



2014-2015 Annual Report

Stronger Counties. Stronger America.



NACo Vision

Achieve healthy, vibrant and safe counties across America

Through NACo, county officials:

NACo Mission

The National Association of Counties unites America's 3,069 county governments.

Advocate with a collective voice on national policy

Exchange ideas and build new skills

Innovate transformational county solutions

Enhance the public's understanding of county government and...

Exercise exemplary leadership in public service



Table of Contents

2014-2015
NACo Annual Report

President's Message	2	Civic Engagement	29
Executive Director's Message.....	4	Public Stewardship.....	33
Presidential Initiative ...	7	Financial Stewardship..	35
Advocacy	10	The Future	36
Exchange Ideas	18	NACo Leadership.....	37
Innovation	21	Funding Partners.....	43

NACo is Helping Counties Deal with Critical Challenges



Dear Fellow County Official,

Aloha and Mahalo. Serving as President of NACo has been an amazing, exhilarating experience. I truly appreciate the opportunity that you have given me to lead you and officials from America's 3,069 counties.

My travels to state association conferences and other meetings around the country have allowed me to renew friendships and make new friends. Through those meetings, I have learned a great deal about the challenges facing coun-

ties and how you and other officials are responding to those challenges with innovation, creativity and, what counties are noted for, hard work.

But let me point out, you are not facing those challenges alone. I am proud to say that during this past year NACo helped counties with advocacy, resources, information and assistance on a number of key issues. My presidential initiative focused on transportation and infrastructure, key areas of concern for counties.

I know that county leaders make decisions every day about transportation, infrastructure, land use and economic development policies. The investments that counties make influence local and national economic opportunities, shape how communities grow and contribute to Americans' quality of life.

The goal of the initiative was to strengthen the capacity of county leaders to deliver critical services to our communities. We achieved success with this initiative through special meetings, conference workshops, new reports, case studies and podcasts. In addition, NACo shared a variety of new tools and resources to assist county leaders in making the important decisions we face each day.

The highlight of the initiative was a symposium on transportation and infrastructure in my home county, Maui County, Hawaii. Over three days, 100 county officials learned about innovative county-led transportation projects, trends in global freight movement, new vehicle technologies and creative financing strategies for infrastructure initiatives. Participants also learned about the many ways that Maui County is investing in new infrastructure technology and partnering with the private sector to grow tech-based businesses.

A second meeting in San Bernardino County, Calif. focused on an app-development exercise with Esri to address county infrastructure challenges. That group also toured the Port of Long Beach in Los Angeles County to understand the impact of one of the world's busiest ports.

The initiative was part of a very productive year moving legislation forward and fighting changes that would be detrimental to counties and their residents. Here are the priorities that we are continuing to focus on:

- ★ Fighting the repeal or scaling back of tax-exempt municipal

bonds, a vital finance tool that state and local governments have used for more than a century to build and maintain more than 75 percent of the nation's public infrastructure.

- ★ Reforming the proposed "Waters of the United States" rule. This rule would expand federal oversight over county-owned and maintained roadside ditches, flood control channels and stormwater systems. If it were to go into effect as proposed, it would cause delays and increased costs.
- ★ Securing passage of a long-term reauthorization of MAP-21 and fixing the Highway Trust Fund. We are working to ensure that future federal surface transportation bills provide more targeted and increased investments for county-owned infrastructure. We are also pushing for streamlined project delivery requirements and increased local control.
- ★ Pursuing adoption of the Market-place Fairness Act, which would allow state and local govern-

ments to enforce existing laws and stop the loss of billions of dollars in uncollected tax revenue on sales in e-commerce every year.

- ★ Seeking full funding for Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and addressing the long-term crisis surrounding forest counties through active forest management and funding the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program.

