

NACO National Association of Counties

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

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Rural counties advance priorities during RAC fly-in

By **ERIK JOHNSTON**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Nineteen county officials from 15 states participated in NACo's Rural Action Caucus Fly-in March 27–29 in Washington, D.C. to raise awareness about critical issues fac-

ing rural counties.

The delegation met with 54 congressional offices, five federal agencies and the White House Rural Council, and worked to oppose federal unfunded mandates and preemptions, make rural development a priority within farm bill

reauthorization, urge passage of a multi-year highway and bridges bill, protect rural health programs and urge level funding for public lands programs.

"In an economy struggling

toward recovery, the last thing we need is to harm programs that lead directly to economic opportunity and jobs in rural America," said NACo President Lenny Eliason, who led the advocacy effort.

Each year, NACo's Rural Action Caucus identifies the most pressing issues facing rural America and brings them to the attention of

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Bill to stop 'waters of the U.S.' guidance released

By **JULIE UFNER**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

A bill to prevent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corp of Engineers

(Corps) from moving forward with the "waters of the U.S." guidance, was introduced March 28 by Sens. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), Dean Heller (R-Nev.), Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) and 26 other senators.

The bill, Preserve the Waters of the U.S. Act, would stop a proposed guidance on "Identifying Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act." Originally issued as a draft in April 2011, the guidance was sent in final form to the Office of Management and Budget on Feb. 21. The final "waters of the U.S." guidance is expected to be released this month.

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Photo by Jim Philipps

Reps. Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.) and Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) answer questions before a Congressional Rural Caucus briefing on the 2012 Farm Bill. McIntyre and Smith are co-chairman of the caucus.

QuickTakes

Counties with Best Beaches for Families

- 1 • Honolulu County, Hawaii – Waimanalo Beach
- 2 • Barnstable County, Mass. – Outer Beach
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- 4 • Hancock County, Maine – Sand Beach
- 5 • Dare and Hyde counties, N.C. – Cape Hatteras

Source: Family Vacation Critic, 2012

CountyNews Features

Court rules Fannie, Freddie not exempt from Mich. transfer taxes

By **CHARLIE BAN**
STAFF WRITER



Oakland County struck a blow for Michigan county treasurers and recorders when it took Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae to court over unpaid transfer taxes — and won.

The ruling opens the door for all of Michigan's counties to follow in an effort to recover transfer taxes, which most, if not all, of the remaining 82 counties are doing in a class-action suit.

"It's a great first step and sets

a good precedent for Michigan's other counties to stake a claim to their transfer taxes," said Denna Bosworth, a legislative coordinator at the Michigan Association of Counties.

Judge Victoria Roberts of Michigan's Eastern District ruled in favor of the county in March, saying that precedent found statutory exemptions from taxes, such as those Fannie and Freddie were granted by Congress, do not include excise taxes, including the transfer taxes, which they had not been paying to counties. Fannie and Freddie will likely appeal the ruling.

Damages in the case have not yet been determined, though Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner said he estimated the county's losses over the last six years, the statue of limitations in this case, to be between \$3 million and \$5 million. Oakland County, along with much of Michigan, saw an increase in property transfers during the recession as houses were being foreclosed, which meant the county was missing out on more transfer taxes than usual.

"I hope it's a good feeling for our county taxpayers, who have been

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The House FY13 budget resolution delays \$110 billion in cuts » **Page 2**

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FY13 House budget delays billions in cuts

The recently-passed House FY13 budget blueprint would delay the \$110 billion in cuts mandated for FY13, and instead offer just about \$18.3 billion in cuts with budget caps set at \$1.03 trillion. This contrasts with last year's agreement to reduce spending by \$1.04 trillion as part of the enactment of the Budget Control Act. As a blueprint, the House Budget Resolution, drafted by House Budget Committee Chair Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), does not name specific programmatic cuts.

Below are some highlights:

SRS and PILT

For the second year in a row, Ryan prioritized the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (SRS) and the continued funding of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. The proposed budget resolution included a deficit-neutral reserve fund for rural counties and schools to provide for the reauthorization of the SRS program and/or changes to the PILT program.

The deficit-neutral reserve fund language sets the stage for a much-needed reauthorization of SRS, which expired in September 2011. The commitment from the House Budget Committee provides a major step forward toward continued funding of both PILT and SRS.

Taxes

Ryan's proposal suggests several steps to enact "pro-growth" tax reform. The focal point is the tax code and its immense complexity. In his plan, Ryan proposes to simplify the tax code in a number of ways. Among them are the consolidation of the current six individual tax brackets into two at 10 percent and 25 percent and an elimination of the alternative minimum tax. Additionally, the corporate rate would be reduced to 25 percent, and a territorial tax system would be instituted to encourage businesses to bring foreign earnings back into the U.S.

Finally, Ryan argues for the elimination of loopholes and subsidies deemed to benefit only a small percentage of taxpayers in order to broaden the tax base and achieve a fairer code with lower tax rates. The plan does not provide any specifics as to which provisions in the tax code would be eliminated.

The budget also proposes that all authorizing committees should annually provide to the House Budget Committee recommendations for spending reduction that targets programs in their jurisdictions that are

"duplicative, wasteful, outmoded, or excessively expensive for the benefits received." This would build upon suggestions previously identified in the work of groups such as the President's Fiscal Commission and the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

Community and Regional Development

Under the Budget Resolution, community and regional development budget authority (function 450) would decrease by 47 percent from \$20.8 billion in FY12 to \$11.05 billion in FY13. The resolution further decreases this function area to \$7.3 billion in FY14.

Key federal programs to improve community economic conditions, promote rural development, and assist in federal emergency disaster preparations would be affected. These programs include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Department of Agriculture rural development programs, FEMA

and the Economic Development Administration.

Agriculture

The budget resolution aims to reduce Farm Bill funding by \$181 billion over the next decade: \$15.5 billion from commodity supports, \$15.5 billion for crop insurance, \$16 billion for conservation and \$134 billion for nutrition assistance.

This cut to Farm Bill programs over 10 years is dramatically deeper than the \$23 billion cut proposed by the leadership of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees that was offered during the super committee process and will make passage of a Farm Bill this year very difficult.

Transportation

The budget resolution proposed lowering spending for transportation from a FY12 level of \$88.6 billion to \$57.1 billion for FY13, a cut of \$31.5 billion or 36 percent. However, elsewhere in the

budget resolution there is a mechanism that appears to allow this cut to be avoided if Congress can pass a measure that maintains the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund and does not increase the deficit. This could potentially occur when there is action on the reauthorization of the surface transportation program.

Employment and Training Programs

The FY13 House budget resolution proposes a 22 percent cut in employment and training programs. While the resolution does not include details of specific cuts at the program level, the budget blueprint released by the committee chairman includes language that clearly indicates that funding for workforce programs and Pell Grants is being targeted.

The blueprint document states that the budget "advances reforms to increase job-training outcomes" by "calling for the consolidation of duplicative federal job-training pro-

grams into a streamlined workforce development system with fewer funding streams that provide targeted career scholarship programs."

The Ryan budget also hints at new oversight and accountability measures for job training programs.

Environment and Energy

The House budget takes aim at environment and energy programs, significantly cutting agency funding levels. Within the Department of Energy (DOE), the budget trims \$3 billion for civilian DOE programs, which include funding for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Additionally, the budget implies it will also eliminate all programs that provide DOE loans to alternative and clean technology companies. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was likewise singled out for its "unnecessary regulations." Budget authorities and outlays for EPA programs are drafted to drop significantly from FY12 numbers. The

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RAC members stress importance of farm, transportation bills

FLY-IN from page 1

key administration officials and members of Congress. This year's priorities include:

- oppose unfunded federal mandates and preemptions, especially the "waters of the U.S." guidance expected to be issued soon by EPA
- support for making rural development a priority within the Farm Bill reauthorization and level funding for USDA Rural Development Programs
- support for a multi-year reauthorization of the highway and bridges bill, MAP-21
- support for an extension of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) and continued mandatory funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), and
- support for health care services in rural America, especially Medicaid.

RAC members also discussed these priorities with senior officials from six federal agencies and senior staff at the White House Rural Council. Eliason led the delegation that met with the White House Rural Council staff and brought forward all of RAC's priority issues, including a focused discussion on federal regulations that have negative impacts on counties.

