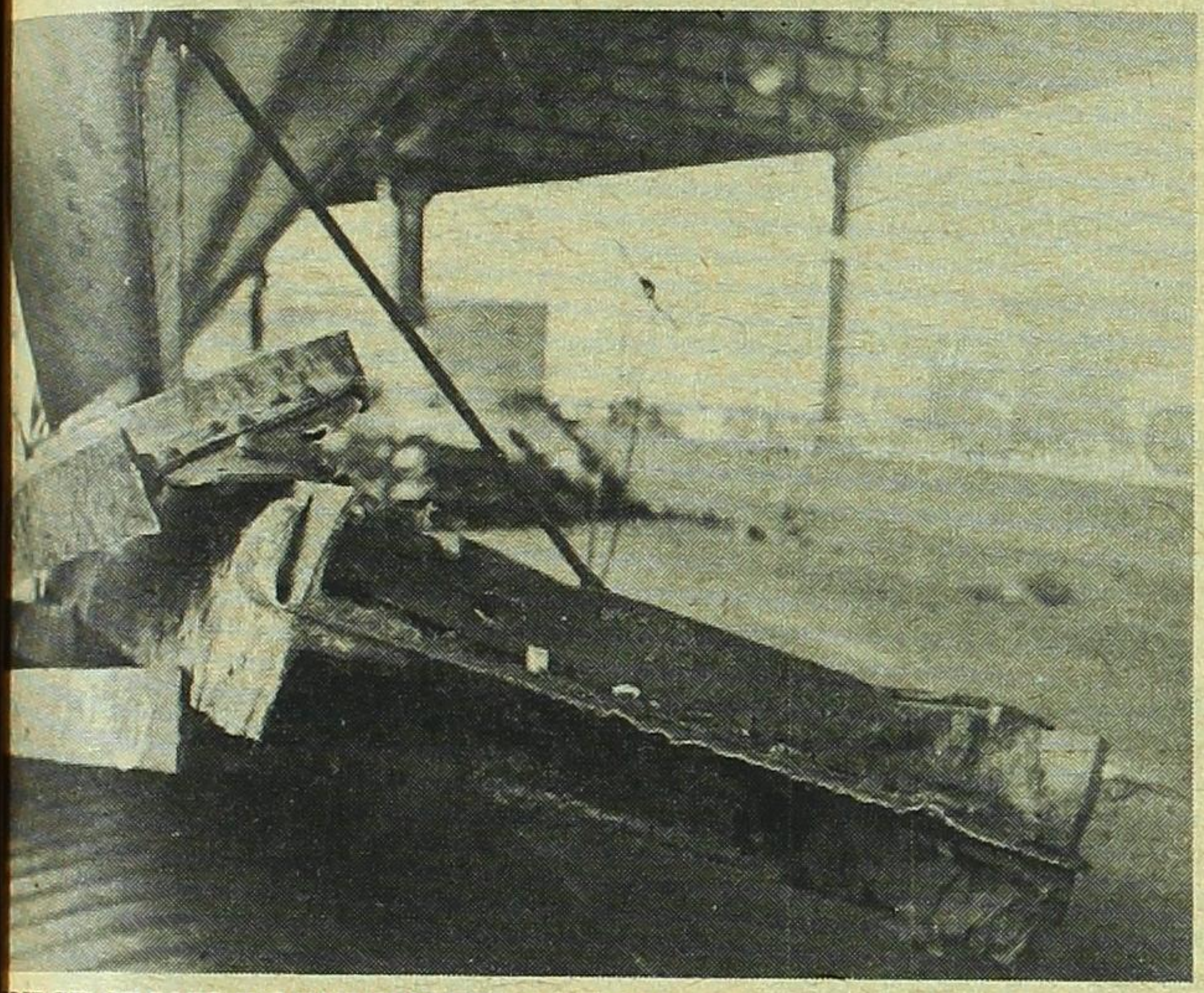
Representatives from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will participate in two sessions. One will focus on OMB implementation of the Federal Program Information Act, an act to develop a national computer of federal programs and a work plan to implement recommendations to streamline federal planning requirements. The second will be devoted to federal management circulars applicable to local government assistance recipients.

George Bohlinger III, deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Criminal Justice Programs, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and Blair G. Ewing, deputy director for the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, LEAA, will participate on a panel to discuss the new LEAA incentive grant program.

Jim Brougman, director of the Entitlement Division, Office of Community Development Block Grants, Department of Housing and Urban Development, will speak at the community development sessions.

In addition to a two-hour seminar on indirect cost allocation plans, sessions will deal with CETA, county programming for the cultural arts, economic development administration programs, energy, environment, parks and recreation, bridges, highways, antirecession/countercyclical legislation and recent efforts to reform the grants-in-aid system.

