

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

VOL. 43, NO. 10 ■ May 23, 2011

Homeland security assistance faces severe reductions

By DALEN A. HARRIS

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

House appropriators are proposing massive reductions in homeland security grants, exercises, technical assistance and other programs important to states, local governments and public safety agencies. The legislation, the FY12 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill, also proposes a major change to the current formula for distributing state and local grants. The new formula would prevent many counties from receiving any state or local grants assistance from DHS.

Specifically, the legislation proposes \$1 billion dollars to fund a variety of programs important to states, local governments and public safety agencies. This represents a decrease of \$1.2 billion compared to the current year, and

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AP Photo/Gerald Herbert

A boat carrying prison trustees, used as workers against the flood, motors through Mississippi River floodwaters past the Riverside Medical Complex, which is protected by a wall of Hesco baskets, in Vidalia, Concordia Parish, La., May 19. As of May 18, 33 Louisiana parishes were under a flood warning because of swelling from the Mississippi River, thanks to heavy rains in the Missouri Valley over the last month. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opened the Morganza Spillway May 14, diverting floodwater to the Atchafalaya River, sparing Baton Rouge and New Orleans from flooding at the expense of eight rural parishes. Roland Dartez, executive director Police Jury Association of Louisiana, said the northern parishes have been offering assistance with public works equipment to build and reinforce levees. He suggested donations go to the Red Cross.

Final 3 percent withholding regulations published by IRS

By MIKE BELARMINO

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The IRS has issued the final regulations governing the 3

QuickTakes

Top 5 Counties on 'Twitter'	
King County, Wash. @kcvash	6,598
County of Philadelphia, Pa. @PhiladelphiaGov	5,971
Fairfax County, Va. @fairfaxcounty	4,456
Oklahoma County, Okla. @OKCountySheriff	4,004
San Diego County, Calif. @SanDiegoCounty	3,572

Source: CodeForAmerica.org

percent withholding requirement mandated by the 2005 Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act.

The provision requires counties that spend \$100 million or more annually to withhold 3 percent of their payments to vendors and remit the amount to the IRS. The regulations, which were published May 9, come after several years of waiting and vigorous efforts by NACo and others to repeal the requirement altogether.

Full repeal, though, has proven to be quite elusive but those opposed to the provision have been able to stall its implementation until Jan. 1, 2013. It was originally scheduled to go into effect this year on Jan. 1.

The final regulations set two main threshold amounts to trigger the requirement. First, starting Jan. 1, 2013, if your county makes \$100 million or more in payments for property or services annually, then the withholding requirement will apply to you. Initial estimates show that approximately 20 percent of the nation's counties could be subject to the requirement.

However, the final regulations do provide an optional rule that applies to local governments that generally remain below the \$100 million threshold, but experience an unusually high year of expenditures. Those entities may average payments made during any four

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Subcommittee advances bill to repeal Medicaid MOE

By PAUL BEDDOE

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Legislation now moving in the House of Representatives would allow states to reduce Medicaid eligibility levels without the risk of losing federal funding.

The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, May 12, approved the State Flexibility Act (H.R. 1683) for consideration by the full committee. The bill, introduced by Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Ga.), would repeal the maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement for states to maintain their Medicaid and CHIP eligibility standards or lose their federal matching funds.

NACo opposes the repeal of the Medicaid MOE because it puts counties at risk for significant cost-shifting as states could push people off the rolls and into county systems to receive uncompensated care.

"In this context, 'state flexibility' really worries us, because it means

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House approps chairman releases subcommittee allocations

By MARILINA SANZ

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The next step in the congressional budget process began in earnest May 11 when House Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers (R-Ky.) announced the subcommittee spending limits, known as 302(b) allocations, and schedules for the FY12 budget cycle. Two of the subcommittees, Homeland Security, and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies held their mark-ups May 13. The chairman's goal is to have at least nine of the 12 bills ready for floor action by the August recess.

The 302(b) allocations would cut \$46 billion in non-security programs from the FY11 levels. The Transportation-Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee (T-HUD) received the largest percentage cut, at 13.9 percent, followed closely by the Agriculture Subcommittee at 13.4 percent.

As a result of the T-HUD reduction, NACo believes that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) appropriations could be reduced to \$1.5 billion in FY12.

CDBG already took a 16 percent cut, \$600 million in FY11 to \$3.3 billion. NACo policy supports funding domestic discretionary programs at FY10 levels, which would be \$3.9 billion for CDBG.

The Agriculture Subcommittee level of funding is 25 percent less than the FY10 level of \$24.3 billion. This allocation will force cuts to all program accounts within the Agriculture Subcommittee including food safety, nutrition assistance, extension and rural development. The subcommittee is scheduled to mark up its bill May 24.

NACo's appropriations priority in agriculture is rural development, which already received significant cuts in FY11. The most vulnerable nutrition assistance program is probably the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program. Although the House budget resolution calls for cuts and a block grant in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the former food stamps program, SNAP is an entitlement program. Any cuts in that program would have to be made by the authorizing committee and not the appropriators.

NACo policy opposes block grants for entitlement programs.

The Labor-HHS Subcommittee, which handles the largest domestic spending bill, received the third largest percentage cut at 11.5 percent. Some of the most vulnerable programs in Labor-HHS are the job training programs and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The three workforce programs of greatest interest to counties, adult, youth and dislocated worker training, are currently funded at \$2.8 billion, but they had been targeted for elimination in one of the early versions of the House continuing resolution for FY11.

CSBG escaped the FY11 debate virtually unscathed at \$680 million, but both the president's budget for FY12 and an earlier version of the 2011CR would cut the program in half. Finally, while a big fight over the Pell Grant program was averted in the final CR negotiations, the program may not be so lucky the next time around.

Other Health and Human Services programs of interest to counties that are targeted for cuts in the House Budget Resolution such as Medic-

aid and the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee because of their entitlement nature.

Medicaid falls under the jurisdiction

tion of Energy and Commerce in the House, and Finance in the Senate. SSBG, which would be eliminated in the budget resolution, falls under the jurisdiction of Ways and Means in the House, and Finance in the Senate.

Bill could leave 300,000 without insurance coverage

MEDICAID from page 1

that states will have the ability to cut their Medicaid rolls and dump people into the counties' safety net services—without any way for us to recover our costs," said Santa Clara County, Calif. Supervisor Liz Kniss, Health Steering Committee chair. "Congress needs to keep the MOE in place to keep these important programs stable while the economy recovers."

MOE requirements were imposed on states as a condition of receiving enhanced federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) for Medicaid under the American Recovery Act and the Affordable

Care Act (ACA). For adults, the MOE requirement extends until 2014 when the ACA's new state-based health insurance exchanges are functional and for children until October 2019.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the bill would save the U.S. Treasury \$2 billion over 10 years and would leave about 300,000 people, including children, without insurance.

The bill will likely be marked up by the full Energy and Commerce Committee the week of May 30 and may go to the House floor that same week. A similar measure, S. 868, was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah).

NACo election credentials due Friday, July 1

By ILENE MANSTER

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Credentials and voting information for NACo's 2011 election were mailed May 19 to the chief elected official (CEO) of each member county. In order to vote, a county must have paid its 2011 dues and have at least one paid registration to the annual conference. The CEO must indicate on the credentials form, the names of the voting delegate and alternate authorized to pick up a county's voting materials. There can only be one alternate designated on the form.

The CEO must also indicate on the credentials form whether the county would want its ballot cast by another (proxy) county or its state association of counties president, or his or her designee in the event that neither of its designated delegates picks up the county's ballot. A county may also choose not to cast its ballot.

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

This year's election will be held on Tuesday, July 19 at 10 a.m. during

the Business Meeting at the NACo Annual Conference in Multnomah County (Portland), Ore. Counties will vote on resolutions that set NACo legislation and association policy for the coming year. Delegates will also elect NACo officers for the coming year. The position of second vice president is usually the one position that is contested.

The county must be a NACo member "in good standing" in order to vote, meaning that a county's dues for 2011 must be paid before the voting occurs. Also, the county must have at least one paid registration for the annual conference and have proper credentials.

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

The number of votes per county is determined by the amount of dues it pays. Dues are based on population. NACo's bylaws allot one vote per \$500 in dues.

- Counties with dues of \$400 to \$499 receive one vote.
- Counties with dues of \$500 to \$999 receive two votes.
- Counties with dues of \$1000 to \$1,499 receive three votes, and so on.

The maximum number of votes a county can receive is 112.

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

The 2011 Credentials Committee members are:

- Helen Purcell, recorder, Maricopa County, Ariz., chair
- Cindy Bobbitt, commissioner, Grant County, Okla., member
- Rodney Long, commissioner,

Alachua County, Fla., member

- Michele Sherrer, commissioner, Gem County, Idaho, member

The NACo bylaws also provide for a Parliamentarian, Reading Clerk and Tally Clerk to aid in the election process.

- Marc Hamlin, district clerk, Brazos County, Texas, parliamentarian

- Ron Houseman, presiding commissioner, Taney County, Mo., reading clerk

- Patty O'Connor, taxpayer services director, Blue Earth County, Minn., tally clerk

If you have any questions, please contact Ilene Manster, membership coordinator at imanster@naco.org or 202.942.4291.

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► Recordings of past webinars online for your convenience

Have you missed a NACo webinar? Would you like other staff to benefit from a webinar you participated in? Would you like to review a webinar you previously attended? NACo members may view and hear recordings of previous webinars at their convenience by going to www.naco.org ► meetings ► webinars and click on "Past Webinar Recordings." For more information, contact Amanda Odorimah at aodorimah@naco.org or call 202.942.4225.

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

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(202) 393-6226 • FAX (202) 393-2630
 Published biweekly except August by:

National Association of Counties

Research Foundation, Inc.

25 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.,

Ste. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630

E-mail | cnws@naco.org

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Mail subscriptions are \$100 per year for non-members. \$60 per year for non-members purchasing multiple copies. Educational institution rate, \$50 per year. Member county supplemental subscriptions are \$20 each. Send payment with order and address changes to NACo, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to

County News, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Ste. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

(USPS 704-620) ■ (ISSN: 0744-9798)

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NACo conference explores rail's impact on communities

By ROBERT J. FOGEL
SENIOR LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city and state governments and their communities was the focus of NACo's first rail-centric conference, April 27-29 in Du Page County, Ill.