RAC members emphasized rural surface transportation reauthorization priorities with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and obstacles to rural health care service delivery in rural areas with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). RAC members also met with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to discuss floodplain-mapping issues and with the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in which the focus was NACo's opposition to the upcoming "waters of the U.S." guidance. RAC members met with senior officials at the U.S. Postal Service to discuss NACo's policy that seeks to limit the closure of postal facilities.

The fly-in included a March 28 Congressional Rural Caucus Briefing: Rural Development in the Farm Bill — Perspectives from Rural County Elected Officials. Congressional Rural Caucus Co-Chair Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) and Rep. Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.) offered remarks at the beginning of the briefing that demonstrated bipartisan support for NACo's Rural Development and farm bill priorities.

RAC is the voice for America's rural counties in Washington. It is a bipartisan coalition of rural elected officials from across the country striving to enhance the quality of life in rural counties through effective federal legislation.

In Case You Missed It ...

News to Use from Past County News

► Fixing It: Infrastructure and the Economy Survey released

NACo recently completed a survey of 400 county engineers regarding the current conditions of county roads and bridges. It explores how the recent economic slowdown has affected construction and maintenance funding.

To view the survey report and findings, visit www.naco.org ► Research ► Pubs ► Documents ► Surveys.

For more information, contact Jacqueline Byers at jbyers@naco.org or 202.942.4285.

CountyNews

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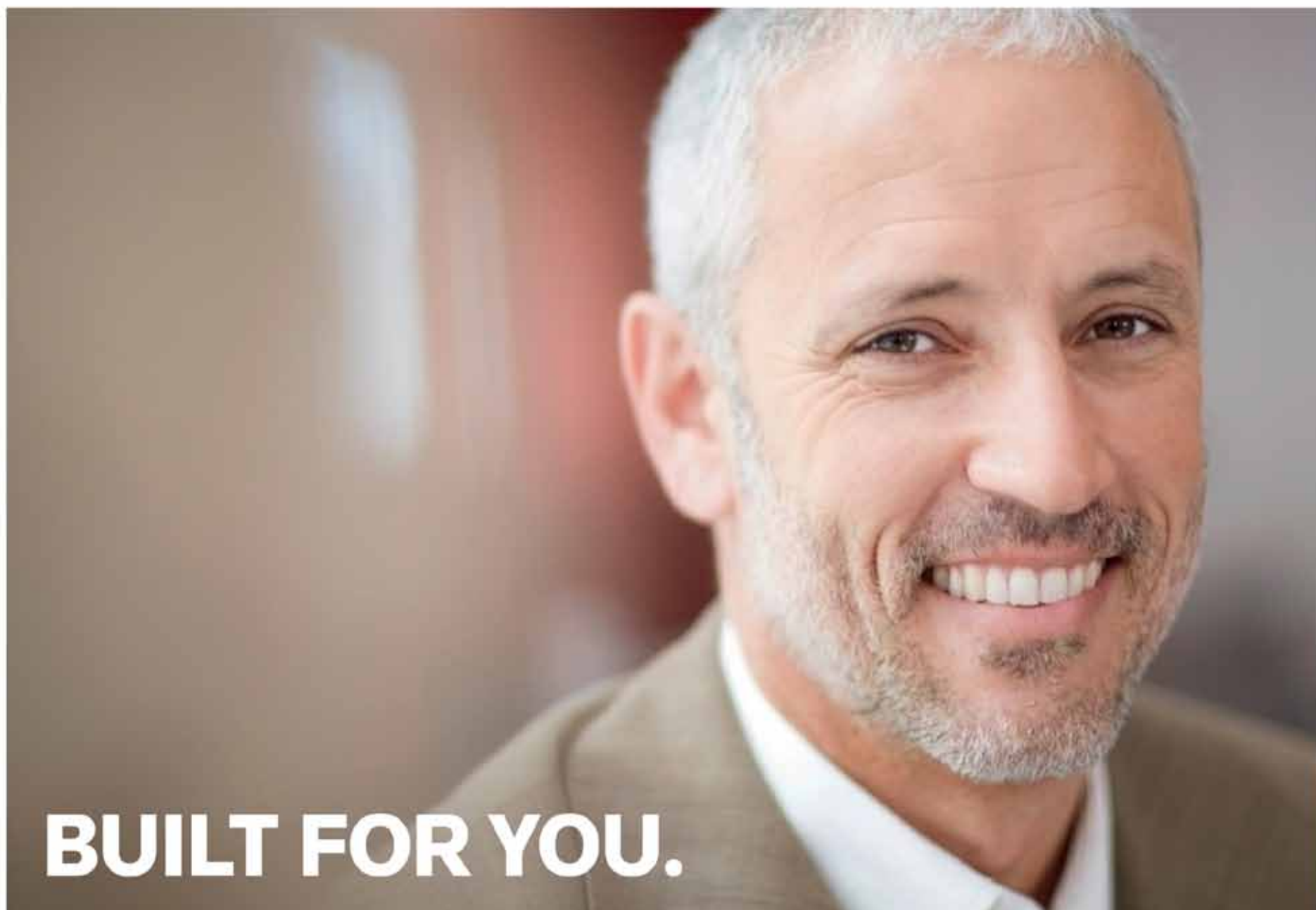
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2012 Health Rankings provide new tools, announce health 'Roadmaps' recognition prize

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Counties nationwide will find new health indicators in the 2012 County Health Rankings, which this year also announced a financial incentive to encourage improving the health of their communities.

Now in its third year, the rankings are compiled by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). They assess the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states, using a standard measurement of how healthy people are and how long they live.

This year's data includes several new indicators, such as how many fast food restaurants are in a county

and levels of physical inactivity reported by residents. Online, it also features new graphs illustrating premature death trends over 10 years.

"On the website, you'll see a new interactive mapping feature that makes it easier than ever to access the data, explore and share your county's data," said Patrick Remington, M.D., director of the County Health Rankings and associate dean at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Officials also announced a new Roadmaps to Health Prize that will recognize up to six communities across the nation with a \$25,000 prize for their efforts to improve residents' health (see sidebar). It will be awarded in early 2013.

The rankings ([www.county-](http://www.county-healthrankings.org)

healthrankings.org) highlight the importance of factors such as education rates, income levels and access to healthy foods — as well as access to medical care — in influencing how long and how well people live. They reflect health-related factors in four categories: health behavior, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

The findings indicate that some factors which influence health — such as smoking, availability of primary care physicians and social support — show highs and lows across all regions. Meanwhile, other factors reflect distinct regional patterns, such as:

- Excessive drinking rates are highest in the northern states.
- Rates of teen births, sexually transmitted infections and children in poverty are highest across the southern states.
- Unemployment rates are lowest in the Northeast, Midwest and central plains states, and
- motor vehicle crash deaths are lowest in the northeastern and upper Midwest states.

"Our goal is to move the conversation from asking the question, 'Why is my county unhealthy?' to, 'What can we do about it?'" Remington said.

Since the first rankings in 2010, counties across America have responded by taking steps to improve their health status.

Columbus County, N.C. has ranked dead last in its state for three years running, but it's not for lack of focus on the issues that contribute to its being the least healthy of North Carolina's 100 counties, according to Kim Smith, the county's health director. She recognizes that things won't turnaround overnight. Her department's mantra now is "Eat Smart. Move More," a message anyone calling her will hear on her voicemail greeting.

"Between myself and our health educator, we have done lots of speaking engagements, lots of educating the public about the health rankings," she said. "Not only the numbers but how those numbers came about, and what we can do to bring those numbers down. We're tired of being 100; we want to go down in the world."

Coming in last in 2010 came as a "shock" to Smith, but it has spurred her community into action. In Whiteville, the county seat, more people are walking to work or during lunch time. County employees have run their own version of "The

New Roadmaps to Health Prize

Community Health Rankings will recognize six communities in early 2013 with Roadmaps to Health Prizes of \$25,000 each.

"The Roadmaps initiative provides funding, tools and resources to community coalitions and national organizations working to make changes that will have a lasting impact on health," said Michelle Larkin, assistant vice president and deputy director of RWJF's Health Group. The prize money will have "no strings attached."

The "Roadmaps" prize is a "place-based prize" and will honor entire communities, including towns, cities, counties, regions (such as contiguous towns, cities or counties), and tribes or tribal communities.

Each applicant will be asked to designate a local governmental or tax-exempt charitable nonprofit entity to accept the prize funds on the community's behalf, should they win.

Applicants must submit a brief notice of intent to apply by May 31 with full applications due June 7.

For more information on the Roadmaps to Health Prize, visit www.countyhealthrankings.org/roadmaps/prize or contact Kirstin Siemering, Roadmaps to Health Prize manager, at RoadmapsPrize@match.wisc.edu.