The conference will be held Oct. 22-25, 1978 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Washington. (See conference registration on this page.) On-site registration will be conducted Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 22 and 23. For more information, contact Linda Church of the NACo staff (202/785-9577).



BRIDGE CRISIS DOCUMENTED—NACo has been working for over two years to document the serious condition of thousands of bridges across the country. Currently only $180 million is authorized for bridge replacement and repair while the need is estimated to be $25 billion.

Conferees Must Iron Out Major Bridge Differences

Continued from page 1

"Furthermore, bridge usage throughout the United States has dramatically changed over the past years; our vehicles are heavier, more numerous and travel at much higher speeds. The impact of these changes on our nation's substandard and obsolete bridges threatens our personal safety, our travel and our commerce."

Flaherty, NACo's chairman for bridges, repeated to congressmen that he had told a Senate committee in March. "In Allegheny County alone, 106 bridges are closed or restricted and considered potentially dangerous. In addition, these closings have shut off at least 50 major commuter arteries and truck routes.

"The problem is not merely that bridges deteriorate and must be closed," he said. "Long before a closing, commerce is disrupted when bridge traffic is curtailed by the imposition of weight limits. All over the United States, commerce is hurt by bridges in different stages of disrepair."

THE HOUSE-SENATE conferees considering the highway and transit legislation will have to resolve major differences in the bridge program.

The House version, shepherded along by Rep. James Howard (D-N.J.) authorizes $1.5 billion per year for four years and recognizes the local bridge crisis by earmarking a maximum 35 percent and a minimum 25 percent for off-system bridges. The bill also increases the federal match to 90 percent.

On the other hand, the Senate's bridge program is set at $525 million each year for two years. This amount is $75 million more than the Administration had proposed and was raised because of Senate floor efforts by Sens. John Culver (D-Iowa) and John Heinz (R-Pa.). A maximum 25 percent and minimum 15 percent is earmarked for off-system bridges, while the funding match was reduced to 70 percent federal from 75 percent.

NACo has worked for increased bridge authorizations for nearly two years. During this time NACo has helped secure increased bridge authorizations above the current $180 million program and a reasonable share for off-system bridges.

At press time, House-Senate conferees have not decided the outcome of the future increased bridge program. County officials should contact their representatives and point out their bridge needs and especially note the fact that additional funds above the Senate's $525 million can be spent in a non-pork barrel manner.

—Tom Bulger

4th Annual National Federal Aid Conference

hosted by

National Association of Counties

and

NACo Council of Intergovernmental Coordinators

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Sunday, Oct. 22
NACo/CIC Board of Directors Meeting

Reception (for all delegates)

Monday, Oct. 23
Legislative Overview of the 95th Congress

Program Sessions on:
- OMB Initiatives and circulars
- CETA
- Aging/Title XX
- EPA Programs
- Grants Roundtable

Tuesday, Oct. 24
CIC Business Meeting Election of Officers

Program Sessions on:
- SMSA Revision
- LEAA
- Community Development
- Indirect Costs
- EEOC Guidelines
- Public Works/EDA Grant Reform

Wednesday, Oct. 25
Program Sessions on:
- Urban Intitiatives
- Rural Devopment
- Airports, Bridges, Highways
- Countercyclical/Antirecession

Delegates to NACo/CIC Fourth Annual National Federal Aid Conference can preregister for the conference and reserve hotel space by completing this form and returning it to NACo.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Conference registration fees must accompany this form before hotel reservations will be processed. **Enclose check, official county voucher or equivalent. No conference registrations will be made by telephone.**

Conference registration fees: $95 (member), $125 (non-member counties), $150 (other). **Make check payable to NACo/CIC Federal Aid Conference.**

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Since conference deadline is so near, **delegates should call the Hyatt Regency directly** for hotel reservations and identify themselves as being with NACo. Available housing will be assigned on a first-come basis. For our information, please fill in the following form.

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Arrival date/time ____________________ Departure date/time ____________________
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Send preregistration and hotel reservation to: **National Association of Counties, NACo/CIC Federal Aid Conference, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006, ATTN. Linda Church.**

For further information call NACo Conference Registration Center: 703/471-6180.

COUNTY CLOSEUP

Long-term Plans for Elderly Goal of Rensselaer County

RENSSELAER COUNTY, N.Y.—"There's no way I would let services to the elderly be cut if a Proposition 13 were passed in New York," says County Executive William J. Murphy.

Services to the elderly, he adds, have "a quasi-mandated status" because "the elderly simply will not stand still for cuts in service."

Murphy made these observations during a discussion of long-term prospects for county services with NACoRF research associates Janet Smith and Phil Jones.

Smith and Jones were in the county last week to collect data and interview officials as part of a NACo Research Foundation project to assist five counties to develop comprehensive long-term plans for the elderly.