The conference, "Moving Freight and Passengers in the 21st Century," explored the movement of freight rail in urban, suburban and rural communities and discussed funding challenges to modernize passenger and freight rail systems. The idea for the conference was generated by members of NACo's Transportation Steering Committee who have been debating and developing rail policy over the last several years, most recently under the leadership of Chair Leo Bowman of Benton County, Wash.

"Rail issues, both freight and passenger, have been a major focus of the committees' work recently and the success of the rail conference was a direct result of committee member's input and participation," Bowman said.

The conference was hosted by Du Page County Councilman Jim Healy who serves as vice chair of the Transportation Steering Committee. "All counties are affected by either or both freight and passenger rail," he said. "These systems will be expanding in the future and the purpose of the conference was to educate county officials so that we can begin to tackle the problems of rail expansion now. It makes sense to begin to work with rather than fight the freight rail industry and in particular to figure out solutions that meet all our needs."

The three-day conference began with a tour of two intermodal freight rail facilities, among the largest in the world, in Joliet, Ill. Conference attendees were able to see first hand these state-of-the-art rail yards operated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific railroads.

The second day of the conference consisted of four panels: The Movement of Freight Rail Today; Passenger Rail — Present and Future Issues; The Next 25 Years; and Long Term Investment, Needs, and Impact of Freight on State and Local Government. Five railroads, including Union Pacific, CSX, Canadian National, Canadian Pacific and Genesee and Wyoming, participated in the first panel as attendees heard about what the railroads are building, public safety and land use issues; short line railroads and the industry position on truck size and weight;

rail growth and quiet zones, freight rail rates and sharing freight rail with passenger and high-speed rail.

Also on this panel was Randy Blankenhorn, executive director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, who talked about the

importance of freight rail to the economy of northeast Illinois and Chicago as well as freight being a national and interstate problem.

The final panelist was Eric Johnson, executive director, Washington Public Ports Association, who

commented on the close relationship between freight movement, the ports and the railroads, and how freight railroads, local government and the ports must work together in the future to make the system work and make good investments.

The second panel focused on passenger rail. Art Guzzetti, of the American Public Transportation Association, discussed the dramatic growth of commuter

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Despite gains in commuter rail, many cannot access public transportation

RAIL IMPACT from page 3

rail in the United States, while pointing out that at the same time 45 percent of Americans still have no access to public transportation. Derrick James from Amtrak told the audience about the growth of passenger rail ridership. Amtrak had 28.7 million riders in 2010, is 85 percent self-supporting and serves 46 states and three Canadian provinces.

David Christianson of the Minnesota Department of Transportation addressed the role of state DOTs in the future of passenger rail. He outlined Minnesota's state rail plan, first adopted in 2008, and passenger rail's importance to the state's economy.

Christianson believes there is a market for passenger rail in corridors of 100–500 miles. Minnesota is depending on county support for expansion of the passenger rail system.

Tom Loftus, from the Seneca group, represented the American High-Speed Rail Association. Loftus said that he believes that even with the recent setbacks in federal funding for high-speed rail, many Americans understand the inherent benefits of this form of transportation. A key element, he said, is to develop a funding structure to get the private sector to contribute to the development of high-speed rail.

The third panel heard first from Frank Mulvey, the vice chair of the Surface Transportation Board (STB), a federal agency that has regulatory authority over freight railroads. He discussed some of the trends he sees in the industry, including a strong recovery from the recession, more intermodal freight, the continuing importance of coal, more exports, the possibil-



Photos courtesy of DeKalb County, Ill.

Jill Robinson, Franklin County, Tenn. shares views on freight rail with Herb Smith, from Norfolk Southern.

ity of more consolidation in the industry and fewer long distance trucks. The STB tries to facilitate communication between railroads and local governments, and urged local officials who have problems to contact the STB.

Next was Jennifer MacDonald of the Association of American Railroads. MacDonald discussed the impact of freight railroad deregulation, in particular the Staggers Act of 1980, and how the freights were affected by the recession. She said out that freight railroads are a capital intensive industry with \$480 billion invested over the last 30 years and \$12.5 billion projected in 2011. Stressing the impact of freight railroad, she stated that in the United States 40 tons of freight per person is moved by rail each year.

The final panelist in this session was Charles Banks of R.L. Banks and Associates, a rail expert and consultant. He outlined the

current state of freight railroads, the result of dozens of mergers in recent decades, and how the freight rail industry has benefited from increased fuel costs, which makes it more competitive with the trucking industry. One of the limits on rail growth is rail access to commercial sites. In the future, the freight rail industry will see growth, more congestion and the need to address community impact of its operations as well as more passenger trains on its rails.

The final panel included two rail experts and comments from representatives of the associations sponsoring the conference. Libby Ogard of Prime Focus LLC, a rail consulting firm, talked about reasons for investing in freight rail in the future, including the "greening" of the supply chain, freight doubling by 2020 and increased foreign trade.

She discussed how many people don't want freight rail going through their neighborhood and the challenges this presents. She also outlined Project Create, a multi-billion investment in freight rail infrastructure improvements in Chicago and how that improves terminal access.

Joseph Schwieterman, director, Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, DePaul University, described three phases of railroad-community relations.

Phase I was when freight and passenger rail went everywhere in the United States and there was a strong rail industry presence in many communities. In the 1950s and 1960s as railroads were moving out of communities, including the demise of passenger rail, the connection or involvement with the public was lost.



Derrick James, AMTRAK, Chicago office answers questions about passenger rail services.

In Phase II (1999-2009), local governments wanted to leverage rights-of-way—the Alameda Corridor and short lines are examples of this trend.

Phase III began in 2009 with federal government support of high-speed rail and the need to address congestion. The trend now points toward unified planning for freight and passenger rail expansion. Freight rail and communities are facing quiet zone issues, grade crossing delays and higher shipping rates. Art Guzzetti, representing the American Public Transportation Association, commented that those communities that have commuter rail prosper.

The National League of Cities

representative, Council Member Dennis McCloskey of Broomfield, Colo., talked about the need for everyone to work together, especially in light of increasing freight traffic. He also mentioned that the Denver area has the largest light rail expansion in the United States.

Fred Abousleman of the National Association of Regional Councils reiterated the need for government and railroads working together and the issue of railroads and ports having a three-year to five-year planning horizon while metropolitan regions have a 30-year horizon.

Council Member Jim Healy of Du Page County, Ill. representing

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Taking notes to keep on track: Dennis McCloskey Broomfield City and County, Colo.



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Freight railroads do not understand local governments, Healy says

RAIL IMPACT from page 4

NACo, stated that freight railroads companies think they understand local governments but they don't, and local governments need to do something about that.

Land use planning is crucial and there is often conflict between local land use concerns and railroad concerns, Healy said. The recent acquisition by Canadian National of the EJE rail line is an example. The acquisition resulted in an increase in train traffic from two to 50 trains daily through Healy's county. What is needed and would help, said Healy, is a common vision.

The last day of the conference began with a presentation by Joseph Szabo, administrator, Federal Railroad Administration.

"It speaks volumes that you came together for a rail conference," he said. "The Interstate Highway system did for the U.S. in the past what a rail renaissance will do for us in the future."

Szabo talked about the Obama administration's commitment to rail — \$600 million in TIGER grants to freight rail and \$5.8 billion obligated to high-speed rail. He recognizes



Joan Murphy, Cook County, Ill. and Jim Healy, DeKalb County, Ill., who hosted the conference, listen to a panel presentation. Both Murphy and Healy are members of NACo's Transportation Steering Committee. Healy serves as a vice-chair and Murphy serves as a subcommittee chair.

some of the challenges faced by local communities — idling trains, blocked grade crossings, stored rail cars, horns and noise — and called for restoring the dialogue between railroads and local officials. "My agency can play a role when conflicts arise — play the honest broker role,"

Szabo said.

The last morning session was devoted to a discussion among attendees about many of the topics covered during the conference, how to improve ongoing communications between state and local governments and the freight railroads,

and a long-term strategy to improve rail infrastructure. NACo President Glen Whitley said he hoped the conference will serve as a catalyst for continued communications between local and state government, and the rail industry.

Some of the more general comments coming from conference attendees and the railroads were:

- State and locals need to recognize that private investors drive railroad decisions, but railroads still need to ensure that the public's interest are considered.

- Railroads and communities are in a symbiotic relationship — railroads can't be dismissive. NACo should speak for local governments at the national level.

- Freight railroads should notify communities when a merger or acquisition is taking place. Communities should look at zoning in anticipation of these developments.

- Local officials should partner with economic development agencies in their regions to work with and negotiate with freight railroads.

- It would be great to know about future plans of railroads in providing access to short lines.

- Freight railroads mistrust

working with the public, in part because they were forced in the past to carry passenger at a financial loss.

- There's very little planning or problem solving at the federal level.

- One next step could be to convene regional meetings with state legislatures.

- Railroads need to negotiate with local officials in good faith.

- Freight railroads are supportive of passenger rail, already host many Amtrak and commuter lines. Will host additional commuter lines based on liability, protection of freight traffic and good communications.

- When concerns arise, it is important to get to the right person at a railroad, and

- Next meeting could occur in March 2012 between NACo and NLC legislative conferences.

Several of the presentations made at the rail conference can be found on the NACo website — www.naco.org.

For county officials who have issues with freight railroads, a list of individuals by state that can be contacted at each railroad can be found at www.aar.org (go to Statistics & Publications ► Railroads by state ► railroad representatives by state.

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Morale Pals lift employees' spirits in tight budget times

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Furloughs, benefit cuts, layoffs. The measures being taken by counties to avoid deficits can leave employees feeling like the walking wounded.

Counties across America are making tough choices to balance their budgets while trying to maintain existing services. It's a recipe for

“During uncertain economic times any organization will have morale issues and county government isn't an exception”

— Ray Jeffers
Person County Board member

doing more with less that can leave employees feeling overworked and under-appreciated.

Person County, N.C. came up with an innovative program to improve employee morale while valuing the work they do. It's called Employee Morale Pals. A committee of 12 employees from

across the spectrum of county jobs organizes social, recognition and appreciation events and activities — at little or no cost to the county. The program was recently recognized for excellence by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners with an Outstanding County Programs Award.

“I knew that our morale was an area of concern,” said County Manager Heidi York, who came up with the idea. “We're a small organization and I'm very accessible. So I've heard a lot of it directly. That tells me there's probably a whole lot more being said that I don't hear.”