Profiles in Service



» Karen M. Miller
NACo Board of Directors
Commissioner
Boone County, Missouri

Number of years active in NACo: 19 (NACo President 2004)

Years in public service: 20

Occupation: Commissioner

Education: B.A. in business administration with a political science minor

The hardest thing I've ever done: bury my brother

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: my brother Scott, my mother Gerry and my grandmother Nettie.

A dream I have is to: take a cruise.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: worked as a laborer for a construction company.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: skydive while in college.

My favorite way to relax is: porch-sitting with David, my husband, and enjoying a glass of wine or cup of coffee.

I'm most proud of: being elected by my peers as an officer of NACo.

Every morning I read: *The Columbia Missourian* and my email.

My favorite meal is: BBQ pork steak, corn on the cob and fresh tomatoes.

My pet peeve is: elected officials with their own agenda.

My motto is: "It is better to be controversial for the right reasons rather than popular for the wrong reasons." — Shimon Peres, former prime minister of Israel.

The last book I read was: *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest* by Stieg Larsson.

My favorite movie is: Walt Disney's *Mary Poppins*.

My favorite music is: 50s and 60s Rock and Roll.

My favorite president is: President Bill Clinton.

Biggest Loser" to some success, she said.

"We've had a big push here lately to gather up the leaders of the faith community, and we've had a really good response from that faith community," Smith said. Churches are working with the local cooperative extension office to hold classes on weight loss, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure. "And the churches have let us go out and measure out walking trails around the churches' perimeters, and we've been able to get people active that way," she added.

In Muscatine County, Iowa, the rankings also have proved useful; this year it placed 54th in health outcomes among the state's 99 counties.

Director of Public Health Mary Odell said every five years, the state requires counties to perform a health needs assessment — and submit a specific health improvement plan to the state health department. The rankings provided a new set of data

to incorporate into their planning.

"The most important thing is people get a better sense of how we compare to other counties," she said, "and maybe where we're not doing as well, maybe we need to take a look at what another county is doing that is similar to our county — 'What they are doing differently than what we're doing?'"

Chip Johnson is mayor of Hernando, Miss. in DeSoto County and participated in a nationwide teleconference announcing this year's rankings; the county is the state's healthiest, according to the rankings. "We also have to share this information with each other," he said. "I know we cannot continue to be healthiest county in our state or the healthiest city in our state in a vacuum."

"I have to do this regionally. We cannot rise alone," he added. "If the counties and cities around us don't rise with us, there's only so far we can go. The idea-sharing is crucial."

County Health Calculator Provides New Online Tool

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Virginia Commonwealth University's Center on Human Needs unveiled a new County Health Calculator (www.countyhealthcalculator.org) in concert with this year's County Health Rankings.

The calculator is an interactive online app designed to illustrate the connection between social factors and health; it shows how much education and income influence rates of diabetes and spending on diabetes care county-by-county.

NACo partners with Congressional Rural Caucus on Farm Bill

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

County officials converged on Capitol Hill March 28 to lobby for priorities important to rural counties. Chief among their causes was the 2012 Farm Bill, crucial not only to farmers, ranchers and everyone who eats, but to the nation's rural communities as well.

NACo's Rural Action Caucus (RAC) made its support for the Farm Bill clear at a Capitol Hill briefing of the Congressional Rural Caucus — led off by caucus co-chairmen, Reps. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) and Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.).

"The Farm Bill is not only about helping the farmers, it is far far more," Rep. McIntyre said in the briefing. "It's probably a misnomer, because it's not only helping farmers, it's helping boost economic activity in rural America."

He outlined the many ways projects funded by the Farm Bill would benefit entire rural communities. With more financial support for local police and fire departments, insurance fees for homes and businesses decrease.



Photo by Jim Philipps

Brookings County, S.D. Commissioner Don Larson and NACo President Lenny Eliason, an Athens County, Ohio commissioner, speak at a Congressional Rural Caucus briefing on the 2012 Farm Bill March 28.

Money for public works projects allows communities with low tax rates to provide services they couldn't otherwise afford.

All of those projects cost money, and more so for utility providers to

reach areas with lower population density, but McIntyre said rural America was good for it.

"Rural communities and businesses have continually shown they can and will take responsibility for

financing on such investments if the capital is available," he said.

NACo President Lenny Eliason, Rural Action Caucus Chair Lu Barron and Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee Chair Don Larson briefed the congressional staff on NACo's priorities.

"It's going to be hard to pass the farm bill this year, but it's critical we do it, and before the election," Eliason said. "We're calling on Congress to pass this Farm Bill now, don't wait until after the election."

He evoked Athens County, Ohio's efforts to bring sewer service to 1,100 homes, with much of the \$20 million coming from U.S. Department of Agriculture funding. Eliason is an Athens County commissioner.

"We have no way of funding \$20 million and making it affordable for those citizens without USDA funding," he said. "If that funding goes away, that project goes away, and those people will continue to live in substandard conditions."

Larson, a Brookings County, S.D. commissioner, emphasized support for expenditures that serve as investments, most prominent among them, broadband access.

Broadband gives family members of agriculture workers options beyond what they would have had otherwise, especially important to young farmers.

"The spouse has an economic opportunity to carry forward their career because of broadband," he said. "They can stay home, they can take care of their family, they can integrate with their children and their school system, and yet have a good-paying job, and that's all because of the opportunities that broadband brings."

Those kinds of services in rural America, Brookings and several other speakers said, give people and businesses the option to live where they want. He also expressed the need to make USDA Rural Development focus on the priorities of rural regions, whether they favor one county or are multi-county in nature.

Barron, a Linn County, Iowa supervisor, stressed the importance of bipartisan efforts to highlight the challenges facing rural communities. She pledged RAC's continued partnership with the Congressional Rural Caucus in order to raise the profile of bipartisan rural priorities.



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12-05907

2012 NACo Second Vice President Candidate ...

Maui County, Hawaii Council Member Riki Hokama, submitted the following information in accordance with NACo election guidelines.

It is intended to provide NACo with information on candidates for the office of second vice president for the election to be held in Allegheny County, Pa. in July.

No other elected official from a NACo-member county submitted a candidate data form.

Name: G. Riki Hokama

Current Elected Office Held:

County Council - Lanai seat

County: Maui County

State: Hawaii

Preferred Email Address:

riki.hokama@mauicounty.us

Phone: 808.270.7768

Cell: 808.344.0277

Preferred Mailing Address:

Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Expiration of Term:

January 2013

Are you term limited?

January 2023 (Five 2-year terms)

Is your county a NACo member (required)? Yes

Have you been endorsed by your state association of counties? Yes

to 2006, 2008)

- Chair, Transportation Steering Committee (2006 to 2008)

- Member, Election Reform Task Force (2004)

- Member, NACo Audit Committee (2005 to 2009)

- Member, Membership Committee (2005 to 2008)

- Member, Presidential Theme Advisory Committee (2007)

- Committee Representative, NACo Finance Committee (2008)

- Member, NACo Governance and Structure Task Force (2008 to 2009)

Q: Please list all state county association service, such as Board of Directors, committees, and task forces, the year(s) of service, and leadership positions held.

- Alternate on the Executive Committee, Hawaii State Association of Counties (1999 to 2008, 2011 to present);

- Member, Hawaii State Association of Counties (1999 to 2009, 2011 to present)

Q: Why are you interested in serving as a NACo officer?

I'd like to share my knowledge and experience to help other coun-



Riki Hokama

Maui County Council Member

ties. As chair and member of the Transportation Steering Committee, I inspected port authorities in the wake of changes and improvements, due to Homeland Security modifications. Importantly, I had the opportunity to meet with colleagues and learn about the unique conditions of their area. NACo is an important advocate for our counties, and I'd like to help in continuing its good work.

Q: What do you consider to have been your most important contribution to

the National Association of Counties to date? — to your state association of counties?

NACo contribution: As Chair and member of the Transportation Steering Committee, I worked with colleagues to foster an understanding that all components of our transportation system (ports, airports, railways, and highways) are necessary to move the economy forward and improve the well-being of all counties.

State association contribution: I worked to get 100% of Hawaii's counties to be members of NACo.

Q: What do you consider to be the two or three most important challenges facing NACo in the near future on which the Officers/Executive Committee/Board of Directors should focus? Why?

Recruitment of a new Executive Director to continue the positive direction and NACo's influence in the federal legislative process.