RENSSELAER IS first of the five counties to be selected. Results in all five counties will be described in a report which will be distributed nationwide next year.

Selection of participating counties is based on their population characteristics, geographic location, and service structure.

Rensselaer County's 1975 population is 153,000. About 16 percent is 60 and older and 11 percent is 65 and older—which approximates national averages.

Like most cities, the county's two major municipalities—Troy and Rensselaer—have lost industries, endured urban decay and been forced to raise taxes to very high levels to make up for shrinking tax bases. (The county's taxes, however, have remained among the lowest in the state.)

Like the nation itself, most of the county's land area is rural. Stretching east from the Hudson River to the Taconic Mountains, this rural region is home to a scattered population who face poverty and low accessibility to services.

ALTHOUGH THE average nationwide increase in the number of elderly in the next 20 years is expected to be about 37 percent, Rensselaer County's increases will be substantially lower. This may reflect conditions in counties located outside major metropolitan areas that have lost their young adult and middle-aged populations as economic opportunity waned over the last 20 or 30 years.

Howard Taub, director of the county's planning office, cautions, however, that there are assumptions built into the county's population projections that may prove incorrect.

"There may be some migration back into the county that are not being included in our projections," Taub points out.

Robert Beaudoin, administrator of the county's 400-bed nursing home, is most concerned about the growth in the number of very elderly, those 75 or 85 years old.

"As the number of the very old increases, there will be increasing pressures on nursing and other health services," he warns.

Another problem cited during the week was a lack of housing for the elderly in the rural areas of the county. (New York forbids counties to sponsor housing authorities that could build such housing.)

"We have several housing developments for the elderly," says Robert Hayes, director of the Troy Housing Authority, "but there's absolutely nothing out in the eastern parts of the county."

TO HELP OFFSET this problem, the county's Department for the Aging operates a transportation service and two senior centers in rural towns.

Paul Tazbir Jr., commissioner of the Department for the Aging, adds that his office has also developed Project Alert, an intensive program to identify all the elderly in the county and determine their need for services.

Tazbir and his staff are acting as liaison between NACoRF researchers and local service agencies. The department's staff is also working with the NACoRF staff to summarize the results of the data-gathering and interviews into proposals for a long-term plan. These proposals will be presented at a public meeting later this fall.

During or after the meeting, the county executive will appoint a committee of agency representatives and elderly citizens to consider the proposals and develop a final long-term plan.

For more information, write or call the NACoRF Aging Program.

Matter and Measure

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION COUNTY ENGINEERS NACE

ENERGY-IMPACT HIGHWAYS

A new Department of Transportation (DOT) report focuses primarily on highway assistance needs for transporting coal.

According to the study, "Highway Needs to Solve Energy Problems," approximately $7.3 billion, or 76 percent of the cost of all "energy-related" highway improvements which states estimate will be needed between now and 1985, relate to the building or rebuilding of coal-haul roads. The Appalachian states accounted for $6.4 billion, or 88 percent, of this amount. Approximately $1.9 billion, or 20 percent of all energy-related highway needs, accrue from rail-highway grade crossing improvements, improvements to highways in "boom towns," improvements to access roads to power plants and facilities for off-shore drilling.

As a potential long-term solution to provide revenues for coal road improvements, DOT recommends use of a coal severance tax. DOT believes such a tax would reflect the "user pays" principle and allow the price of coal to cover production and transportation costs.

DOT's short-term recommendation is for federal-aid transportation programs to be increasingly directed to addressing coal road needs. "States and localities should also be increasing their involvement with the problem consistent with the federal-state partnership in highway construction," recommends the report.

DOT proposes that the states, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration, designate a coal-haul highway system of roads or bridges necessary for the efficient transport of coal. The system would include highways either on or off the federal-aid system, but once designated part of the coal-haul system, the roads would automatically become part of the federal-aid system.

Copies of the report are available from Marlene Glassman at NACo.

FHWA REGION 15 DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

During October and November, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will present demonstration projects on stone column for highway construction; highway noise analysis; and water quality.

According to FHWA, the stone column method of strengthening cohesive soils is often a feasible solution for bearing capacity or settlement problems.

The demonstration is conducted in two parts. Part one is a one-hour slide show. Part two is a two-three hour workshop that illustrates design procedures and example problems. A guideline manual on use of stone columns is provided.

Presentations on **stone column** for highway construction will be presented at the following locations:

- Oct. 30, 1 p.m., Tennessee Department of Transportation, Nashville; contact Dave Royster at 615-741-4775.
- Oct. 31, 8:30 a.m., Georgia Department of Transportation, Nashville; contact Dave Royster at 615-741-4775.
- Oct. 31, 8:30 a.m., Georgia Department of Transportation, Forest Park; contact Sam Vollo at 404-363-7567.
- Nov. 1, 8:30 a.m., Alabama State Highway Department, Montgomery; contact Frank Holman at 205-832-5250.