In the past few years, the county's workforce has shrunk by about 10 percent to 400, York said. “So I knew we were really asking employees to do more with less.” And the county's contribution to employees' 401k plans was cut in half, to 2.5 percent from 5 percent. Over the last three years, the county has cut is \$7 million from its budget, which is now about \$60 million.

“During uncertain economic times any organization will have morale issues and county government isn't an exception,” said Ray Jeffers, one of five Person County Board members. “...And through our new morale committee employees help employees to cope through these times.”

When York got the idea last year,



Photo courtesy John Hill/Person County, N.C.

Person County chose enthusiastic, dynamic employees for its Morale Pals committee. Front row, from left to right, are: Jennifer Teasley, Kay Farrell and Yvette Farmer. Middle row: Celestine Bradsher, John Hill and Cherie Thomas. Back row: Jeanette Tuck, Gladys Lerchbacher, Rebecca Morrow and Kim Griffin. Not pictured: Janet Clayton and Flora Villines.

she knew she wasn't the ideal person to lead the effort — she felt it would have more credibility and employee buy-in if it was led by employees. So, she recruited two county staff members to co-chair the committee who “are enthusiastic, like their jobs and have contagious energy.”

“Part of the fun of this is that it really is this grassroots, employee-led initiative,” she said. “I had the initial idea, but I never pushed it on anybody.” Her office provided \$300 in seed money to get things started. The committee's biggest event to date was an employee recognition

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Employee morale a key challenge for public employers

Addressing employee morale and workload problems are among the top workforce issues facing local and state governments, according to a new survey by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence (CSLGE).

More than 95 percent of respondents said employee morale is an “important” or “somewhat important” workforce issue for them going forward. The survey also identified retaining the staff needed for core services and reducing employee health care costs as areas of concern.

“With furloughs, pay cuts and additional out-of-pocket expenses for benefits, coupled with an increased workload and often intense media scrutiny, public sector employee morale is low,” said Leslie Scott, director, National Association of State Personnel Executives. “Earlier, this year, NASPE members, identified low employee morale as the number one issue facing state government HR executives.”

CSLGE electronically surveyed members of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR) and NASPE between April 18–May 3. Eighty percent of respondents work for local government.

Twenty-five percent of survey respondents reported that employees are accelerating their plans for retirement, and 71 percent say their workforce has shrunk since the 2008 economic downturn.

Workforce changes most commonly cited are:

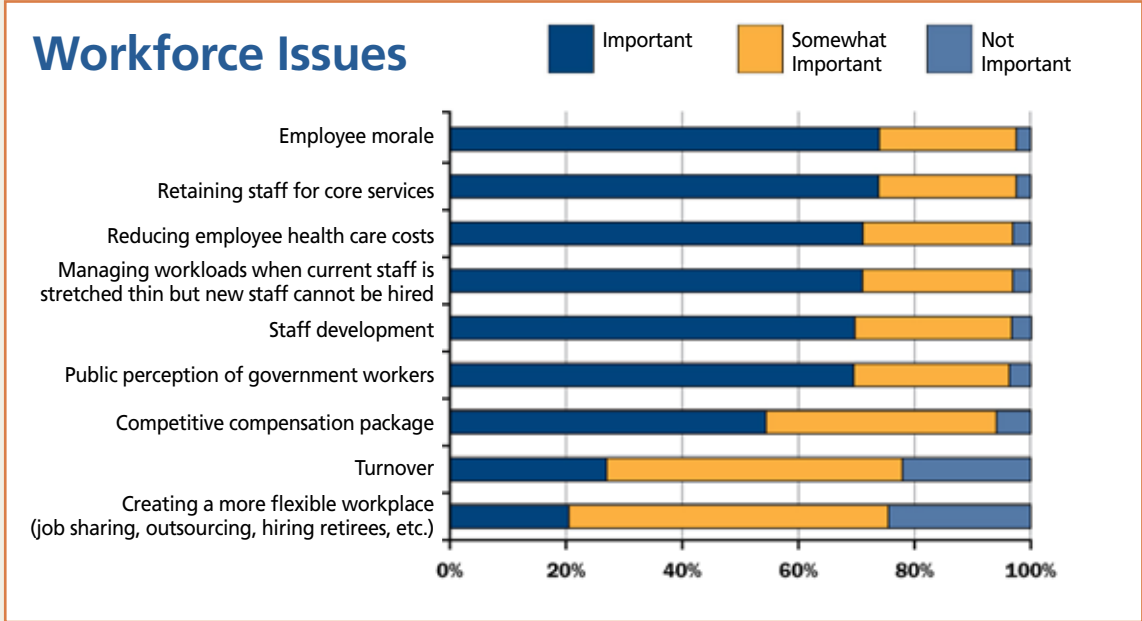
- shifted more health care costs to employees (72 percent)
- pay freezes (62 percent)
- hiring freezes (54 percent)
- layoffs (41 percent)
- created wellness programs (33 percent)
- shifted more health care costs to retirees (23 percent)
- raised contributions to pension plans (23 percent, new hires; 22 percent, current employees)

Respondents also reported having a hard time filling a number

of positions, including engineers; environmental, chemical and forensic credentialed professionals; finance; police and firefighters; information technology professionals; librarians; nurses and physicians; middle and top management; skilled trades; and social workers.

“As they face hiring freezes, morale issues, layoffs, and accelerating retirements, more than 70 percent of state and local governments say staff development is a priority issue,” said Elizabeth Kellar, president and CEO of CSLGE.

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence (www.slgc.org), based in Washington, D.C., is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose mission is “to help state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers so they can attract and retain talented, committed, and well-prepared individuals to public service.”



Report shows ways to meet disaster needs of children

Children represent nearly 25 percent of the country's population, but when an emergency or disaster strikes, their unique needs are typically unmet or misunderstood.

The National Commission on Children and Disasters, an independent advisory body established by Congress, examined children's needs in relation to the preparation for, response to, and recovery from

all hazards. Its *2010 Report to the President and Congress* contains more than 100 recommended actions for federal, state and local partners, including steps that counties can take to improve emergency planning for children.

Linn County, Iowa Supervisor Linda Langston understands the impact disasters have on children, having dealt with catastrophic floods in her community in the summer of 2009. "The floods taught us many lessons, but none were more important than the need to plan for children," said Langston.

The floods occurred when schools were closed and caused the cancellation of summer activities, which created overwhelming demand for child care, but there was no plan to accommodate the influx of children under emergency situations. Parents were given the difficult choice of staying with their children or reporting to work.

Eventually certain regulations and requirements were eased, but Langston argues that such actions should be built into a plan, not determined on an ad-hoc basis after the disaster hits. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

agrees and recently issued an informational memorandum to guide states and localities in developing, exercising, and maintaining written child care emergency preparedness and response plans.

Langston also emphasizes the importance of developing long-term recovery plans that focus on children. Initially people come together after a disaster, but as time marches on there are often increases in mental health, domestic violence and substance abuse issues that can affect the ability of children to cope and learn.

She said government, service providers, and child-serving environments (such as schools, Head Start, child care) should work together and plan for such scenarios. "Child-serving environments will be more receptive to accepting assistance if it is offered by someone they know and trust," Langston said.

The federal government is putting a priority on disaster planning for children. FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate embraced the work of the commission early on in his tenure. In short order, Fugate formed a Children's Working Group to serve as a platform across his agency for

integrating the needs of children into FEMA programs, policies and operations.

The results so far are encouraging. FEMA revised its Homeland Security Grant Program guidance to demonstrate for states and local governments how these funds can be used to improve safety and protection of children from disasters. In addition, FEMA issued guidance that a state, local or tribal government may be reimbursed through the public assistance grant program for costs associated with providing child care services to families as part of emergency sheltering efforts, including the operation of stand-alone child care centers.

Fugate's working group approach has caught on at the Health and Human Services, and the Justice departments, which formed a working group to develop emergency planning guidance for juvenile facilities. Signaling the Obama Administration's commitment to children and disasters, the White House recently formed an inter-agency working group to drive progress on commission recommendations.

NACo's Justice & Public Safety

Steering Committee webpage links to a "Resources on Children and Disasters" page created by the commission. The page features over 100 documents and links that will help counties integrate children more fully into emergency planning, including a vital document, *Preparedness Indicators for Children*.

Fairfax County, Va. Supervisor and NACo Board member Gerald Hyland notes that while each county is different in how it plans for disasters, and some counties may have greater resources than others, all counties have children. "Priorities drive decisions and what could be a higher priority than our children?" Hyland adds that budgeting is a difficult challenge for all counties, but he believes the commission has succeeded in providing counties with viable low- to no-cost options that merit serious consideration and action.

To view the Resources on Children and Disasters webpage please visit www.naco.org/legislation/policies/Pages/JPS.aspx.

For more information on the National Commission on Children and Disasters please visit www.acf.hhs.gov/nccd/resources.html.



Share your point of view ...

Letters to the Editor

Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail, fax or e-mail to:

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COUNTY, NJ

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To-Date
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NACo National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties

Spotlight on Cumberland County, New Jersey

Cumberland County, NJ, launched the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program in October 2007. Since the program's inception, thousands of people in the County (population of 155,000) have utilized the program and saved more than one million dollars.

Contact Andrew Goldschmidt, Director, Membership Marketing at 1-202-942-4221 or Ilene Manster, Membership Coordinator at 1-202-942-4291, or visit www.naco.org/drugcard for program information.

Operated by CVS Caremark.

This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies. Rev 04.11

Smartphone users
scan code to access
the NACo website.



Trailer spreads the word for building safety

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

The residents of Clark County, Wash. can breathe easier when it comes to construction safety, thanks to the Building Safety Campaign.

A public campaign in Clark County, Building Safety, sponsored by Energy Efficiency Services, promotes the importance of permits and the work building code professionals do to save lives and protect property. For the past six years, Building Safety has had a mobile wall display showing examples of good and bad construction, and provided hands-on activities for children at various community events.

"At least twice a year for the last five years we have taken our custom trailer and set up our Think Permit booth that has good and bad construction displays and combined it with an activity for children and their parents," said Jim Muir, Clark County chief building official. "We have taken 'boring' out of a governmental booth and made it an event while promoting the work and importance of building code professionals."

This year, outreach efforts expanded to include a new energy

efficiency program funded by the federal Department of Energy. The focus of the new program is air duct sealing, which can lower heating and cooling costs. The program has tested more than 250 Clark County homes for free. When leaks and other problems are found, homeowners receive a \$100 rebate to hire contractors to make repairs.