Maintaining corporate participants to help defray costs and offer quality programs for member counties.

Q: What do you consider to be the two or three most

important issues local officials are facing in their counties that should be on the NACo agenda? Why?

Reduction in federal funding support.

Providing feasible energy options that are more domestic-driven, in order to reduce dependence on foreign sources.

Q: What measures would you recommend to increase and retain NACo membership and to encourage broad participation in NACo by elected officials and employees of NACo-member counties? What specific role would you be willing to assume to help build and sustain membership in NACo?

I would push the NACo drug prescription, U.S. Communities, and other benefit programs that offer members discounts and cost savings. The small counties and their constituents could benefit from the pooling resources for better returns and lower costs.

I would be available to visit and meet with county representatives to promote the benefits and advantages of NACo membership.

Q: Please describe your public service experience, including all elected and appointed positions in local or other levels of government.

Elected Positions: Delegate to the Hawaii State Constitutional Convention (1978) and Maui County Council (1999 to 2009 and 2011 to 2013).

Appointed Positions: Lanai Community Plan Advisory Committee; County Solid Waste Advisory Committee; State Community Services Commission; State Department of Transportation Harbors Task Force 2010 Update; and Community Advocate for Kalawao (Kalawao County, Island of Molokai).

Q: Please list all NACo service, including steering and standing committees, Executive Committee, task forces, caucuses and affiliates. For each, list the year(s) of service, and any leadership positions held.

- Board Member, NACo Board of Directors (2001 to 2009)

- Subcommittee Chair, Transportation Steering Committee (2001

BUDGET from page 2

budget goes further, promising to end "barriers to safe, responsible energy exploration in the United States." This would include ending bans on oil and gas exploration and drilling.

Health

Arguing that Medicaid's financing structure has "...created rapidly rising costs that are nearly impossible to check," Ryan again proposes to convert the federal share of Medicaid into a block grant for the states, capped, but indexed for inflation and population growth. In exchange, the states would be given complete freedom to set eligibility and design benefits as they see fit. In total, he proposes to spend \$770 billion less over 10 years than the president's budget proposes for Medicaid and other (unspecified) health programs.

NACo has grave concern about the Medicaid proposal because of the near certainty of massive cost-shifting to states and counties. According to the Congressio-

nal Budget Office (CBO) analysis of the plan, the magnitude of the reduction in spending "... means that states would need to increase their spending on these programs, make considerable cutbacks in them, or both. Cutbacks might involve reduced eligibility, coverage of fewer services, lower payments to providers, or increased cost-sharing by beneficiaries — all of which would reduce access to care."

The Ryan proposal also assumes the full repeal of the Affordable Care Act including federal subsidies for the purchase of qualified health plans and the Prevention and Public Health Fund. He projects that this will save \$1.57 trillion compared to the president's budget.

Medicare would be gradually changed from an entitlement to a system of means-tested and risk-adjusted premium support for the purchase of plans on a new "Medicare Exchange." Traditional fee-for-service Medicare would be available on the Medicare Exchange as an option.

While changes to Medicare grab most of the headlines, the savings

projected for Ryan's proposal are relatively modest in the first 10-year budget window because current beneficiaries — and those soon to be eligible — are exempt from the changes.

Human Services

The Ryan budget would turn the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is currently an entitlement program, into a block grant with an inflation increase and would also add more work and training requirements. SNAP is up for reauthorization as part of the Farm Bill. Additionally, the budget makes reference to ceding other low-income, means-tested programs to the states, similar to the 1996 welfare reform legislation, but doesn't specify which programs beyond SNAP and Medicaid.

Justice and Public Safety

In the Justice and Public Safety issue area, the FY13 House budget proposes capping off non-military federal discretionary spending from \$1.05 trillion to \$1.03 trillion. This

could be particularly harmful as any further reduction in federal discretionary spending will likely mean decreased funding for Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant programs, technical assistance, and initiatives important to counties. In 2011, numerous members of the House Appropriations Committee cited the reduction in federal discretionary spending caps as the justification for lower allocations in 2012 for many of DOJ and DHS programs and initiatives important to counties.

Additionally, the budget cites an annual Government Accountability Office's report and calls on all authorizing committees to share spending reductions with the House Budget Committee on "duplicative, wasteful, outmoded, or excessively expensive" programs. GAO's report has regularly targeted a number of DOJ and DHS grant programs and initiatives important to counties; and any annual review of these programs may indicate that Congress will target these items for consolidation or elimination.

Ryan budget would block-grant SNAP program

100 Best Communities for Young People competition now open

The 100 Best Communities for Young People, an annual competition now in its sixth year, rewards and recognizes communities making extraordinary efforts to reduce dropout rates and provide outstanding services and supports to their youth.

These communities, while not without their own challenges to overcome, have demonstrated a significant and lasting commitment to their young residents for which they deserve to be recognized and commended.

The 100 Best Communities are intended to be representative of the nation as a whole. Each year, the winners vary dramatically in size, location, demographics, resources and approaches to their unique challenges. Some of the past winners have included Alachua, Manatee and Hillsborough counties in Florida, Houston and Troup counties in Georgia; small towns such as a mobile home community in Minnesota, and some of the nation's largest cities, including New York, Chicago and Houston.

Applications for the 2012 competition are due by May 17. Any applications submitted by May 1 will be eligible for consideration to receive one of two special incentive grants: a \$2,500 grant to support a local dropout-prevention program

and a \$2,500 scholarship for the author of an outstanding youth testimonial. All applications must be submitted using an online form.

To read more and to begin the application process, please visit www.americaspromise.org/100best.

What You Win

Winning communities receive:

- national and local media recognition
- grant money for hosting a local awareness event or supporting youth serving-programs
- commemorative awards
- access to special interactive events with Alliance partners
- subscription to a leading online grant search service to help locate additional funding sources, and
- opportunity to share their best practices and effective programs with a national audience through extensive online profiles.

Applications are assessed by America's Promise Alliance staff, and the winners are chosen from a group of finalists by a blue-ribbon panel of national leaders on youth issues.

ING and the ING Foundation support the *100 Best Communities* program. More information about the program, and its winners past and present, can be found at www.americaspromise.org/100best.

Power2Give set to help local art

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

The term "starving artist" has long been used to describe someone who sacrifices material well-being in order to focus on their artwork. Some counties are doing what they can to ease the starving artists' plight and support the arts through a new program that provides artists assistance with fundraising using technology and social media.

"By connecting the public with the projects they are most passionate about, we are ensuring the long-term strength of our local arts and culture economy and helping to enrich our county," said Dane County, Wis. Executive Joe Parisi.

In August 2011, the Arts and Science Council (ASC) in Mecklenburg County (Charlotte), N.C. developed *Power2Give.org*, an online fundraising platform whose mission is to build appreciation,



participation and support for the arts, science, history and heritage in a given area. Whether it's private or public donations, the site allows anyone to easily give a gift of at least \$1 towards the projects they are most passionate about.

During the first week it was live, the site's projects received more than \$40,000 in donations. About a week after the official launch, that number jumped to more than \$76,000. Since that time, more than \$400,000 has been raised. The site has supported scholarships for music students, saved trees and helped young choristers in the Charlotte Children's

See GIVE page 9

NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

NACo has a new solution to help your county!

The NACo Prescription Discount Card Program Marketing Reimbursement Fee Option was vetted and approved by the NACo Board of Directors in December 2011 and launched in 2012. The benefits are two-fold to help the county and to help county residents!

To learn about this exciting new change contact NACo at 1-888-407-NACo (6226), Andrew Goldschmidt, Director, Membership Marketing at extension 221 or Ilene Manster, Membership Coordinator at extension 291.

The program has proven results to provide you the confidence to offer this program to your residents. County residents nationwide have saved in excess of \$454 million dollars on more than 36 million prescriptions. Currently, 1,400 counties and counting participate in the program.



Access the program
information at www.naco.org
or scan your smartphone here.

Operated by CVS Caremark.
This is NOT insurance.
Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies. Rev 03.12



NACo National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties

Counties fear federal jurisdiction over local ditches

WATERS from page 1

According to the EPA and Corps, the guidance is meant to clarify what waters fall under federal jurisdiction by modifying the “waters of the U.S.” definition in the Clean Water Act (CWA).