FHWA will also present its demonstration project on highway noise analysis—state-of-the-art techniques to measure, predict, and abate highway-related noise. Unless otherwise arranged, the demonstration will be conducted assuming working knowledge in traffic noise analysis.

The demonstration consists of class and field workshops run in and around a trailer equipped as a miniclassroom and noise analysis laboratory. Attendance is limited to eight persons. A typical demonstration runs two and one-half days.

Highway noise analysis will be presented at the following locations:

- Oct. 17-19, Connecticut Department of Transportation, Hartford; contact Ed Button at 203-566-3477.
- Oct. 31-Nov. 2, Maine Department of Transportation, Augusta; contact Arlo White at 207-289-3321.
- Nov. 14-16, New Jersey Department of Transportation, Trenton; contact John Dempster at 609-292-5700.

In addition, FHWA will present its demonstration project on **water quality** Oct. 24-26 at the Washington Department of Transportation in Olympia; contact Skip Pearson at 206-753-7213. The demonstration will provide information to properly analyze highway impact on water quality and will demonstrate erosion control methods to reduce water pollution during highway construction.

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(Signed) Michael Breeding

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(Signed) Michael Breeding

Commentary

Joker in the Deck: Prop 13 May Put a Cap on Growth

by Neal R. Peirce

SAN DIEGO—Radical changes in government, from Prohibition to civil service to strict ethics laws, often turn out to have major side effects no one considered before they were put into place. Now it appears Proposition 13 will be no exception.

Pushed heavily by groups associated with free enterprise and pro-growth positions, the California initiative, together with its virtual carbon copies on the Oregon, Idaho and Michigan ballots this fall, is threatening to place a clamp on new residential development potentially more effective than any existing land use control law.

The result could well be a curb on the sprawl development often so harmful to cities and established suburbs. City governments should also benefit from the castor oil of tightened management practices which Proposition 13 has forced on them. But heavy slashes in budgets may cause side effects from which it will take cities years to recover: declines in basic services, deferred maintenance, roadblocks to center city development and a significant loss in home rule.

OF ALL THE effects, the joker in the deck, the effect practically no one anticipated, is the damper on new development. Any local government deprived of a major share of its property tax revenues simply must find economies. At all costs, it must avoid new obligations. New subdivisions, requiring immense capital outlay for streets, lighting, water and sewer lines, schools, police and fire stations, have long been suspected of not paying their own way. But under Proposition 13-like restrictions on the property tax, there may not even be enough money to pay for the year-to-year payroll costs of required new teachers, police and firemen.

The likely result: a slowdown in new subdivision construction, a sharp shift in costs to developers, and, at least in some cities and suburbs, a virtual freeze on new subdivision building.

California cities are now diverting large portions of their capital budgets to operating costs for existing services. San Diego, one of the West's most rapidly growing cities, cut its capital budget 43 percent in the wake of Proposition 13, Mayor Pete Wilson notes.

A California leader in controlled growth, San Diego was already requiring developers to pay for such facilities as streets, gutters and sewers. In negotiations for development of North City West, a tract of open rolling hillside within San Diego's borders planned to house up to 35,000 people, the city had already forced developers to agree to pay for fire and police stations and schools as well as streets and sewers.

BUT NOW Proposition 13 has thrown a monkey wrench into those negotiations, because the 1 percent assessment lid will force tax revenues below ongoing personnel costs. "We don't just build pyramids out there; we have to put staff in them," Wilson says.