To advertise the program, the county formed a partnership, Planet Clark, with public and private entities including Clark Public Utilities, Parr Lumber and Energy Trust of Oregon. The program provides information on energy efficiency, building safety, permits and inspections, green building, home safety, emergency preparedness and environmental services.

The Planet Clark program takes information to the public at various events using a 20-foot, interactive educational trailer and its Energy Detectives program visits area schools. The partnership builds on earlier outreach efforts of the county and other jurisdictions in the Think Permit program.

International Code Council president Jimmy Brothers recently presented the program with the the

2011 International Code Council's Raising the Profile Award.

"For five years, the Clark County Building Safety trailer has brought examples of good and

bad construction and interactive displays and tools to neighborhoods," Brothers said. "Their reputation has spurred others to observe their work and improve

their own programs."

More information about Clark County's Building Safety program is available at www.clark.wa.gov/commdev and www.PlanetClark.com.



Photo Courtesy of Clark County, Wash.

Clark County has partnered with public and private entities to create "Planet Clark," a traveling 20-foot trailer that promotes the Building Safety campaign.

Price: "cuts doubly disruptive as states slash budgets"

SECURITY from page 1

a cut of \$2.1 billion compared to 2010. The legislation also proposes major reductions in DHS' FIRE and Safer Grants (\$350 million), FEMA Flood Mapping (\$120 million), and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants (\$40 million).

The only programs important to counties not slated to be slashed are FEMA's Disaster Relief Account (\$2.65 billion) and Emergency Management Performance Grant (\$350 million).

According to House Appropriations' Subcommittee on Homeland Security Chairman Robert Aderholt (R-Ala.) state and local first responder grants were specifically targeted for reductions because "roughly \$13 billion dollars in past grants have yet to be drawn down," and FEMA's shortcomings in establishing "a credible method for measuring the impact of these grants."

However, House Appropriations' Subcommittee on Homeland Security Ranking Member David Price (D-N.C.) countered that the "\$1 billion for all state

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- » Only programs important to counties not slated to be slashed are FEMA's Disaster Relief (\$2.65 billion) and Emergency Management Performance Grant (\$350 million).
- » NACo strongly opposes any effort to reduce DHS funds and programs for state and local governments.
- » House of Representatives Appropriations Committee scheduled to mark up the measure May 23.

and local grants, 65 percent below the [President Obama's FY12] request, breaks faith with the states and localities that depend on the federal government as partners to secure our communities." Rep. Price adds that "these cuts will be doubly disruptive as many of our states and municipalities are being forced to slash their own budgets." He added that he cannot conceive of any defensible argument for cuts of this magnitude.

For many years, NACo has strongly opposed any effort to re-

duce DHS funds and programs for state and local governments and agencies and asserted that a minimum level of preparedness must be provided to all communities. As a result, NACo has supported a balanced approach to the DHS funding basic formula grants used by states and localities to achieve a minimum level of preparedness and additional funds for high-risk urban regional areas.

The FY12 Department of Homeland Security Appropriation bills breaks from this viewpoint, and the legislation proposes a major consolidation of programs important to states, local governments and public safety agencies.

Specifically, the legislation proposes combining into one single line item:

- DHS' State Homeland Security Grant Program
- Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program
- Metropolitan Medical Response System
- Citizen Corp Program
- Rail and Transit Grants
- Intercity Bus Security Grants
- Port Security Grants

- Interoperable Emergency Communications Grants, and
- DHS and FEMA Training, Technical Assistance and Exercises.

Funding would be awarded at the discretion of the DHS Secretary.

State minimums, the mandatory pass-through of 80 percent to units of local governments, and targeted funding to the nation's most densely populated regions would all be eliminated or revised. Instead, state and local first responder assistance, exercise and training funds would be combined into a single grant competitive program, and funded at \$1 billion in 2012.

The House of Representatives Appropriations' Subcommittee on Homeland Security approved the FY12 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Bill by voice vote May 13.

The full House of Representatives Appropriations' Committee is scheduled to mark up the measure May 23. The Senate has yet to announce its plans.

NACo has already issued a "call to action" urging all county elected and appointed officials to call their members of Congress immediately

and oppose any effort to reduce funds to DHS grants, exercises, and technical assistance important to states, local governments and public safety agencies.

Additionally, NACo members are also urged to instruct their members of Congress to oppose the consolidation of these important programs, and reject any proposal that awards future first responder funds at the discretion of the DHS Secretary.

States and local governments can only achieve the highest level of preparedness, response and recovery if the federal government properly continues to fund these critical programs. Preserving these funds ensures that state and local governments implement statewide and regional strategies, essential resources and capabilities for state and local first responders are not jeopardized, and basic levels of all hazard preparedness, prevention, response and recovery across the nation are enhanced.

For more details or to join the call to action, please visit on the following link: <http://capwiz.com/naco/callalert/index.tt?alertid=46272521>.

Inmates fight fires in Sumter County, Ga.

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Sumter County, Ga. inmates are going from selling hot stereotypes to subduing burning buildings, and in the process lowering insurance rates and the county's bottom line to boot.

In 2009, the county's fire protection services were limited to full-time firefighters near the city of Americus and volunteer companies in the unincorporated areas. Contracting with the city to extend firefighting services to unincorporated areas resulted in rising costs to the county and no respective increase in service, said Brent Williams, former county board chairman.

"In two years we saw our costs to provide fire services quadruple," he said. "It wasn't an acceptable way for us to go forward."

On top of that, the Insurance Services Office (ISO), which provides ratings by which insurance companies price policies, gave the unincorporated parts of the county terrible scores, which sent fire insurance prices climbing.

When county leaders balked at signing a long-term contract with Americus' fire department, the county had about 90 days to figure out what to do or see its ISO ratings plummet and insurance rates skyrocket. "We were facing a near revolt from residents who

thought they would have either no fire protection or that they would have rapidly escalating insurance rates," Williams said. "Some of it was misinformation, but regardless we were under a lot of pressure, and we made a bold move in going alone."

In September 2009, the County Commission established a county-wide fire department from scratch, funding the department with a fire service fee on each parcel of land. That meant filling the ranks with full-time firefighters, though, in less than three months.

Another pressure on the county was the budget, which suddenly had to account for building or renovating facilities, buying equipment and hiring firefighters. With the low end of firefighters' wages in the \$40,000 ballpark, plus benefits, staffing the stations could be as expensive as outfitting them with trucks. After buying used equipment in good condition to furnish 22 fire stations,

the county then tapped a labor gold mine – the Sumter County Correctional Institute run by the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Nine inmates serving time for non-violent offenses, mostly drugs, theft or burglary who passed extensive screening were trained and relocated to four staffed fire stations, where they live under the eye of full-time firefighters who work 24-hour shifts. They are monitored on closed circuit television while in the firehouse and while on calls, they follow the lead of the full-time firefighter.

"A number of people said we don't want inmates coming to our house," Williams said. "What they don't realize is what pressure these guys are under to do right."

The department enforces a zero-tolerance policy for infractions, so the inmates know there is no margin of error for their behavior, and they also know there are plenty of inmates in the main jail eager to take

their place, County Administrator Lynn Taylor said.

Being in the fire station 24 hours a day gives them more training time than the average professional firefighter, Williams said.

"They take a tremendous amount of pride in being inmate firefighters," he said. "It gives them a better purpose in life than waiting out their sentences. I am personally very impressed by the attitudes, work ethics and dedication of these inmates."

Taylor derives a lot of satisfaction from the opportunities the program allows inmates. When they are released, inmates who successfully complete the program are eligible for hire at a fire department.

"Otherwise they'd have to wait 10 years," she said. "This gives them the opportunity to get right back into a productive field and get their lives on track upon release."

See INMATES page 11

Profiles in Service



» Stephen H. Holt

Board of Directors
Collector of Revenue
Jasper County, Mo.

Number of years active in NACo: 12

Years in public service: 22

Occupation: Collector of revenue

Education: B.S., business administration, Missouri Southern State University; masters in finance, public administration, University of Missouri-St. Louis

The hardest thing I've ever done: walking my only daughter down the aisle and giving her hand in marriage.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln and my late mother.

A dream I have is to: to build the membership of the National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers and Finance Officers (NACCTFO) and continue to make it a more progressive organization.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: enjoy going to live theatre productions.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: while attending college, I went with a fellow student to New York City to recruit entertainment to bring back to our campus for future entertainment activities.

My favorite way to relax is: turn on the television and fall asleep on the couch.

I'm most proud of: my wife, my son and my daughter.

Every morning I read: my daily devotional and the newspaper.

My favorite meal is: lasagna or a taco salad.

My pet peeve is: people that will not try.

My motto is: "Two can do anything if one is the Lord."

The last book I read was: *Never Again* by John Ashcroft.

My favorite movie is: *Gladiator*.

My favorite music is: classic rock.

My favorite president is: Ronald Reagan.

Alameda County to locate health clinics at fire stations

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

An idea born out of the tragedy of one man's death in Alameda County, Calif. could result of thousands of lives being saved through better access to health care in a few short years.

The county Board of Supervisors recently approved \$750,000 to fund a pilot program to set up basic health care "portals" — or clinics — in fire stations in medically underserved areas of the county. They would be staffed by a nurse practitioner, paramedic and an administrative care coordinator.

"It sounds like a pretty ingenious concept, and so we said, let's pilot this and give it a shot, give it a try," said Nate Miley, president of the Board of Supervisors.

Alex Briscoe, director of the county's Health Care Services Agency, said the idea came to him during a demonstration outside the trial of a transit cop, charged with shooting and killing an unarmed man in Oakland on New Year's Day 2009. On his way to the Board of Supervisors building across from the courthouse, he ran into some young protesters whom he knew.

"As I walked over, they began yelling a bunch of negative stuff at

the police who were overseeing the demonstration," he recalled. "And as I walked up, a fire truck drove by. And the kids all stopped yelling crazy stuff at the police and waved."

"In that moment," he realized that "even in marginalized communities, fire retains everyone's trust. They are the most popular public servant." Every low-income community is served by a fire station, and it is associated with providing life-saving paramedical services. People know where they are.

"So the thought leapt into my mind," Briscoe continued, "What happens if we use the same model that we are nationally recognized for, which is bringing federally qualified clinics into schools and community colleges? What hap-

pens if we did that at fire stations? What happens if we co-located a nurse practitioner from one of the community clinics with a paramedic and ran the public sector's response to the retail clinic?"