NACo has repeatedly expressed concerns over the scope of the waters of the U.S. proposal — the guidance is significantly broader in scope than previous guidance documents on the subject. Previous guidance documents narrowly referred to CWA Section 404 wetlands jurisdiction, in light of previous *SWANCC* and *Rapanos* U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The guidance, on the other hand, states there is only one “waters of the U.S.” definition within CWA and thus, will impact every CWA

program beyond the 404 Permit program.

County Implications

The waters of the U.S. proposal acknowledges “that decisions concerning whether or not a waterbody is subject to the CWA have consequences for states, tribal and local governments...” yet, potential consequences have neither been addressed nor adequately studied. Since there are a number of CWA programs that directly impact counties — such as the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Program, Pesticides General Permits, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Water Quality Standards — changing the definition of waters of the U.S. would affect counties.

While the guidance is technically non-binding, many counties believe, based on previous experience, that Corps staff will claim federal jurisdiction over county ditches using the 404 permit program, essentially using the guidance as a regulation.

County-owned Ditches

Under the draft guidance, a ditch is jurisdictional if it has a bed, bank and an ordinary high-water mark, and connects directly (or indirectly) to a navigable or an interstate water — or both — regardless of distance.

Many counties are required to obtain 404 permits for their ditches — roadside, flood or stormwater, and 404 permits can be cumbersome and costly to obtain. A number of counties report the process may take years and be extremely expensive.

Contact Your Senator

NACo asks counties to contact their senators and ask them to co-sponsor or support S. 2245. Co-sponsors now include: Republican Sens. Jim Inhofe (Okla.), Jeff Sessions (Ala.), Dean Heller (Nev.), Mitch McConnell (Ky.), Mike Enzi (Wyo.), David Vitter (La.), John Boozman (Ark.), Mike Crapo (Idaho), Pat Roberts (Kan.), John Thune (S.D.), Roger Wicker (Miss.), Jim Risch (Idaho), John Cornyn (Texas), Richard Lugar (Ind.), Chuck Grassley (Iowa), Tom Coburn (Okla.), Roy Blunt (Mo.), Marco Rubio (Fla.), Jon Kyl (Ariz.), Pat Toomey (Pa.), Dan Coats (Ind.), Rand Paul (Ky.), Mike Johanns (Neb.), Saxby Chambliss (Ga.), John Hoeven (N.D.), Jerry Moran (Kan.), Johnny Isakson (Ga.), Ron Johnson (Ohio) and Thad Cochran (Miss.).

Mortgage giants Fannie and Freddie not protected from real estate transfer tax

TAXES from page 1

denied critical revenues at a time of crisis,” Meisner said. “That loss of revenue compromises Oakland County’s ability to provide essential services, especially when so many residents are losing their homes.”

Fannie and Freddie claimed exemption from the state and county transfer taxes — the county’s tax being \$1.10 per \$1,000 of property sold — saying they are taxes on them as corporations, and that Congress exempted them from all taxation. Oakland County argued that Fannie and Freddie were liable for the taxes because they are federal entities and not federal entities, as they were earlier in their lifetimes.

“Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac had taken the position that they were private corporations on many instances,” Meisner said. “Their prospectus says they are not a government entity, they’re traded on the New York Stock Exchange. It’s clearly a case of wanting their cake and eating it, too.”

Roberts found that a U.S. Supreme Court decision interpreted a

statutory exemption from “all taxes” only meant direct taxes, not excise taxes, including property transfer taxes.

The county’s legal team decided on that argument while it explored options for recovering some revenues during the foreclosure crisis. Meisner said Oakland County went alone against Fannie and Freddie to be “more nimble” and to test the judicial waters. Genesee County Treasurer Deborah Cherry is coordinating a class-action suit against Fannie and Freddie to follow Oakland’s.

Genesee County will start collecting transfer taxes from Fannie and Freddie immediately. Cherry said a conservative estimate placed Genesee County’s losses at close to \$500,000 dollars over the last six years. “We’re going to go through our deeds over that period and get a better number,” she said. “Other counties in the suit will do the same and then we came move forward.”

The exact timeframe for the class action suit is still undetermined. With as many as 82 parties, that could be complex.

“We didn’t believe Fannie Mae

and Freddie Mac were government bodies, so it was good to hear the court verify that,” Cherry said of the Oakland County ruling.

The case differs from one involving Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems (MERS), a national mortgage registry, against which counties and states have filed suit. County officials point to banks using the MERS registry to circumvent county recorder offices by maintaining their own registries.

“I’m familiar with MERS, though we don’t have a required recording statute in Michigan so it’s not a pressing issue,” Meisner said. “We’re well aware of the intent behind that structure, it certainly appears one that is designed to evade taxes and fees, and avoid or confuse legal liability.”

Meisner estimated that the state could recoup between \$15 million and \$20 million in lost transfer taxes in Oakland County, and he hoped the state would divert that money back to Oakland County to fund foreclosure mitigation programs.

“It could assist us with hiring more housing counselors,” he said. “We can try to keep people in their homes, or find a way to make these foreclosed properties economically productive.”

In regards to maintenance activities, the EPA and the Corps have stressed continuation of their current exemption of maintenance of ditches. However, while an exception exists on paper, it is very narrowly crafted. In reality, a number of counties have been required to obtain maintenance of ditch 404 Permits to cut down vegetation or trees in earthen ditches, or clean out debris from manmade ditches. Special conditions may also be attached to the permit for maintenance activities. One California county can only clean out an earthen floodwater ditch six months out of the year because of impacts to bird habitat.

If more ditches become subject to federal jurisdictions under the guidance, the problems that exist now within the 404 permit program could only intensify, especially if the process is not streamlined nor accompanied by a Corps staff increase.

Because of the broad implications for state and local governments, NACo opposes the waters of the U.S. guidance’s moving forward. NACo would like the agencies to proceed with a transparent rule-making process, in order to address all concerns in the bill.

NACo’s policy states that local streets, gutters and human-made ditches must be excluded from the definition of “waters of the United States.”

Word Search

Counties with Colorful Names

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

BLACK HAWK (Iowa)

BLUE EARTH (Minn.)

BROWN (Kan.)

CHERRY (Neb.)

COAL (Okla.)

GOLDEN VALLEY (N.D.)

GRAY (Texas)

GREEN (Ky.)

GREENBRIER (W. Va.)

GREENE (Ga.)

GREEN LAKE (Wis.)

ORANGE (Calif.)

RED LAKE (Minn.)

REDWOOD (Minn.)

YELLOWSTONE (Mont.)

Created by: Christopher Johnson

Stay updated on NACo’s Facebook ...

www.facebook.com/NACoDC

Counties interested in accessing Oakland County’s casework can contact the Oakland County Treasurer’s office at 248.421.0624 or meisnera@oakgov.com.

**To read the court ruling, visit the online version of this story at www.naco.org/countynews.*

Model Programs From the Nation's Counties

Multnomah County, Ore.

County Battles Prostitution with Therapy, Assistance

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

When the Portland, Ore. City Council let the sun set on its prostitution-free zones, the streets came alive with activity.

Shortly after, in 2007, two eastern city neighborhoods in particular, 82nd Street and Sandy Boulevard, were overrun by streetwalkers.

"A lot of women came from out of state," said J.R. Ujifusa, the Multnomah County deputy district attorney who has focused on the rise in prostitution in the area. "Word was, Portland was the place to go to make a lot of money really fast."

Transplants from Florida, Nevada, California and elsewhere plied their trade on the streets with police unable to banish them for 90 days, as they could in the days of the prostitution-free zone. The masses did not mix well, Ujifusa said. The visibility of that many prostitutes alone was gutting the quality of life for residents. Litter and drug

paraphernalia, and the occasional resident propositioned by mistake all added up to public outcry.

"Not only were there more prostitutes, they stood out more," he said. "It was stressing the communities to the point where people had lost control."

Community meetings in what were known as "high-vice areas" culminated in a partnership among the city police, district attorney's office and a treatment program. That partnership, the Prostitution Coordination Team (PCT), changed the way prostitution was handled in Multnomah County.

Where before all defendants charged with misdemeanor prostitution-related crimes could take unlimited trips to community court for a community service hearing or a five-day to 10-day stay in jail, they now had fewer options. Defendants now have one shot at community court, and repeat offenders get 18 months of probation, with special conditions. They include evaluation

and treatment through New Options for Women (NOW)—the program's treatment provider — restrictions from visiting the high-vice areas, and barring contact with pimps or prostitutes.

Ujifusa is the district attorney's representative to the team. He coordinates weekly meetings where each of the four police officers assigned to the team and a NOW representative examine each probationer's case.