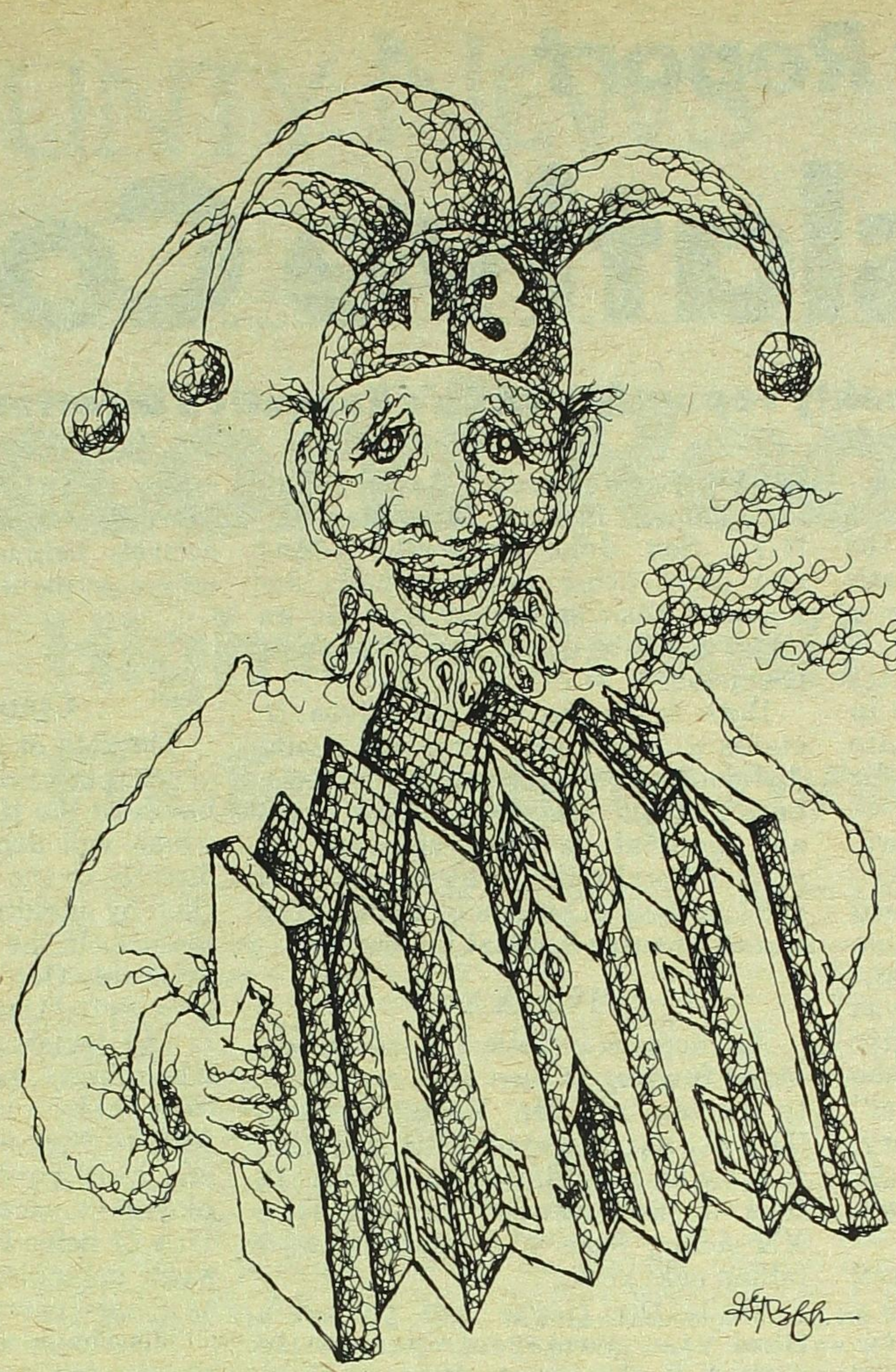
Petaluma, the fast-growing town north of San Francisco that battled developers to the U.S. Supreme Court to win the right to limit new housing starts, has passed an ordinance to pass the costs of major municipal improvements, ranging from streets to police and fire stations, to the builders. Developers will have to pay an "impact fee" of $3,000 an acre and the council may force builders to submit analyses proving that revenue generated by new homes will cover the cost of additional services. "We're trying to find a means of pay-as-you-go," says Mayor Helen Putnam. "Permits just won't be issued if new housing will be any financial burden to the city."

In Fairfield, a San Francisco suburb long pro-growth in its attitudes, a computer study by the Association of Bay Area Governments showed that total tax revenues from a proposed new subdivision would pay for only half the required new police—and no other services at all. Fairfield upped its per-lot building fee, to cover city capital costs, to $4,000. "But it's the operating costs that scare us even more," says City Manager Gale Wilson.

At a minimum, Proposition 13 now seems sure to drive up California's already sky-high housing prices. The increased costs will be a heavy blow to low-income people and make mincemeat of Howard Jarvis' pre-vote claim that Proposition 13 would make housing more affordable to young households by reducing property taxes.

However far-reaching the effects of Proposition 13 may be in California, they could be even more unsettling in other states. In Idaho, for instance, property taxes are already well below the national average, cities have no other tax source, and there's no large state surplus to distribute to localities. Boise Mayor Dick Eardley warns that the 1 percent tax assessment limit on the November ballot would cut 63 percent off his city's tax receipts—a figure that "in our wildest dreams we couldn't expect the legislature to replace."

Building moratoriums in his fast-growing city might be required, says Eardley, because "adding new firemen and new policemen and building new police and fire stations would be a practical impossibility with 1 percent."



Urban Park Bill May Get to Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Senate Energy and Natural Resource Committee sources said last week that the Senate may consider the proposed Urban Park Rehabilitation bill drafted by Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio). The Senate is expected to consider the bill as part of floor consideration of the pending Omnibus Parks bill which passed the House last July.