Briscoe came up with a proposal to pilot such a program at five fire stations over the next three years at a cost of \$2 million. He said some stations might need to be modified by additional construction, or by reclaiming unused or underused space. The estimated cost of construction or renovations is \$350,000 per site, which would be borne by the municipality in which the station is located. Staffing and operating costs would be about \$400,000 per site.

See CLINICS page 11

How is social media useful? How do I get started?



Learn more about **Facebook** and **Twitter** and how you can use social media effectively in your county! Contact Emily Landsman at elandsman@naco.org or Matthew Fellows at mfellows@naco.org.

Join the NACo Social Network ...

www.twitter.com/NACoTweets
www.facebook.com/NACoDC

National County Government Month Award deadline May 31

Did your county celebrate this year's National County Government Month theme, Serving Our Veterans, Armed Services and Their Families? Did your county make the extra effort to raise public awareness about the role and responsibilities of county government and the services and programs available during the month of April?

If so, be sure to apply by the May 31 deadline for the first-ever National County Government Month Award.

The purpose of the award program is to encourage counties to participate in NCGM and recognize those counties that sponsor outstanding programs to educate residents about county government during NCGM each April. (See the end of this article more information about the award).

This year's veterans theme has proven to be very popular and generated positive media coverage for counties across the country. Clips of local television coverage of various NCGM celebrations are posted in the NCGM playlist on the NACo Channel at: www.youtube.com/NACoVideo.

Since 1991, NACo has encouraged counties to actively promote county government services and programs during county government awareness campaigns. Here are some examples of how counties and state associations of counties celebrated NCGM this year:

The Wisconsin Counties Association highlighted the Honor Flight Network in the April edition of the association's Wisconsin Counties magazine. The national program flies World War II veterans to Washington, D.C. to



Photo courtesy of Manistee County, Mich.

Manistee County (Mich.) Board Chair Jim Krolczyk presents Lexie Ronning with a certificate for winning the county's essay contest – middle school category – during National County Government Month. Her essay best answered the question: "Why It's Important to Thank Our Veterans."

see the World War II Memorial. Wisconsin has five Honor Flight Network Hubs.

The Rapides Parish (La.) Police Jury passed a resolution supporting NCGM.

Lancaster County, S.C. sponsored an essay writing contest, "The Veteran in Your Life." The county's LearnTV cable program featured interviews with local officials discussing available benefits for veterans. The county council held a reception to honor county employees who are veterans.

Spink County, S.D. published a 20-page newspaper tabloid, Discover Spink County, which featured county departments describing the services provided and the county employees who deliver those services.

Peoria County, Ill. displayed photos of the community serving local veterans, armed forces and military families. They also held an information seminar discussing available benefits for veterans.

Trumbull County, Ohio passed a resolution in support of NCGM.

The Yuma County, Ariz. Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of NCGM. Supervisors committed to "Walk-a-Mile in their Boots" by visiting each of the local military bases and participated in some of the daily activities local service members endure.

For example, three of the elected officials gained valuable exposure to the Marine Corps way of life as they visited the air station and got a first-hand view of the Marine Corps' premiere aviation training base.

In Robeson County, N.C., elected officials visited several schools to discuss with students the role and responsibilities of county government.

Boone County, Mo. hosted a series of weekly brown-bag lunches for county employees and the public featuring speakers on this year's veteran's theme. The commissioners prepared breakfast for county employees each morning during the week of April 25.

Madison County, Ky., passed a resolution in support of NCGM.

Citizens in Hampton County, S.C. gathered at the Courthouse Square on April 20 to commemorate "Hampton County Government Day." Festivities began at the All Wars Memorial with a formal ceremony honoring Hampton County Veterans.

Douglas County, Neb. held a series of ceremonies honoring veterans throughout the month. County officials also collected personal care items to donate to local homeless shelters.

The Association of Indiana Counties is awarding \$100 cash prizes to a third grade student in

each of the association's six districts for NCGM essays honoring veterans.

Other examples of NCGM celebrations were previously reported in the March 28 and April 25 editions of *County News*.

NACo President Glen Whitley, who has made raising public awareness about counties a priority of his presidential term through his County Government Works initiative, said he is extremely pleased about the enthusiasm he has seen exhibited by member counties throughout NCGM in April.

"National County Government Month under the theme, Serving Our Veterans, Armed Services and Their Families, was a resounding success," Whitley said. "I am grateful to every county official and employee who devoted their time and expertise to interact with the communities they serve to raise awareness about county government services and programs."

Counties interested in applying of the award before the May 31 deadline should go to: www.naco.org/programs/countiesdo and click on the National County Government Month link. A team of public relations professionals from the National Association of County Information Officers (NACIO) – a NACo affiliate organization – will judge the applications. Judges will select one winner in each of three categories – rural, suburban and metropolitan counties.

Each winning county will be recognized during the NACo Annual Conference and win two, free registrations that could be used at any NACo conference. This prize is worth more than \$1,000.

Nothing counters the one-two punch in affected counties' costs

WITHHOLDING from page 1

of the five consecutive accounting years ending with the accounting year that ends with or within the second preceding calendar year when the exception is sought.

Second, the amounts subject to the three percent withholding include all payments made for property or services that are \$10,000 or more. This threshold applies on a payment-by-payment basis. As a result, withholding will be necessary in situations where a single payment is for multiple items or if the payment is to a single payee for multiple days of service. Generally, multiple payments by a government entity to a payee will not be aggregated in

applying the \$10,000 threshold. However, the final regulations adopt an anti-abuse rule intended to address situations where payments are intentionally divided into multiple payments in order to avoid the threshold.

The anti-abuse rule raised some concern given that it is highly subjective and could be burdensome for government entities to determine whether a payee intentionally manipulated the billing to avoid the threshold. The rule applies only if the government entity knew or should have known that the payment had been divided with the primary purpose of avoiding the threshold.

Payments made by credit card or other payment cards are cur-

rently not subject to the requirement since the IRS has yet to determine whether these should be subject to withholding.

Next, the final regulations exclude all grants from the withholding requirement even though the proposed regulations did not provide an explicit exception. The IRS determined that while many grant payments likely qualify for statutory exceptions provided in Section 3402(t), exempting all grant payments would alleviate the administrative difficulty and potential frustration to the intended use of grant proceeds that may arise. This exception, however, does not apply to the distribution of grant proceeds by a government entity.

And last, payments made under contracts existing on Dec. 31, 2012, that are not materially modified are exempt from the withholding requirements. For purposes of this rule, a mere contract renewal will generally not be deemed a material modification. Rather, the modification must materially affect either the payment terms of the contract or the services or property to be provided under the contract.

"Counties should keep in mind the big picture of the impact to comply with the mandate. There is no benefit or financial assistance received in withholding and remitting the 3 percent to the IRS. Thus, there is nothing to counter the one-two punch affected counties

take in the administrative costs incurred to comply and the likely increase in costs for goods and services passed on from the private sector," said Ed Rosado, NACo legislative affairs director.

(For more information on the new regulations, Mike Belarmino can be reached via email at mbelarmino@naco.org. Also, as NACo continues to fight for full repeal, it is asking its members for any data that can show the impact of the 3 percent mandate such as estimates for implementation costs or annual compliance costs. Information on the effort and resources necessary to track and ensure compliance from a staffing perspective would also be helpful. Please contact Belarmino at the email address above.)

County fire stations double as clinics for medically underserved

CLINICS from page 9

In addition to the county funding, other anticipated sources include federal reimbursements, grants and philanthropy, Briscoe said.

The health care portals would be located in the five zip codes where county data shows the highest rates of “avoidable” emergency room usage and “the most compromised access to primary care.” These are also communities that have high percentages of Medicare, Medicaid and indigent populations, he added. More than 200,000 of Alameda County’s almost 1.5 million residents cannot afford health coverage.

The “portals” would be entryways into the health care system that can address minor medical problems. Briscoe said 10 clinical problems, such as sinusitis and immunizations, account for more than 90 percent of visits to retail clinics, which many drug store chains now offer.

In addition to providing a limited array of on-site services, including follow-up from emergency room visits, the health portals will:

- respond to “sub-acute” 911 calls under the county’s new

Medical Priority Dispatch System (approx. 30,000 calls annually), which triages response to non-life-threatening calls

- provide discharge follow-up for residents in a defined area within 48 hours of discharge from emergency department care, and

- take direct referrals from the county’s 211 call center for medical advice or consultation.

Statewide, California ranks 51st in the nation in emergency room

wait times, according to Alameda County Fire Chief Sheldon Gilbert — ahead of Puerto Rico, but behind Washington, D.C. And Briscoe says the majority of those visits are for “chronic” conditions — related to things like diabetes and high blood pressure — not acute ones.

Gilbert said the clinics will be located only at the stations that can do so without compromising their normal operations.

“The individuals who need to be

available for emergency response will continue to be available, and they will come and go as needed, and the people assigned to the clinic will be committed to that clinic,” he said.

“It’s going to be compatible; it’s going to be coordinated, and it’s going to protect the operational readiness while at the same time expanding the use of that community facility.”

The city of Oakland, the county

seat, has its own fire department. But the county provides its paramedic services, said Bill Sugiyama, the city’s fire EMS division chief.

“EMS, right now, we have become the Band-Aid primary health care for those that don’t have access, for those that don’t have health care,” he said. “And this is one of the ways to go ahead to help to try to mitigate and handle that problem.”

The respect that those courthouse demonstrators showed for a passing fire crew outside a murder trial last year is part of a “sacred” trust that fire fighters and paramedics have earned — hard won and fiercely nurtured, Gilbert said.

“The fact that we can build upon that trust and meet that ever-growing health need in our community that ultimately impacts the quality of life and public safety of our community is absolutely consistent with our mission and something that we’re very excited to be able to do.”

(For more information, contact Alex Briscoe, director, Alameda County Health Care Services Agency: Alex.Briscoe@acgov.org, 510.618.3453

Inmates learn to battle blazes

INMATES from page 9

Randy Howard, current county board chairman, said he’s seen the inmates do a great job in the fire department.

“They’ve made it their fire department, and clearly have a personal stake in their performance,” he said. “They have more to lose than any other firefighter, and that has helped them focus and become extremely professional.”

One of the fire stations is located in the regional park maintenance

building, at the entrance to the county’s recreational fields. This gives first responders a crucial proximity that Taylor thinks will be an advantage in drawing events to the county.