"We're focusing on breaking the addictions, treating mental health problems and improving the condi-

tions that are forcing women to resort to prostitution," he said.

NOW assigns a mentor to each defendant, who helps her register for government benefits, find housing, a legitimate job and finish schooling.

Ujifusa said the district attorney's office is escalating its efforts to bring cases against human traffickers who staff the streets.

The county also created a Sex Buyers Accountability and Diversion class for the johns the police pick up, in which they learn the effects of their actions and hold them accountable

for their part in the prostitution cycle, including a presentation from a former prostitute. The class costs johns \$1,000 each. In 2011, 61 men went through "john school," as the program was dubbed.

Those proceeds go to the DA's office, the Portland police and NOW, plus \$200 to the survivor presenter. NOW's costs depend on the number of women who receive treatment, but in 2010 118 women meant a cost of \$250,000.

Between 2008 and 2010, the overall arrest rates within 1,000 feet of 82nd Avenue for all types of crime fell by 46 percent, and prostitution arrests dropped 75 percent for women and 89 percent for men. In 2009 and 2010, NOW treated more than 118 women, with eight completing the program and their probation by the end of 2010.

Online fundraising benefits arts programs

GIVE from page 7

Choir perform at the White House. Since then, Power2Give has expanded to counties in Florida (Miami-Dade), Kentucky (Shelby) and in Wisconsin (Dane).

Expected to launch in Dane County this summer, Power2Give has already been used in other communities to help artists fund projects in otherwise difficult economic times.

"The summer launch will make Dane County among the very first counties in the country to offer this powerful online cultural marketplace connecting donors' interests and passions with local projects," said Karen Crossley, director of the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission.

The Power2Give site includes detailed descriptions of local projects, with fundraising goals and amounts raised to date, as well as breakdowns

of how the donated funds will be spent.

Any tax-exempt organization that has earned grants from its county within the past five years or has obtained a Charitable Donation Registration from its state is eligible to post arts, science, history and heritage projects in need of funding. Individuals visit the site and donate directly to projects.

The ASC of Charlotte-Mecklenburg manages the operations of the website and provides marketing tools and resources to organizations that post projects. ASC takes about 12 cents of every dollar to cover administrative costs, which is below the national fundraising standards of 20 percent.

*For more information on Power2Give and other links, visit the online version of this story at www.naco.org/countynews.

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers and Officials

• **Lenny Eliason**, NACo president, spoke about NACo and his presidential initiative on Healthy Counties at the Michigan Association of Counties Annual Conference in Ingham County (Lansing) March 27.



Gerry Hyland

• **Gerry Hyland**, NACo board member and Fairfax County, Va. supervisor, testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies March 22 in support of a number of NACo justice and public safety priorities.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

What's in a Seal?

» Kings County, Calif.
www.countyofkings.com



Kings County was formed in 1893 from the western part of Tulare County. Located in the south central San Joaquin Valley, the county has remained a predominantly agricultural area since its first settlement in the 1850s.

The early economy of the county was centered on ranching and farming. The first vineyard was established in 1890, and grapes continue to be an important crop in the region. The first dairy farm came three years later in 1893. Dairy farming continues to be a major part of the Kings County economy. In addition, cotton, fruit and nuts have all become important crops in the region.

In 1928, oil was discovered in the Kettleman Hills located in the southwestern part of Kings County. The Kettleman North Dome Oil Field became one of the most productive oil fields in the United States.

The completion of the California Aqueduct in the early 1970s brought needed water for agriculture and domestic use to the west side of the county.

The seal shows the sun rising up over the Diablo range and shining over the farmlands with the aqueduct providing water.

(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Christopher Johnson at 202.942.4256 or cjohnson@naco.org.)

Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights award-winning programs.

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with information and answers!

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News From the Nation's Counties

► ALABAMA

Claiming that doing so would render the government unable to pay expenses, the **JEFFERSON COUNTY** Commission voted to **skip a \$15 million debt payment**.

The default means that the investors, including many Alabama residents, will not get payments scheduled for April 2, county officials said. Jefferson County filed for the largest government bankruptcy in U.S. history last year and has a total of \$4.1 billion of debt.

Commissioners told the *Birmingham Times* they couldn't make the payment largely because the Legislature has failed to come up with replacement revenue for the defunct occupational tax that generated \$66 million in fiscal 2010. The tax was thrown out last year by the Alabama Supreme Court because of a technical defect in how the state Legislature enacted it.

► CALIFORNIA

• Responding to animal rights activists, **ORANGE COUNTY** Fair Board officials have banned elephant rides at the annual Orange County Fair, ending a quarter-century summertime tradition, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

• **SOLANO AND YOLO counties** are looking to create the position of a "farmbudsman," a person who would act as an intermediary between local government and agriculture.

The agricultural ombudsman position once existed in Solano County, but was cut. A need for a new farmbudsman emerged again during a Solano and Yolo Joint Economic Summit last year. The Yolo Agriculture and Food Alliance is in the process of defining the needs and expectations of someone in that position.

Larry Clement, an adviser for the Farm Bureau, told *The Reporter* that a farmbudsman would help farmers get through the bureaucracy at the county level.

The counties have yet to determine if the farmbudsman will be a county employee, but most likely it would be someone that works as a consultant that has a case-specific role. The region's agricultural industry generated \$2.5 billion between the two counties in 2009.

► COLORADO

The Colorado Children's Campaign ranked **DOUGLAS, BROOMFIELD and LARIMER counties** as the **best in the state for a child's well-being**. The 25



Photo by Wolfgang Volz, © Christo 1999

For aesthetic and technical considerations, four life-size prototype tests of artist Christo's "Over the River" project were conducted in 1997, 1998 and 1999 on private property near the Colorado-Utah border.

► COLORADO

Artist Christo's "Over the River" project, which involves suspending huge fabric panels from cables over parts of the Arkansas River, has approval from the **FREMONT COUNTY** commissioners. Christo's team already has federal permission to proceed hanging 5.9 miles of fabric in certain sections on a 42-mile stretch of the river, but still needs permits from **CHAFEE COUNTY**, the Colorado Department of Transportation and the State Patrol.

The team hopes to start construction next year and exhibit Over the River in August 2015 for two weeks before dismantling the project, the *Denver Post* reported.

Fremont County required more than 30 conditions before approving a permit, Christo's team said, including funding costs the county might incur for mitigating road impacts or staffing. Christo didn't think the conditions were onerous.

counties, which account for about 95 percent of the state's population under age 18, were documented in the "2012 Kids Count in Colorado" survey, *The Gazette* reported.

Among the indicators are the number of low-birth-weight births, uninsured children, overweight or obese children, single-parent families, children living in poverty, fourth-graders reading below grade level, high-school dropout rates, teen birth rates and infant mortality rates.

► FLORIDA

• A strict new ordinance designed to shut down "pill mill" pain management clinics passed the **MANATEE COUNTY** Commission.

The ordinance regulates all "pain management clinics," defined as facilities that prescribe more than 25 prescriptions a day for controlled substances for the treatment of pain. Each one must have a permit issued by the county.

The ordinance bans "cash-only" payments; sets hours of operation; and requires record-keeping subject

to inspections. It also included a number of exemptions, for such facilities as hospices and surgery centers, according to the *Bradenton Herald*.

• Even though spring break is over, **PALM BEACH COUNTY** bars, restaurants and businesses will have to post signs warning customers they face hefty penalties if they **sell alcohol to minors**.

County commissioners voted last week to require businesses that sell or dispense alcohol to post the 8.5-by-11-inch signs, which also include a phone number where customers can report those who violate the state law.

Those who sell alcohol to customers under 21 face up to 60 days in jail and a fine of up to \$500, the *Palm Beach Post* reported.

• **PUTNAM COUNTY** Sheriff's Office Animal Control is now **allowing the rescue of pit bulls** and pit mixes to authorized dog rescue groups, Sheriff Jeff Hardy announced.

The agency had previously not allowed either the adoption or the rescue of the animals for the about 11 years that the Sheriff's Office has supervised Animal Control in Putnam County, citing safety reasons.

Advocates of pit bull breeds began speaking up earlier in March, saying the county had no right to sign a dog's death sentence based purely on appearance, News 4 Jax reported.

► ILLINOIS

Minority- and women-owned companies will soon have a shorter waiting time and lower costs to get certification to get a leg up on city contracts in Chicago, the *Sun-Times* reported.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and **COOK COUNTY** Board President Toni Preckwinkle signed a "reciprocal certification" that will allow the city to recognize companies certified by the county and vice versa.