Earlier last week the House approved another version of the Omnibus Park bill which contains fewer national park proposals and a version of the Urban Park bill more closely aligned to the Metzenbaum draft.

NACo supports urban park rehabilitation legislation which provides for county eligibility on an equal basis with other general purpose local governments. County officials should contact their members of the Senate and urge a vote in favor of the Metzenbaum draft when it comes to the full Senate for approval.

The Metzenbaum draft bill would:

- Authorize 70 percent matching grants totaling $150 million annually for five years to assist counties and other general purpose local governments to rehabilitate existing park and recreation facilities in distressed urban areas.
- Fifteen percent of the total amount would be set aside for local governments which would not be eligibility criteria approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
- Eligibility of general purpose local governments would be determined by the Interior Department based on a variety of criteria.
- Funds can only be used for rehabilitating or refurbishing existing park and recreation facilities. No funds could be used for acquisition or development of new facilities.

Job Opportunities

Manpower Director, Rock County, Wis. Salary $16,797 to $22,776. To formulate and implement administrative policies and procedures; direct extensive research projects in determining program effectiveness in accordance with federal, state and county regulations. Minimum of a bachelor's degree in public or business administration statistics, economics or related field with considerable administrative experience. Equivalent combination of training and experience will be considered. Resume to: Personnel Office, Rock County Courthouse, 51 S. Main St., Janesville, Wis. 53545. Closing date: Oct. 15.

Director of Utilities, Manatee County, Fla. Salary to $28,000. Experience in responsible management or supervisory position in water and sewer system operations, including treatment, collection and distribution, with experience on the west coast of Florida preferred. Master's degree (preferred) with major course of study in an engineering field related to the operation of a utilities system or in public administration. Resume to: David B. Collier, County Administrator, Box 1000, Bradenton, Fla. 33506.

Personnel Psychologist, Pima County, Ariz. Salary $18,468 to $24,936. Preference will be given to candidates with comprehensive experience in developing, constructing and validating personnel selection, placement, promotion and evaluation techniques. Minimum qualifications: Master's degree in psychology/industrial psychology and three years experience in personnel psychology, including psychometrics and statistical analysis or an equivalent combination of training and experience totaling nine years. Resume to: Pima County Personnel Dept., 151 W. Congress St., Tucson, Ariz. 85701.

Administrator, Residential health care facility, Nassau County, N.Y. Responsible for the total operation of a large skilled nursing facility. Applicants must have a master's degree in health services administration, with at least seven years of responsible administrative experience in a hospital or skilled nursing facility. A New York nursing home administrator's license is required. Preference given to residents of Nassau County. Resume to: Commissioner of Social Services, Nassau County Dept. of Social Services, 900 Ellison Ave., Westbury, N.Y. 11590.

Executive Director, Jackson-Josephine Job Council, Medford, Ore. Salary $1,800 to $2,300 per month. CETA prime sponsor in Southern Oregon seeks executive director to coordinate and supervise all phases of program administration. College background in business administration, economics, urban planning or related field. Graduate school training preferred, as well as experience directing multipurpose contract and staff. Resume to: Jackson-Josephine Job Council, 123 W. 10th St., Suite 5, Medford, Ore., 503/779-9303. Deadline Oct. 20.

Letters to NACo

Dear Bernard:

Just a brief note of deep thanks for NACo's efforts concerning my proposal on the Indochina Refugee Assistance Program. You know I'll be doing all I can to seek passage of my amendment, which has been adopted by the full Senate Human Resources Committee.

—**Alan Cranston**
United States Senate

To the Editor:

Your double-paged spread on "Proposed State Activities in the Tax Area" (*County News*, Sept. 11, 1978) was most useful and helpful in demonstrating the nationwide grassroots movement for fiscal responsibility in government.

However, it is deficient in that it omitted any reference to the action of 23 states which have thus far forwarded the appropriate resolutions to the U.S. Congress calling for a constitutional convention for the purpose of amending the constitution to require that the federal government operate on a balanced budget, without budgeted deficits. This, of course, is common in local government administration and if the federal government were similarly operated we might be able to preserve the integrity of the dollar.

—**Randy H. Hamilton, Dean**
Graduate School of Public Administration
Golden Gate University
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Bernie:

How about an unsolicited testimonial?

I am continually impressed with the very high quality of the *County News*. When it arrives in a staff of "stuff" it is the first thing I read. I am impressed with its timeliness, thoroughness and excellence of journalistic style. This department gets several copies and they all get circulated quickly because it is such a good tool for keeping current on many matters of interest to us.

—**Aileen R. Lotz**
Director, Department of Human Resources
Metropolitan Dade County, Fla.