Taylor said the county is waiting for an ISO reevaluation. The onsite review is finished, and she hopes it will be done by the end of June.

“Because of the economy it’s something governments with access to inmates with appropriate training should consider,” Taylor said. “In many places, the public is

accustomed to inmates in society, doing sidewalk maintenance and other government work. They are carefully monitored, highly trained and can greatly reduce costs.”

Williams is adamant about the department’s virtues, even if he admits he doesn’t have nationwide numbers to back them up.

“We have the lowest operating budget for a countywide fire department in the country,” he said. “If someone wants to challenge it, then they can try to prove it.”

Proposed Policy Resolutions Due June 15

NACo policy resolutions are due at NACo headquarters by C.O.B. Wednesday, June 15. They should be sent electronically to Aster Eshete, aesthete@naco.org.

For more information on correctly drafting a NACo policy proposal download the guidelines at

www.naco.org/legislation/Documents/NACoPolicyProcess.pdf.

Model Programs FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

El Paso County, Colo.

Program teaches teens self-sufficiency

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Some teenagers can barely cook spaghetti, so asking them to navigate the social services bureaucracy that looks as straightforward as that plate of pasta is a surefire way to frustration.

In an ideal world, a teen grows into the processes of being an adult, learning from his or her parents. Too often, though, a stable family dynamic is on the wish list above a car or iPhone.

El Paso County, Colo. has designed a self-sufficiency program to help shepherd troubled teens through the services the county offers, knowing quite well they might not have parental guidance to help them understand what is available or how to access it.

The program serves youths between ages 14–21 classified as low-income and usually referred after problems in school, with the law, or in trouble with drugs or alcohol.

Many of the participants the program has served since 2000 did not qualify for other education or advocacy efforts, thanks, in part, to income, family composition and other determining factors.

Coaches meet with teens once or

twice a month to lay out goals and strategies for achieving those goals.

“Anytime you work with teenagers, you have to start with a

relationship, so we get to know the youth in the program,” said Program Director Lee Hodge.

“All the assessments are more useful when

we know the youths well, and they can appreciate the efforts we make to know them.”

The staff holds seven voluntary skills workshops. They include: car purchases, food safety and cooking, accessing healthcare, preparing for job interviews, building support systems, exploring creative self-expression and learning what a job can do for an employee.

Hodge hopes to expand the program by partnering with businesses to offer short- and long-term internships that will give youths a leg up on their job searches.

“We want stability,” he said. “It doesn’t help us to find a job for them that doesn’t work out and they quit in a few weeks, so that internship could be part of their early-stage job search. At the same time, the workforce is getting older and more experienced for entry level jobs, so they need the advantage that this experience would give them.”

The program also includes an eight-week abstinence-based course on relationships, focused on reducing teen pregnancy. The course also touches on teaching the difference between personality styles and how to interact with others, identifying the difference between love and infatuation.

An apartment living workshop

teaches the basics in searching for an apartment: evaluating safety, managing leases and deposits, creating a budget, conducting basic repairs and finding roommates. The class involves a tour of several apartments.

Though the program focuses mainly on helping youths satisfy the pressing needs for survival, Hodge said they have responded well to instruction on long-term investments.

“They’re excited to know that with the right investment strategy, they could have \$1 million when they are 65,” he said. “We have encouraged them to put away \$25 or \$50 if they have a little extra each month.”

The overcoming obstacles workshop pits teens against the outdoors, where they camp for two days, build campfires, go on eight-mile hikes and cook their own meals.

In addition to all of these options, participants can also call on staff members to help them find jobs, apply for school or handle emotional stress.

“We measure our success by the number of youths who tell us they have learned from the program,” Hodge said. “Our attendance has steadily gone up to the point where we currently have 41 youths involved in the program.”

The program spent \$1,700 on capital and operating costs in 2009, paid for my Temporary Assistance to Needy Families funding, though individual youths’ TANF eligibility affects funding available. In addition to Hodge, the program has one full-time staff member and two part-time staffers, all of whom are funded by the county.

(Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights Achievement Award-winning programs. For more information on this and other NACo Achievement Award winners, visit NACo's Web site, www.naco.org ► Research & Publications ► Find Solutions.)



Photo Courtesy of El Paso County, Colo.

An El Paso County, Colo. Teen Self-Sufficiency Program participant learns to cook for herself during one of the program's workshops.

Events can also include employees' families

PALS from page 6

luncheon, at which the county announced its first employee of the year as part of the new initiative.

Rebecca Morrow, the county's safety officer, is one of the committee's leaders, along with John Hill, head of the county's Recreation, Parks and Arts department.

Committee members include department heads, a health department lab supervisor, a human resources technician, an animal control worker and two bus drivers. “We feel that regardless

of whether you are the county manager or the custodian, you are important to our team operation,” Morrow said.

Since the program began in 2010, the committee also organized an employee yard sale at a county park's parking lot, among other activities. Employees were charged \$10 to rent a space — the fees went back to the committee to help fund other programming — and employees kept the proceeds of their sales.

The committee also made \$300 on the employee luncheon — “a

pig pickin'-type barbecue” — by selling leftover barbecue, offsetting more than half the \$500 budgeted for the affair, Morrow said.

Events aren't just for employees; sometimes their families are included, as in the case of a Saturday Family Fun Day the committee organized for May 21.

In addition to social activities, there are the “real simple things,” according to York. The committee created a “good news” bulletin board outside the commissioners' chamber to showcase “any thank you notes or compliments on customer service that we might receive, or positive news coverage.” The committee also emails inspirational quotes and messages to employees weekly, which Morrow has been told are appreciated.

“The little things count some-

times,” she said. “Sometimes it's not the big raise, it's the pat on the back or ‘Good job!’”

York believes the program could easily be replicated elsewhere because it's essentially self-sustained by the money the committee raises, or donations from businesses it is able to obtain. “My advice to other places wanting to replicate is to get folks who stand out to you any way because they like their job,” she said.

To Jeffers, the commissioner, the approach employees have taken is right in line with the county's ethos. “Through planned activities and encouraging words, Person County has pulled together as any organization and family should, and in my opinion, we have adopted a motto I have always used: ‘We take care of our own.’”

Keep up with NACo online ...

www.naco.org



CORRECTION

In the May 9 puzzle “Counties with National League MLB Teams,” the Milwaukee Brewers of Milwaukee County, Wis. were omitted.

News From the Nation's Counties

►CALIFORNIA

• A California appeals court ruled that **SACRAMENTO COUNTY**'s pension system must hand over information about **who receives benefits and how much** they get. The ruling upheld a lower court decision in a lawsuit filed by *The Sacramento Bee*.

The *Bee* and the First Amendment Coalition sued the Sacramento County Employees Retirement System after a public records request for the information was denied. The newspaper said that without the details, it was nearly impossible to investigate possible pension abuses such as "spiking," where boosting compensation in a worker's last year on the job leads to higher benefits throughout their retirement.

• Perhaps **reducing truancy** can lead to a drop in crime. That hypothesis got some attention from **SOLANO COUNTY** law enforcement, education leaders and Superior Court justices. A

youth summit was called to foster collaboration between the law enforcement community, school districts, community members and related government agencies to find solutions to the challenge of reducing student absenteeism in order to reduce crime.

A new truancy court proposed at the summit will target the parents of truant children, possibly for the first time in the county.

School officials told *The Reporter* that once a student is labeled as chronic truant, law enforcement may contact the parent to attend a meeting of the Student Attendance Review Board, which often includes members of law enforcement as well as school officials. This acts as an intervention, where officials hope to find a way to support the family in getting their child to attend school regularly.

Teenage truants can be issued a citation to appear in juvenile court. Penalties for not adhering to the judge's order to attend school can

include a fine of \$100, community service and suspension of driving privileges.

►FLORIDA

• **CLAY COUNTY** commissioners have passed an ordinance **restricting alcohol sales hours** for large night clubs in hopes of eliminating or significantly reducing criminal and gang-related activity.

All businesses larger than 4,750 square feet near a local shopping mall must stop selling alcohol after 11 p.m. daily. County Attorney Mark Scruby told commissioners and *Clay Today* there is a "substantial investment of capital" in the area — including the Orange Park Mall — that is being threatened by "late-night disruptions" such as loud noise and a wide range of criminal activity.

Board chairman Travis Cummings said the Sheriff's Office has expended an "inordinate amount of resources" along the corridor during the past year, and that the county shouldn't have to continue spending "disproportionate" amounts of time and money in one area of the county.

Under the proposed ordinance, panhandlers and roadside vendors would be required to wear a reflective vest and carry photo identification. Anyone soliciting money for a charitable organization would be required to register with the state.

HILLSBOUROUGH COUNTY and St. Petersburg have enacted outright bans on roadside solicitation.

►KANSAS

The Kansas Legislature passed a law intended to **stop land grabs by cities**.

It requires cities seeking to annex more than 40 acres to put their request to landowners for a vote — assuming it's approved by the County Commission.

The bill, thought to be the biggest rewrite of state annexation laws since 1987, now goes to the governor for his signature.

The measure was portrayed as an effort to protect property owners who are unwillingly annexed into cities. It addresses longstanding complaints from rural residents, including some in southern **JOHNSON COUNTY**, who have vigorously fought city efforts to expand.

The bill didn't have much vocal opposition from cities, which settled for a compromise in lieu of a more restrictive annexation measure, the *Kansas City Star* reported.

• **Four MONTGOMERY COUNTY** Council members are asking law enforcement to ignore a **federal deportation program** that is expected to be forced on the county later this year.

A resolution being pushed by Councilwoman Nancy Navarro encourages county police to "continue its current policy" and not participate in the Secure Communities program, run by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

A Department of Homeland Security official told *The Washington Examiner* immigration officials will mandate that Montgomery County participate in the Secure Communities program, likely by September.

The program sends the fingerprints of all county inmates to the Department of Homeland Security, who use them to check the inmates' immigration status. Illegal immigrants identified through the program can be deported.

Montgomery County has resisted joining the program. Under current policy, the county provides information to ICE only about illegal immigrants who have been charged with violent crimes.

Arlington County, Va. in the D.C. Metropolitan area has also balked at participation in the Secure Communities program.

►MONTANA

A **PARK COUNTY** judge granted temporary restraining orders to halt state agencies from **allowing bison to roam** into parts of Montana from Yellowstone National Park.