City certification was made more rigorous after a series of scandals that culminated in the \$100 million fraud by the mob-connected Duff family, but critics said that was too much — with an application as long as 17 pages and an average waiting time of 175 days. Now, minority contractors will have one application to complete, one set of hurdles to jump through and one fee to pay, \$250 every three years. Only construction contracts will have net-worth requirements.

► MAINE

The Maine Supreme Judicial Court ruled unanimously in favor of six counties in a lawsuit over the **bulk copying of electronic documents** in registries of deeds. The justices also upheld a 2011 law that set standardized fees that replaced those charged by each individual county for copies of documents at registry offices. Before the law was passed, there was no statewide standardized fee schedule.

In November 2009, a businessman sued **ANDROSCOGGIN, AROOSTOOK, CUMBERLAND, KNOX, PENOBSCOT and YORK counties** alleging that the fees the counties wanted to charge for digitized documents were unreasonable. The price quoted by Penobscot County was \$1 per page for four million pages.

The decision preserves an important revenue stream for counties, according to the attorney who represented the counties, the *Sun-Journal* reported.

In defending their decision to

charge a business millions in copying costs, the counties argued that they are required to be financially self-supporting by law and must be able to recover their costs to scan and maintain millions of documents.

► NEW YORK

The **ERIE COUNTY** Legislature voted to **create a land bank** to spur development of vacant and blighted properties. About 20,000 vacant parcels in the county are eligible to be included.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) signed a bill last year that allows municipalities to create land banks as an economic development tool. It empowers them to take control and redevelop or sell abandoned properties, the Associated Press reported.

The land bank will be governed by an 11-member board.

► NORTH CAROLINA

Storm water fees in MECKLENBURG COUNTY won't rise next year, thanks to the discovery of sufficient reserve funds to postpone an anticipated hike.

County commissioners had been pursuing an increase, under the assumption that they would have to raise the fees — in part, to replace federal money that had been used to purchase homes in flood-prone areas, *The Charlotte Observer* reported. They had proposed a 39-cent monthly increase phased in over three years for most residents.

Dave Canaan, storm water services director, told the board the county will have \$4.4 million in its flood-mitigation fund balance — nearly 50 percent more than originally anticipated.

► OHIO

County and state officials are exploring the possibility of building a third state-run **veterans home** for low-income, disabled vets. **CUYAHOGA and STARK county** officials are interested in landing the new home, *The Plain Dealer* reported.

The state's Department of Veterans Services currently operates two such homes in southwest Ohio. Cuyahoga and Stark are in the northeast part of the state.

Stark County Commissioner Peter Ferguson said a facility similar to one in **BROWN COUNTY** could create 200 jobs — an economic benefit. But he added, that's secondary to "taking care of our veterans."

Cuyahoga County Council President C. Ellen Connally said her county is also interested.

Research News

Moving In: Ariz., Calif. Counties Most Popular

More than 17 million people out of the 48.1 million people who moved, according to recently released Census data, relocated to a different county.

The data was collected over a five-year period from the American Community Survey which asks respondents where they lived one year prior to the survey. The first release of this information at the county level since the 2000 census covers the five-year period from 2005 to 2009.

The results show county inflows, which are the number of people living in a given county who lived in another county one year earlier.

Outflows, on the other hand, represent the number of people who lived in a particular county one year earlier who subsequently moved to another county.

Maricopa County, Ariz. had the largest number of inflows of people for any county in the nation with people moving there from 993 different counties. The highest number of people moving into Maricopa County moved from Pinal County, Ariz. (13,452 people); Los Angeles County (12,403); Pima County, Ariz. (7,349); San Diego County (6,693); and Coconino County, Ariz. (3,994).

Rounding out the top 10 for largest number of inflows include Harris County, Texas; San Diego County, Calif.; Los Angeles County, Calif.; Cook County, Ill.; Bexar County, Texas; Clark County, Nev.; Tarrant County, Texas; Richland County, S.C. and Dallas County, Texas.

In addition, Maricopa County led the nation in residents moving to other counties with a total of 1,156 other counties. Individuals leaving Maricopa were more dispersed throughout the country than individuals leaving any other county. The top places for people from Maricopa County to move to were Pinal County (21,974), Pima County (8,464), San Diego County (4,156), Los Angeles County (3,813) and Coconino County (3,188).

Rounding out the top 10 for largest number of outflows are Los Angeles County, Calif.; Cook County, Ill.; San Diego County, Calif.; Harris County, Texas; Clark County, Nev.; Dallas County, Texas; Hillsborough County, Fla.; Tarrant

County, Texas; and Orange County, Fla. Except for Cook County, Ill., most of the origin counties are in the West and in Florida.

The top five most common county-to-county moves were from Los Angeles County to San Bernardino County, Calif. (48,456), Los Angeles County to Orange County, Calif. (41,612), Los Angeles County to Riverside County, Calif. (29,710), Orange County, Calif., to Los Angeles County (29,345); and Miami-Dade County to Broward County, Fla. (27,010).

As seen by these county-to-county moves, Los Angeles was a popular place for both inflows and outflows. In fact, Los Angeles County had both the highest number of people entering from another county as well as the highest number leaving for another county. The county experienced a net loss in population of about 160,000 people due to these moves.

Rounding out the top 10 destinations in total movers are Maricopa

County, Ariz. (193,227), Texas Harris County, Texas (176,865), Cook County, Ill. (142,089), San Diego County, Calif. (141,805), Riverside County, Calif. (131,483), Dallas County, Texas (120,086), San Bernardino County, Calif. (118,089), Orange County, Calif. (115,174) and King County, Wash. (104,353).

Some small counties saw very few people move out of the county. The counties with the smallest number of people moving out of the county include Terrell County, Texas; Arthur County, Neb.; Hayes County, Neb.; Borden County, Texas; Billings County, N.D.; Blaine County, Neb.; Grant County, Neb.; Slope County, N.D.; and Loving County, Texas.

For more information on this data, please visit www.census.gov/hhes/migration/data/acs/county-to-county.html.

(Research News was written by Kathryn Murphy, senior research associate.)

Job Market & Classifieds

► COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – COLBERT COUNTY, ALA.

Salary: DOQ.

Colbert County Commission is accepting applications for the position of County Administrator. Job description and applications are available in the County Commission office located at 201 North Main Street, Tuscumbia, AL 35674. Applications will be accepted through Monday, April 23. Colbert County Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

► DIRECTOR, LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES – NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS (WILLIAMSBURG, VA.)

Salary: \$95,000–\$115,000 annually; DOQ.

The National Center for State Courts an independent, nonprofit court improvement organization is seeking to fill a key management position at its Williamsburg, Va. headquarters location. The director position reports to the Vice President, Consulting Services and has overall responsibility for directing programs and staff in the delivery of court interpreter testing services and leading national initiatives relevant to language access services in the courts. The incumbent will staff the Language Access Advisory Committee; serve as liaison to other court/judicial related organizations on language access issues; and research trends, legislation and critical incidents relevant to language access in the courts. Additionally, the incumbent will develop and implement processes and procedures that ensure effective delivery systems for language testing services and provide technical assistance to courts pertaining to court interpreting services.

To be considered applicants must possess an advanced degree in business administration, criminal justice, public policy/public administration, or other relevant discipline and at minimum of eight (8) years of management/

supervisory and program management experience; or a combination of education and experience that demonstrates the ability to perform the work. Court or judicial branch experience is desirable. Experience in the provision of — or relevant to the provision of — court interpreting services is also desirable. Demonstrated experience in developing and writing policy initiatives is required.

Experience communicating and interacting effectively with public officials, management and staff is essential. Proficiency using PC and Microsoft products is required. Overnight travel is required. Hiring Salary Range dependent upon qualifications and experience; plus a comprehensive benefits package. Interested persons must submit a cover letter, resume and salary requirements to the address below.

This position will remain open until filled. Review of resumes will commence on Monday, April 16. EOE. National Center for State Courts Human Resources Office (ATTN: CTSV-WMSBG-001), 300 Newport Avenue, Williamsburg, VA 23185; or submit required documents via e-mail to jobs@ncsc.org.

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► Programs & Services
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Tax revenues at risk in dispute between Utah counties, Indian tribe

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

► PENNSYLVANIA

BUCKS COUNTY has protected its 150th farm under the county's **Agricultural Land Preservation Program**. It took the county from 1989 to 2007 to preserve 100 farms; the program has saved half that number, 50, in the past four years, according to Richard Harvey, director of the program. Since it started, the program has preserved 12,744 acres.