Dear Bernie:

I want to thank you for all the help you provided to the Administration as we were developing our urban policy. Your ideas and proposals had a significant effect on the final policy that the President announced. I also appreciate the support that you have expressed for the policy since it was presented to the Congress.

I look forward to working closely with you through the upcoming months as our legislative initiatives are considered by the Congress. Thanks again for your help and your wise assistance.

—**Stuart E. Eizenstat**
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Affairs and Policy

A Weekly Report

Legislative Countdown

A weekly report by NACo's Executive Director Bernard F. Hillenbrand

President Carter won a major victory last week when the House voted 223 to 190 to sustain his veto of the water projects bill. Two-thirds of both Houses are required to override a veto.

NACo had no policy on the water projects and, hence, took no part in the action. Our Western Interstate Region district actively worked for the override.

The bill funds 26 new water projects the President wanted, but Congress added 27 new ones and restored funding for some of the projects on the President's "hit list" of last year.

The rhetoric on both sides was sharp. The President called the water projects (sometimes referred to as the public works projects) "pork barrel" and said the bill was inflationary. Congressional leaders defended the projects as preventing floods and saving lives.

The fight may prove to be very costly in disrupting the President's relationship with Congress, and encouraging more vetoes of spending bills.

Already it has upset the congressional schedule as members speed to adjourn by the middle of this month. Precious time is left for conferees to work out major differences in CETA reauthorization and highway/transit legislation. Still caught in the time squeeze are bills vitally important to counties: countercyclical aid, welfare, fiscal relief, Title XX social service, and energy impact aid.

As we head for what congressional leaders believe will be the final week of Congress, here's where we are on our countdown issues.

Welfare Fiscal Relief

As we go to press, bills providing fiscal relief for welfare costs are scheduled to be voted on in both the House and Senate. The outcome is too close to call.

In the House, H.R. 13335, sponsored by Reps. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) and James Corman (D-Calif.), was expected to be voted on by Oct. 6. The bill would provide $400 million of fiscal relief to states and counties for part of their share of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. In states where counties contribute to AFDC, 100 percent of the local share would have to be passed through to counties.

In the Senate, an amendment on the tax bill would provide approximately $400 million of fiscal relief for AFDC costs with a 90 percent pass-through to counties. The amendment was offered by Sens. Russell B. Long (D-La.) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.). Sen. John Danforth (R-Mo.) and eight other senators have announced their intention to offer an amendment to delete the fiscal relief provision.

Both bills provide incentives to states with low error rates and would distribute funds according to a two-part formula based on AFDC costs and general revenue sharing. (A similar fiscal relief measure provided $187 million as an amendment to the Social Security Act last December.)

Title XX

An increase in Title XX (social services) funding is also an amendment to the tax bill. Sen. Robert Morgan (D-N.C.) has announced his intention to offer an amendment on the Senate floor to permanently raise the Title XX ceiling from $2.5 billion to $2.9 billion next year.