The *Livingston Enterprise* reports District Judge Nels Swandal said that until further legal proceedings occur, government agencies are prohibited from implementing changes made this spring to a federal-state bison management agreement.

Those changes allowed bison to roam into parts of the Gardiner Basin where they previously had been prohibited because of worries over the animal disease brucellosis. Most of the animals have since gone back into the park or been captured to keep them out of the basin.

►NEW JERSEY

Families of **CAPE MAY COUNTY** jail inmates are getting ready for their close-ups, thanks to a new **Internet video visitation system**. Like Skype, it lets inmates virtually visit with family and loved ones anywhere in the world, *The Press of Atlantic City* reported.

Sheriff Gary Schaffer the system

Word Search

Counties with American League MLB Teams

A C E M X H Y F W N W J C H X R W W E M
K W S U A K G H E N N E P I N Y J L Y D
V P H Z U I L U W H L M W G O A U C H V
O K Z G I H X B O F Y N Y U R S S V V U
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|--|--|
| ALAMEDA
(Oakland Athletics – Calif.) | JACKSON
(Kansas City Royals – Mo.) |
| BRONX
(New York Yankees – N.Y.) | KING (Seattle Mariners – Wash.) |
| CUYAHOGA
(Cleveland Indians - Ohio) | LOS ANGELES
(Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim – Calif.) |
| DUPAGE
(Chicago White Sox – Ill.) | SUFFOLK
(Boston Red Sox – Mass.) |
| HENNEPIN
(Minnesota Twins – Minn.) | TARRANT
(Texas Rangers - Texas) |
| HILLSBOROUGH
(Tampa Bay Rays – Fla.) | WAYNE
(Detroit Tigers – Mich.) |

(*NOT INCLUDED: Baltimore, an independent city and Toronto, Ontario Canada.)
Source: MLB.com • Created by: Christopher Johnson

NACo on the Move

» In the News

Jacqueline Byers, director of research and outreach, was quoted in the article "Critics call for AZ sheriff to resign, be indicted" from the *Associated Press* May 11.

» NACo Staff

Bill Cramer, marketing director, recently spoke on "Communicating Policy and Industry News" as well as presented a "Facebook 101" session at the Center for Nonprofit Success' Social Media Summit at the American Society of Association Executives' Marketing, Membership and Communications Conference in Washington, D.C. May 10.



Bill Cramer

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson, editorial assistant.

The H.R. Doctor Is In

Whatever Happened to the Founding Fathers?

There is great and growing worry in our country about long-term financial security. This worry is reflected in many parts of the world as well as in my neighborhood and in my wallet. The concerns will be with us for a very long time and could be the harbinger of an unprecedented world-wide crisis.

The great threat to our economic stability and therefore our political and psychological stability does not lie in ugly crises like banking excesses or foreclosure epidemics. The serious problems we face stem from a growing inability to appreciate the power of compromise and be willing to engage in the kind of dialogue for democracy which was vital to the founding of the country in the first place.

Great economic instability shatters dreams and imprisons one

of America's greatest traditions — unbridled optimism about the future — behind walls of fear and depression. Economic uncertainty means that my future, including my retirement and health, are at great risk. It also means that steps I take to enhance the likelihood of a positive future for beautiful granddaughter Evie, such as investing in a Section 529 college fund, may not be productive a decade and a half from now when the need will be there. The worries of our children are also added to the already heavy backpacks of responsibilities and cares each of us carries around.

These are not simply the concerns that affect one individual HR Doctor. They affect the optimism and the ability to secure a positive future for all of the counties, cities, school districts and special districts

throughout America. After all, securing long term financing for capital improvements and repairs, properly funding pension commitments, avoiding tax increases, and doing the hundreds of other things which affect the public health, welfare and safety of all of us is also built upon a foundation of optimism.

These are the concerns of the world not just of the particular county in which I live. The economic "Tiger of Europe," Ireland, has now had its claws and fangs pulled out by this uncertainty. The same is true of other nations we consider friends and economic partners, such as Portugal and Greece.

A simple content analysis of media reports about civic unrest connected to efforts at financial

reform will bring up stories of picketing, strikes, rioting, and threats of more to come on every continent, except perhaps Antarctica. It is also possible to envision future picketers in heavy survival suits near the North and South Poles. In short, risks to economic stability in an era of instantaneous communications must not be ignored and cannot be allowed to swamp generations of economic and social progress.

Of the two major schools of thought about how to resolve the risks, the one getting the most attention currently features the forces demanding cutbacks in public programs, no new taxes, reducing taxes and no additional government involvement in our lives. The other traditional approach has been to increase spending in the hope that it will create a positive

feedback loop further increasing spending and productivity — even at the expense of greater long-term national debt.

This author feels that neither of these approaches alone will solve the problems we now face. They will not stand up against the power and capability of worldwide instant social media that can cause a generation-long ruling family to be thrown out of office. Despite the apparatus of power built up over 30 years, the former president of Egypt was "twittered" out of office. The same may well happen in Sudan, Bahrain, Syria and other places.

A major part of the debate over which course of action is best has targeted the world of defined benefits. This world is also known as the world of entitlements. Defined benefits have come to mean, amidst the shouting and political threats, guaranteed pensions for public employees, along with other benefits, such as a Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP), retiree health insurance guarantees, and commitments to annual cost of living increases hedging against the inflation monster.

It is true that these are benefit covenants derived from decades of collective bargaining or, ironically, often by state law or court decisions. However, it is also true that they are massively expensive and seriously underfunded by overly optimistic projections of investment returns and under-estimated cost and demographic projections.

Another major culprit has been the intense desire of elected officials, candidates for elective office, and others to pose in front of American flags while standing next to firefighters and police officers to whom they have just made promises of future love and affection.

The current mess extends far beyond public employees. We also live in a defined benefit world when it comes to health care benefits for almost all Americans over the age of 65 through Medicare and defined benefit pensions through Social Security. We also promise a degree of medical help for indigent people through Medicaid and through tax-supported public hospitals, clinics and reimbursement schemes for private providers. These also represent guarantees and entitlements, albeit to people who may be very poor, very ill, or

Warren County officers double up in cruisers

NEWS FROM *from page 13*

could generate thousands of dollars for the county each year. To use the service, families of inmates create accounts and pay the service provider, *iWebVisit.com*, \$10 for each 20-minute session. The county will receive 46 percent of the proceeds.

"I think it's good for families," Schaffer said. "The children aren't exposed to the hard realities of jail. Psychologically, I think that will be beneficial to the kids."

Previously, the jail limited visitors to two for each in-person visit. With online visitation, inmates can have up to three visits a day and speak with their entire families simultaneously.

►NEW MEXICO

TAOS COUNTY commissioners will **interview all finalists** for new hires in unclassified positions, such as department heads. Previous county personnel policy stated that candidates for unclassified positions "may" be interviewed by the County Board, *The Taos News* reported.

County Manager Jacob Caldwell, who has sole hiring authority over classified positions, advised his bosses against the change. "I don't think it's a role the county commissioners should take on," he said, adding that the county has always tried to hire "the best, most qualified, most suited-to-work-in-Taos-County individuals for each position."

But Commission Chairman Joe Mike Duran told his colleagues: "Commissioners, I don't know how you feel, but I feel it should be up to the commission to do hiring and firing."

►NEW YORK

• No reprieve for sitting **PUTNAM COUNTY** legislators, who recently **imposed term limits** and made them retroactive.

They voted to limit current, past and future county lawmakers to no more than four three-year terms, *lohud.com*, a Lower Hudson Valley news website reported. The measure will force some current members to step down at the end of their current terms.

Legislature Chairman Vincent Tamagna said, "There will be a rotation, and it will be a rotation of the best and the brightest of **PUTNAM COUNTY**."

Dan Birmingham, a legislator who opposed the measure, said the county already has term limits: "They're called elections."

• The **RENSSELAER COUNTY** Legislature has voted to ban protests within 750 feet of **military funerals** one hour before and after services, according to the *Times Union*.

"We believe our military families deserve the utmost respect and consideration," Legislator Thomas Walsh Sr. said. "This new law helps ensure protections in the sad event

that we have to lay one of our service people to rest."

In March, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that such demonstrations at funerals are protected under the First Amendment, but are subject to reasonable restrictions. At least 43 states have laws that allow a buffer zone of 100 feet or more around funeral sites.

• In a sign of the \$4-a-gallon gas times, **WARREN COUNTY** sheriff's patrol officers are **doubling up in cruisers** to scrimp on miles driven and conserve fuel. Sheriff Bud York said the doubling up is being done on some shifts at the discretion of patrol sergeants, according to *The Post-Star*.

County Supervisor Kevin Geraghty is also the county's budget officer. He said the big jump in fuel prices wasn't anticipated in the county's 2011 budget. "We're going to top what was budgeted, big-time," he said.

►PENNSYLVANIA

ALLEGHENY COUNTY is considering passing an **anti-fraud ordinance**, joining the ranks of places such as Miami-Dade County, Chicago and Philadelphia.

If approved, a county "false claim act" would protect whistleblowers and provide them financial incentives for reporting efforts to cheat taxpayers. County Councilman Ed Kress, who proposed the law, said it has drawn bipartisan

support from four of his colleagues, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported.

Pittsburgh lawyer Andrew Stone told council members the federal government and 26 states have had great success with "false claim act" laws. Kress said federal agencies have recovered \$28 billion over the past 20 years from businesses and individuals who overcharged the government.

►VIRGINIA

The Homeless Services Center in **LOUDOUN COUNTY** recently earned a Silver "**green**" **building certification** from the U.S. Green Building Council, a first for a government building in the county.

USGBC's LEED certification program, for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is an internationally recognized green building certification system.

The Loudoun building's green and energy-saving features include reducing water use through dual-flush toilets, low-flow urinals, shower heads and lavatories. Ninety percent of the project's building materials were obtained regionally.

Loudoun has 12 other projects registered with the USGBC for certification.

(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 e-mail ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.)

Financial Services News

New Public Finance Authority

A new NACo program provides a public benefit, contributes to social and economic growth, and improves the overall quality of life in communities throughout the country. The Public Finance Authority (PFA) is a unique governmental entity established under Wisconsin State Law in 2010 to issue tax-exempt, conduit bonds for public and private entities in all 50 states.