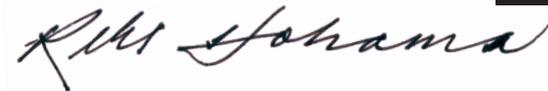
NACo research data and reports provided great support to our advocacy efforts on PILT, SRS, CDBG and the Endangered Species Act. In addition, the second year of the County Tracker, which gauges the progress of county economies, was released in January. The County Explorer, which provides a vast amount of county data through the NACo website, has updates with new information every month.

NACo has specific practice areas that cover issues that are responsibilities for counties, like health, justice and economic development. These, too, have been busy with fo-

rum, meetings, reports, case studies and information to help counties.

Because of the outstanding advocacy and research efforts and pursuit of specific issue areas, media coverage and social media activity has been on the increase during the past year. Media have covered our briefings, news conference and speakers and activities at our conferences.

It has been a great year, with many accomplishments. This Annual Report provides information on all of these programs in much more detail. Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your president. It has been an honor and a privilege. Aloha!!!



Riki Hokama
President
Council Member, Maui County,
Hawaii

“NACo shared a variety of new tools and resources to assist county leaders in making the important decisions we face each day.”

"Stronger Counties. Stronger America." Foundation of NACo's Vision and Mission



“We're focused on keeping America's communities healthy, safe and vibrant through county government leadership, investments and ingenuity.”

Dear NACo Member,

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it,” famously stated computer scientist Alan Kay.

This attitude is rooted in NACo's new blueprint, *Stronger Counties. Stronger America*. With the entrepreneurial spirit of a start-up entity, our 80-year-old association is entering a new phase of promise. We're focused on keeping America's communities healthy, safe and vibrant through county government leadership, investments and ingenuity.

As leadership icon Jim Collins explains, “Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns

out, is largely a matter of conscious choice.” NACo's board and management embrace this philosophy, as we're charting a fresh path to position our county governments for a brighter future. We're pursuing these advancements through our advocacy, leadership development, civic education and enterprise solutions.

We are proud to highlight the association's latest steps in pursuing this vision. As a collective team of members, staff and partners, we are pleased to pause and celebrate our accomplishments:

Advocacy as the bedrock of NACo. As the voice of county government at the national level, our core focus is to promote federal policies that advance the interests of county government. We fight unfunded and underfunded federal mandates as well as unnecessary regulations. We push for appropriate federal investments in county-mandated programs and services, and we work to strengthen the intergovernmental partnership of federal, state and local officials.

This year, we secured renewed funding for the Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) programs. We waged an aggressive campaign to reform the proposed “Waters of the United States” rule. We built new congressional momentum to restore previous funding cuts for local transportation infrastructure. We continue to protect tax-exempt municipal bonds while advancing a level playing field for Main Street and online businesses through the Marketplace Fairness Act.

In partnership with the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation, we launched a national campaign to address our nation's mental illness crisis in our local jails. Through the *Stepping Up* campaign, we are raising national awareness and providing new tools for county officials. Our goal is to make our local communities safer while also improving the living conditions and quality of life for those suffering from severe mental illness, often with co-occurring substance abuse issues.

Because of the nature of politics in Washington, new times require new approaches. This year we launched a new public relations campaign, *"Federal Policies Matter to County Government...County Government Matters to America."* This effort builds on our earlier Why Counties Matter theme, explaining that decisions made by the White House, Congress and federal courts have a major impact on our ability to lead our communities. The three-part series focused on our pressing policy priorities, with targeted pieces showcasing the county role in transportation and the impact of federal public lands policies and funding on county governments.

Exchange ideas and build new skills. American thinker William Edwards Deming said, "In God we trust; all others must bring data." Building on our long-standing policy and leadership development efforts, NACo is investing heavily in our policy and practice research and data.

Our goal is to put our federal policy positions into the context of county government roles and responsibilities. We're also expanding our practice research for core issues, such as

county administration, community and economic development, health and human services, justice and public safety, public lands management, and transportation and infrastructure. These new research tools complement our online data tools, *County Economic Tracker* and *County Explorer*.