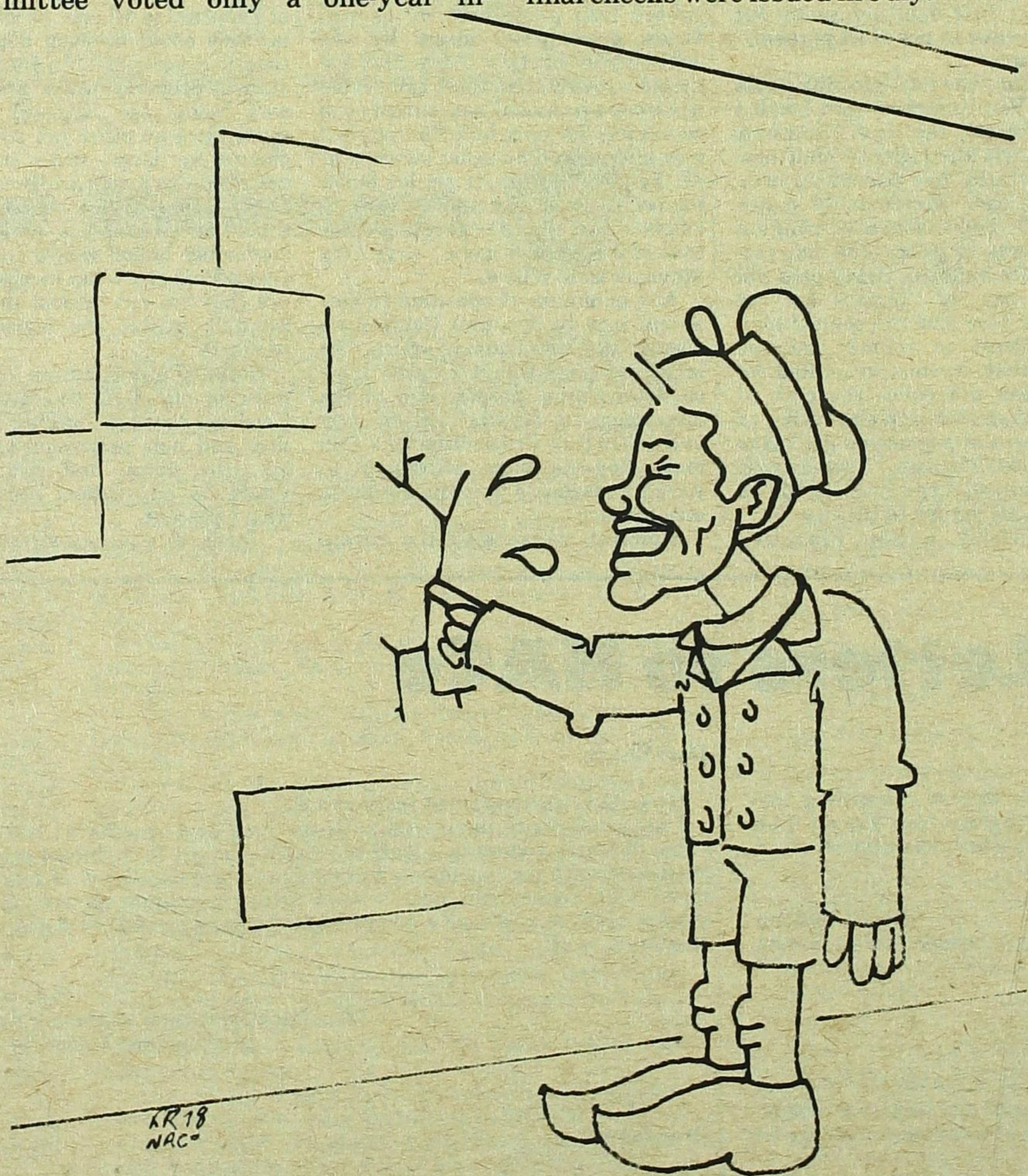
While the House had passed a three-year permanent increase in Title XX, the Senate Finance Committee voted only a one-year increase in Title XX for fiscal '79. The Morgan amendment, which NACo is actively behind, would make the increase permanent.

Countercyclical

The fate of the two-year extension of countercyclical aid rests in the hands of the House Rules Committee which will decide if the bill can go directly to the House floor for a vote, thereby avoiding a House-Senate conference. If the Rules Committee acts favorably Oct. 6, the House floor vote is expected this week.

The legislation, H.R. 2852, overwhelmingly passed the Senate on Sept. 23 by a vote of 44-8. It provides $500 to $600 million per year to state and local governments where unemployment exceeds 6 percent. A new Title II helps local governments only when unemployment dips below the national 6 percent trigger.

The House vote is crucial since the current program expired Sept. 30 and final checks were issued in July.



Energy Impact Aid

The on again, off again efforts at compromise in the Senate on energy impact assistance for counties facing energy boom development may prove to be an exercise in futility. A compromise appears possible between the version which came from the Governmental Affairs Committee Sept. 28 sponsored by Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) and the one from the Environmental and Public Works Committee sponsored by Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.). However, committee staffs plan no further action until they are convinced the House would have time to consider a bill. Sources in the House are pessimistic on this score. It appears this bill may be a victim of little time and much pending legislation.

Transportation

Transportation legislation is creeping along as if it were caught up in the evening rush hour. With luck, it won't run out of fuel before Congress adjourns.

The most important transportation issues pending are the highway/transit safety bills now being considered by House-Senate conferees. The omnibus surface transportation bill includes authorizations for local public transportation systems in both urban and rural areas; highway authorizations for everything from the interstate program to local streets; an expanded bridge program with funds—for the first time—for bridges off the federal-aid system; and modifications to ensure that metropolitan planning organizations are composed of elected local officials.

In the airline area, a top legislative initiative of the President, deregulation of the nation's airlines is being considered by House-Senate conferees. It seems certain that service to many of our small communities will be protected. However, it is uncertain whether the conferees will adopt the Senate's streamlined certification arrangement for commuter airlines along with local involvement in making airline decisions.

As airline deregulation legislation forges ahead, it is hoped aircraft noise bills will also make a conference committee. Last week, the Senate Finance Committee cut out subsidies to the airlines forcing a showdown with the House which voted to allow the aircraft industry to receive $4 billion from passenger ticket taxes to help quiet its fleet. What has not been articulated very well is the nation's need to resolve unacceptable noise levels in and around airports.

Bernie Hillenbrand

NACo's Hotline—the Wire to Washington

For the latest in legislative information, call: 202/785-9591