"Agriculture is still a big component in the county's economy," Harvey told *The Inquirer*. According to 2007 census figures the market value of crops and livestock was \$70.6 million.

► UTAH

A dispute between tribal and county governments over law enforcement could jeopardize lucrative revenues generated by oil and gas drilling.

Ute Indian Tribe leaders claim DUCHESNE COUNTY, UTAH COUNTY and state law enforcement officers in the Uintah Basin region are **harassing tribal members**, the *Deseret News* reported.

The counties refute the allegation.

As a result, tribal leaders say they will review all non-tribal business activity on tribal land "to determine whether cause exists for the termination of ... leases, business licenses, rights of ways and access permits."

Currently, much of the oil and natural gas drilling in the Uintah Basin occurs on tribal land. The counties and the tribe receive severance tax revenues from drilling activity on federally managed lands. They shared \$6.1 million in severance tax revenues last year, according to state officials.

► WASHINGTON

Counties supporting a \$5 billion plan to **expand water storage** and provide environmental benefits in the Yakima River Basin are investing in that outcome.

YAKIMA COUNTY commissioners recently approved an agreement with BENTON and KITTITAS counties to contribute \$10,000 each to a public outreach effort, the *Yakima Herald-Republic* reported.

The counties plan to hire a government relations firm to seek congressional and state legislative

support for the plan.

Yakima County Commissioner Kevin Bouchey said the basin's future economy depends on the water plan. "This sets the stage to address water needs for literally generations to come," he said. "It will take the community to encourage state and federal representatives to step forward and make this a priority."

► WEST VIRGINIA

Petroleum counties would benefit from a state **severance tax for oil and natural gas** if a bill passed by a state senate committee makes it into law. Last year, similar legislation began returning more coal severance tax money to the counties where the coal is produced, according to West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

The bill, approved by the Senate Energy Industry and Mining Committee, would give 2 percent of the tax back to the county where the gas was produced and 1 percent to cities in that county.

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

The H.R. Doctor Is In

From Generation to Generation

It is hard to imagine the gathering up of physical possessions over a lifetime only to see decisions about those personal artifacts made by a group of lawyers in a probate hearing. Preventing that from happening and insuring to the deceased that "...thy will be done" is a principal purpose behind having a Last Will and Testament. To not create such a document and keep it updated is to abdicate a critical issue in your life.

If the Last Will is so important, why is it that less than a majority of Americans have taken the time to prepare one? About one-third of Americans between ages 35 and 49 have wills, while slightly more than one half of Americans over-50 claim to have a will prior to becoming Medicare eligible.

A great employer will help employees appreciate the value of a critical legal document such as a will by making it easier for employees to "will-up." There are many local attorneys who will make the preparation for a basic will available for a small fee, or no fee as an incentive for future business. A county or city attorney may also be willing to provide employees with a no-cost basic will as long as the service is deemed to be meeting a public purpose. The purpose can be to encourage workforce excellence to adding the benefit through a labor agreement or a benefits ordinance.

There is another kind of will, however, which is the real subject of this article. It can be far more meaningful than the document which conveys the family piano to Aunt Tilly. It does not require a lawyer to prepare and it is immune from probate. It is called an Ethical Will.

The Ethical Will has very ancient roots at least going back to the time of the Old Testament. The concept is to transmit ethical values held important by a person, such as a parent, a teacher, or a leader, to the next generation. The number of people who have Ethical Wills is likely very small. I have found no research suggesting a specific number; however, attorneys I have spoken with have rarely if ever had



a client include an Ethical Will in their planning package.

We take great pains to pass on, hopefully without challenge, our desires about physical possessions such as family heirlooms, yet we do little to pass on something far more valuable to the people we love and care about most.

Correcting that failing is one of the purposes of an Ethical Will. Share with your children, for example, the kind of life you tried to live, and what you hope they will do to make a wonderful life and legacy of their own. A teacher can share with students how she hopes the knowledge she imparted has impacted their lives.

These are intensely personal and private expressions of hopes and dreams. What a loss it is to have a life of contribution and meaning without a clue being left behind to help others follow by example. What better way to see the person's legacy come to life than through a first-person account which is an Ethical Will.

It is hard to think of an elected official not wanting that kind of sharing. In a sense, the Ethical Will is a transmission device for a legacy. It may include phrases such as "Remember me for my..." It may include a statement about what a person tried to do as a parent or spouse, and how they harbored dreams and hopes about how their children might turn out as they live their own lives.

Most Ethical Wills are written in an informal narrative style rather than on the parchment of an official declaration. Most are very private. There are no requirements or how-to standards.

One of The HR Doctor's favorite Ethical Will passages comes from an 11th century father named Eleazar. He asked his descendants to "...think not of evil, for evil thinking leads to evil doing. Purify thy body, the dwelling place of thy soul..." He also admonished his descendants to practice his philosophy of charitable giving. There is more wisdom to be found here than in any television program or video game.

Another value of an Ethical Will is that the act of writing something so personal, done in quiet moments of contemplation without embarrassment as the tears flow, has a healing and cathartic effect. Writing my own Ethical

Will consumed nearly an entire box of tissues.

In other words, even the act of writing such a will requires spiritual thought about the kind of life you have led and the kind of relationships you have fostered. A world-renowned physician recommends creating such an Ethical Will as a "gift of spiritual health" to the writer. It provides a special opportunity for the writer to clarify values, to meet inner needs we seldom address, and to suggest to the next generation how we want to be remembered. How often in our lives do we have the opportunity and the tool to do that?

The HR Doctor strongly urges all to have not only an up-to-date

conventional Last Will and Testament. Go beyond that one document. You have an opportunity to add a critical component of a full transmission of the essence of yourself for the future by following the practice of wise men and women by preparing an Ethical Will.

All you need is a quiet place free from the intrusions of cell-phones and the TV and a supply of tissue. Be an agent in sharing important values from generation to generation.

Phil Rosenberg

Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor Desktop
www.hrdtr.net

Financial Services News

Innovation: Key to Survival and Prosperity

County officials are innovators. The pressure to get more done more quickly and with less revenue ensures that an increased service load is delivered, regardless of the obstacles.

In many cases, NACo chronicles innovation at the county level with the expectation that the new ideas can be adapted by other counties. NACo is constantly looking for and reporting on these best practices so that other counties may benefit from the great work already being done.

Toward that end, NACo and the NACo Financial Services Center are involved in a number of projects that highlight county best practices.

State Association Program Database

State associations of counties provide innovative programs that benefit their members. NACo FSC is expanding a project, conceived originally by the Michigan Association of Counties, to collect information and build a database of state association programs. This simple idea is to share solutions among state associations on various member services programs that provide value to counties and revenue to state associations. These programs can be adopted by other states and even nationally.

Building on this idea, NACo staff has created a process to gather the programs and services data from all of the state association websites into a consistent and updatable format. The database will be a strong resource that allows new ideas and innovations to be shared throughout NACo membership.

For more information on this project contact Anya Nowakowski at anowakowski@naco.org.

Corporate Relations Program

Many innovations and ideas for local government originate in the private sector. For example, NACo has worked with a number of its premier members from the technology sector, to organize and hold two technology summits annually. This is an opportunity for private sector solution-providers to meet with progressive county CIOs and other county officials to test and enhance their best thinking into usable products.

NACo is building upon that theme. Other initiatives include healthy counties, green government and rail transportation. These efforts have attracted new sponsors with special interest in these issue areas. NACo has an opportunity to build an organized pipeline of ideas and

innovations from the private sector to the local government sector in areas that parallel many NACo steering committee interests.

NACo is creating an internal communications process that will lead to a coordinated approach to dealing with current and potential corporate sponsors. More than 90 corporations currently participate in NACo at various levels. This effort will focus directly on benefiting counties nationwide.

For more information on this project, please contact Matt Fellows at mfellows@naco.org.

NACo and NACo FSC will continue to work with counties and state associations to create and highlight innovative programs that benefit the overall mission of providing services to citizens. NACo will share those accomplishments so that others will benefit from these experiences.

To learn more about the programs offered by the NACo Financial Services Corporation, contact Peter Torvik at 202.942.4240, ptorvik@naco.org; Lisa Cole at 202.942.4270, lcole@naco.org; or Jim Sawyer at 202.661.8868, jsawyer@naco.org.

(Financial Services News was written by Peter Torvik, managing director, NACo FSC.)

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