In addition to our annual conference and legislative conference, we expanded our leadership development offerings. We produced more than 25 podcasts, hosted dozens of webinars and conducted targeted trainings on economic diversification, global trends in transportation and infrastructure, healthy counties, *continued on page 6*



**“The NACo
Deferred
Compensation
Program is
now celebrat-
ing 35 years of
helping more
than 1.5 mil-
lion county
employees
save for
retirement
through our
partnership
with
Nationwide
Retirement
Solutions.”**

continued from page 5
justice and public safety, and data-driven decision making.

Member Solutions for Cost Savings, Efficiency and Quality of Services.

Counties and other public partners saved at least \$150 million last year through the U.S. Communities cooperative purchasing alliance, a program sponsored by NACo’s Financial Services Center. Among the more than 35 pre-screened vendors, U.S. Communities recently launched new solutions for pharmaceutical and medical equipment supplies, cloud computing, transportation management and government security.

The NACo Deferred Compensation Program is now celebrating 35 years of helping more than 1.5 million county employees save for retirement through our partnership with Nationwide Retirement Solutions. This program is becoming increasingly important as county employees deal with new financial pressures.

The NACo prescription discount program now have 1,355 participating counties helping county residents save more than \$613 million

with an overall average savings rate of 26 percent. To enhance the program, we combined the NACo prescription and health discount programs with our dental program. The new program, *Live Healthy U.S. Counties*, maintains all of the great savings for residents while making it easier for counties to administer.

Public awareness and civic engagement.

At the foundation of our public awareness activities is National County Government Month. This year’s theme focused on transportation and infrastructure, easily one of the most popular topics with our members, the media and the public.

Overall, we generated more than 1,000 national, regional and local media stories this year. We kept more than 40,000 readers informed through *County News* on a biweekly basis. With America’s youth being the key to our future, we were also pleased that more than 216,000 students have learned about county government through Counties Work, an online game developed by NACo in partnership with iCivics.

With all of this activity, we needed to find a way to keep you and our

other members and partners better informed. Among our rebranding activities, we launched a new logo and slogan, redesigned the NACo website and intensified our digital presence. For example, the new NACo.org features a fresh, responsive design that provides customized access for all devices. The streamlined content has been reorganized with a powerful new search function designed to improve your user experience.

Collectively, we made a great deal of progress during the past 12 months. Most importantly, these gains represent only a small down payment on our achievements ahead. It is an honor and pleasure to serve you and all of America’s county officials. Thank you for all of your sacrifices and efforts to make America a better place to live, work and play.



Sincerely,
Matthew D. Chase
Executive Director

Presidential Initiative



Transportation and Infrastructure

Counties facilitate everything from Americans' daily commutes to shipping goods around the globe

Counties play an essential role in providing America's transportation and infrastructure networks. Investing over \$100 billion each year in roads, bridges, transit, water systems and other public facilities, counties facilitate everything from Americans' daily commutes to the shipping of goods

around the globe. Counties are responsible for building and maintaining 45 percent of public roads and nearly 40 percent of bridges, and are involved in the operations of a third of the nation's transit systems and airports that connect residents, communities and businesses. The

“The initiative strengthened the capacity of county leaders to deliver critical services.”

decisions that county leaders make every day about transportation, infrastructure, land use and economic development policies and investments influence local and national economic opportunities, shape how communities grow and change and contribute to Americans' quality of life.

Under the leadership of NACo President Riki Hokama, NACo's *2014-2015 Presidential Initiative on Transportation and Infrastructure* strengthened the capacity of county leaders to deliver these critical services to our communities. Through special meetings, conference workshops, new reports, case studies and podcasts, NACo shared a variety of new tools and resources to assist county leaders in making these important decisions.