The PFA is jointly sponsored by NACo, the Wisconsin Counties Association, the National League of Cities and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

Conduit bonds are tax-exempt bonds issued by a government to make lower-cost financing available to a private entity for certain projects such as affordable housing, airport facilities, and not-for-profit hospitals and social service agencies. The federal tax law defines which projects are eligible. In conduit financings, the private borrower, not the government issuer, is responsible for payment of the debt.

PFA is an innovative solution to the financing problems that certain creditworthy borrowers face in

accessing the tax-exempt market, coupled with the technical and legal hurdles that confront some communities' ability to serve as a conduit issuer.

Many communities lack the staff resources or the expertise to issue conduit bonds so, by partnering with PFA, local governments get the technical assistance needed to bring bond deals to market. PFA works directly with cities and counties to accelerate economic development projects that individual communities deem to be in their best interest.

In addition to obtaining lower-cost financing, private borrowers can reduce issuance costs by working with PFA. Because PFA is authorized to issue bonds for projects in other states, a conduit borrower can obtain financing for projects in multiple states through the sale of just one bond issue. The PFA team works with borrowers, and their finance and legal advisors, to satisfy federal and state requirements. PFA staff also ensures compliance with post-issuance requirements, which relieves cities and counties of regulatory burdens.

PFA's practice of seeking local approval of projects ensures that the projects lacking local support do not go forward. PFA's enabling language explicitly states that the local government having jurisdiction over a project must first approve a financing before PFA will issue bonds, a practice that is far different than those approvals which sometimes take place in cities far away from the residents of a community where the project is located.

Similarly, in cases where a state volume cap allocation is required for a bond issuance, PFA seeks approval from the entity controlling the dispensation of the state allocation.

PFA was not created to supplant the work of existing state, local or regional issuing authorities. Its purpose is to supplement those efforts and to fill a need where state or local issuing authorities may not be able to serve eligible borrowers.

Since its formation, PFA has completed seven deals representing more than \$70 million in project financing. For example, these transactions assisted:

- electrical cooperatives in Wisconsin where the project crossed multiple political boundaries
- a private school in New York where no local issuer existed
- affordable housing projects in Florida where the project financings needed to close quickly, and
- charter schools in Colorado where the borrowers' construction timelines necessitated swift action.

PFA is governed by a seven-member board, which determines all PFA financing policies and procedures, and approves project financings. Each sponsor has a representative on the board and the sponsors' roles are to engage in marketing and awareness activities to governments and businesses throughout the country to create an opportunity for finance professionals to bring project financings to market. Shelby Scharbach, chief financial officer, Maricopa County, Ariz., is the NACo board representative.

All conduit bonds issued by PFA are considered debt obligations of the PFA. There is no liability attributed to a local government approving the issuance of a PFA financing. PFA uses no public subsidies or tax dollars for operations, and it contracts for certain services such as program management and legal counsel. The PFA operates solely on fees derived from each

project financing. Also, there is no membership requirement to use the PFA. Bonds issued by PFA are exempt from federal income taxation.

From an overall perspective, PFA brings experience to the issuance process with program management staff with more than 20 years of tax-exempt, private-activity and governmental finance experience. The structure of the PFA, local government oversight, the project evaluation process, and the TEFRA approval requirement promote accountability and transparency for each financing.

PFA provides communities with another solution that will help them grow and prosper. It is

modeled after the highly successful California Statewide Communities Development Authority (CSCDA), which was established in 1988 with the support of the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties. CSCDA has closed more than 1,300 transactions worth more than \$50 billion.

For more information, contact Steve Swendiman, (202.942.4282; sswendima@naco.org) or Lisa Cole, (202.942.4270; lcole@naco.org at NACo.

(Financial Services News was written by Lisa Cole, director, Financial Services Corp.)

Job Market & Classifieds

► COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – CAROLINE COUNTY, VA.

Salary: DOQ.

Caroline County, Va. (pop. 28,245) is seeking candidates for the position of County Administrator. The county, located along the I-95 corridor between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Va., occupies 549 square miles. Caroline received All-America City recognition from the National Civic League in 2009. The previous administrator departed in March for a similar position in another locality after eleven years of service. The County Administrator reports to a 5-member Board of Supervisors and is responsible for the overall administration of the county government, executing the policies of the Board and the day-to-day operations of local government. The county employs approximately 180 full-time employees with a budget of approximately \$158 million in FY11-12. Additional information about the county is available on the county website at www.visitcaroline.com.

The salary for the position is negotiable based on the candidate's qualifications and experience and is supplemented by a generous benefits package. Interested candidates should submit a current resume, completed county application, salary history and five (5) work related references to Chairman Floyd Thomas, Caroline County Board of Supervisors, c/o Alan Partin, Interim County Administrator, P.O. Box 447, Bowling Green, VA 22427 or email apartin@co.caroline.va.us or fax at 804.633.4970. Applications may be obtained online at www.visitcaroline.com or by contacting the County Ad-

ministrator's Office at 804.633.5380. The closing date for the positions is June 27. Caroline County is an Equal Opportunity Employer

► COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – CHARLTON COUNTY, GA.

Salary: \$50,000 annually; DOQ.

The Charlton County Board of Commissioners in Folkston, Ga. is seeking an energetic, motivated professional for the position of County Administrator.

The position is responsible for the administration of county government, including the direction and supervision of department heads, under the general supervision of the Board of Commissioners. This position directs and coordinates administration of county government in accordance with the policies formulated by the county commissioners and other elected officials.

Applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree preferred, in Public Administration or related field and at least five years experience as a county manager or city manager. Salary is negotiable with qualifications and experience.

Resumes should be mailed to: Charlton County Board of Commissioners, Chairman John F. Meyer, 68 Kingsland Drive, Suite B Folkston, GA 31537 or emailed to: johnmeyer@windstream.net. Note: Call 912.496.2549 to confirm receipt. A detailed job description or additional information will be made available upon request. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. Charlton County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Drug-Free Workplace.

What's in a Seal?

» Henrico County, Va. www.co.henrico.va.us



Henrico County began in 1611 with the founding of the "City of Henricus," the second English settlement in Virginia. The walled town was named for Prince Henry Frederick, oldest son of King James I.

In 1634 the English crown established Henrico as one of Virginia's eight original "shires." The county's first borders, stretching along the James River westward to the Blue Ridge Mountains, encompassed a vast territory from which 13 current localities have been carved.

The county seal displays a third key date: 1934, the year Henrico implemented the manager form of government.

Pocahontas, one of many prominent figures from Henrico history, is the heart of the county seal. The legendary rescuer of Capt. John Smith helped bridge the gap between Indian and English cultures. She is flanked by tobacco, Virginia's first cash crop, and by Indian corn, representing an important native gift to settlers and symbolizing the county's fertile soil.

The seal is incorporated in Henrico's 40th anniversary logo, which evokes the cable-stayed Varina-Enon Bridge. The county landmark connects Henrico's present with its past, lifting Interstate 295 across the James River near the site of the City of Henricus.

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

Hire Quality Staff

Get rate schedules for the Job Market/Classifieds both online and in print.

Visit www.naco.org ► Programs & Services ► Hire Quality Staff for more information, or contact Christopher Johnson at 202.942.4256 or cjohnson@naco.org.

Righteous stands threaten U.S. more than bin Laden

NEWS FROM *from page 14*

hoping to retire with some form of dignity, not to mention enough money to buy groceries.

Many of the pundits shouting out “solutions,” often do so while righteously claiming they have the sole solution to balancing the budget and reducing debt. That solution involves cutting entitlements while reducing taxes for those who may be the least likely to ever need entitlements due to substantial personal wealth.

It is these righteous stands on every issue which will be more of a danger to the U.S. than a dozen bin Ladens. This enemy to solution finding takes the form of self-inflicted wounds.

Turning around this situation requires restoring civil dialogue and restoring a vision of a positive future. Neither of the major camps alone—the “cut everything” camp or the “spend our way out” camp—offers the solution we need.

We are coming upon the greatest test our country will have faced since the Civil War. It is not a test of

technology or of military power. It is a moral test that countries around the world are also facing.

The test was best summarized by a wonderful quote from the late Hubert Humphrey. “... the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.” It’s not, however, the government which is being tested. It is our society and each one of us.

Will we pass the test? Yes, if we adopt the respect and appreciation of compromise for the greater good mentioned in this article. No, if we continue to wear blinders and pretend that only cutting or only spending coupled with confrontation will free us from our fears.



Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor • www.hrdr.net

Research News

Celebrating Older Americans Month

The month of May is Older Americans Month where communities across the country hold ceremonies and events to celebrate those Americans 65 years and older.

As of July 2009, the United States had 39.6 million citizens age 65 and older, 13 percent of the total population. This year’s theme is “Older Americans: Connecting the Community” to celebrate how older Americans pay a key role in strengthening local communities.

In Hillsborough County, Fla., the Department of Family and Aging is celebrating with a variety of events for older Americans including a volunteer recognition dinner for more than 600 seniors who volunteer for county agencies and local nonprofit organizations. The month’s events also include a Seniors’ Prom at a local recreation center.

This year’s Seniors’ Prom theme, A Night in Venice, will feature the jazz band from a local high school providing music throughout the day. The festivities also include dinner, dancing and games, and

culminate with the crowning of the prom king and queen.

Seniors have an opportunity to show off their talents at The Golden Follies Entertainment Show hosted by the Division of Senior Services in Gloucester County, N.J. Home to more than 46,300 residents aged 60 and above, the county seeks to engage and recognize these residents with entertainment provided by their peers. A buffet lunch is served for all attendees and participants followed by the performances.

Transylvania County, N.C., held a health fair and screening that doubled as a birthday celebration for some of its oldest residents. Representatives from local hospitals, home health care agencies and retirement homes were at the Health Fair, and residents stopped by a local community center for information and to celebrate three residents who turned 100 years old.

In addition to representatives from the offices of U.S. senators Kay Hagan and Richard Burr and U.S. Representative Heath Shuler, County Manager Artie Wilson hon-

ored these residents for their service to the community and for imparting their knowledge and wisdom on younger people in the community.

The County Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Health and Human Services Department in Gwinnett County, Ga., is featuring a Senior Art Showcase as part of the celebration for Older Americans Month. Throughout the month, exclusive works of art created by local senior artists will be showcased in the Gwinnett County Justice and Administration Center.

The exhibit includes a variety of artwork including paintings, photography, needlework, sewing and bead work. All the artwork was created by residents who participate in program at the local community centers. The public was also invited to meet some of the senior artists a presentation of by the Board of Commissioners celebrating Older Americans Month.

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



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