Educational sessions provide valuable information

More than 100 county officials from across the country met in Maui County, Hawaii, in December 2014 for NACo's *Symposium on America's County Transportation & Infrastructure*. Over three days, county officials learned about innovative coun-

ty-led transportation projects, trends in global freight movement, new vehicle technologies and creative financing strategies for infrastructure initiatives. Participants also learned about the many ways that Maui County is investing in new infrastructure technology and partnering with the private sector to grow tech-based businesses. County leaders visited the Maui Research and Technology Center—the hub of Maui's growing scientific and technology industry; the Haleakalā Observatory—one of the most important space surveillance sites in the world; the Kaheawa Wind Farm and JUMPSmart Maui, a renewable energy demonstration project that seeks to improve Maui's Smart Grid and integrate electric vehicle technology into the community.

In March 2015, a small group of NACo members met in San Bernardino County, Calif. to participate in an app-development exercise to address county infrastructure challenges at Esri's headquarters. The group also toured the Port of Long Beach in Los Angeles County to learn about the operations of the one of the world's busiest ports, and how its complex supply chain dynamics affect counties nationwide.

Additionally, NACo hosted special panel discussions, educational sessions and mobile workshops on transportation and infrastructure topics at the Large Urban County Caucus 2014 Symposium, the 2015 Legislative Conference, the 2015 Western Interstate Region's Annual Conference, and the 2014 and 2015 Annual Conferences. Topics included how county transportation investments drive economic growth and how county officials can prepare to address connected and autonomous vehicle technology.

Special Reports: Transportation is critical to local economies

NACo released a number of studies describing the role of counties in building and maintaining world-class infrastructure systems. In 2014, NACo released a new report, *Capital Investments: Counties Drive Economic Growth with Transportation & Infrastructure*, describing how six counties are investing in transportation and infrastructure projects to drive economic growth. *The Road Ahead* examines the role of counties in road and bridge ownership, including challenges and solutions

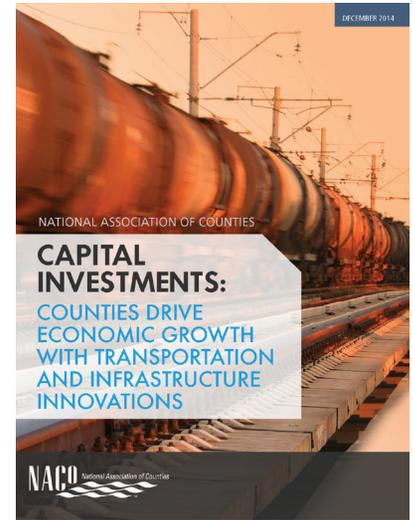
to transportation funding. In 2015, NACo also published a new issue brief highlighting how counties can leverage smart infrastructure technology to improve efficiency and save money in operating various infrastructure systems.

Additionally, in 2015, NACo released a web-based series highlighting how counties invest in airport infrastructure to grow local economies, available on NACo.org. Furthermore, NACo is currently developing a new guidebook to assist rural counties in developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, to be released in early 2016.

County infrastructure case studies feature in three larger special reports released in 2014— *Strong Economies, Resilient Counties; Cultivating a Competitive Advantage: How Rural Counties are Growing Economies with Local Assets and Regional Partners*; and *Partnering in Government Innovation: County Leadership in Action*. These highlight county-led examples in innovative transportation financing and project-delivery programs.

Podcasts focus on rural infrastructure and economic growth

NACo released two podcast episodes as part of the presidential initiative, one highlighting how rural counties are innovating development of broadband infrastructure, and another describing how county investments in transportation promote economic growth.



Advocacy

Speak with a Collective Voice on National Policy

NACo Leads the Charge for Transportation Reauthorization

With counties owning 45 percent of the nation's road miles and 40 percent of bridges, and playing a significant role in a third of transit systems, federal surface transportation policy and funding continue to be high on NACo's agenda. The current federal surface transportation law known as Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

has been temporarily extended while the Highway Trust Fund continues on a path toward insolvency.

Led by President Riki Hokama, and in collaboration with the Rural Action Caucus and the Large Urban County Caucus, NACo has been actively advocating that Congress fix the trust fund and pass a multi-year surface transportation reauthorization bill that provides long-term certainty and supports county priorities.

NACo Continues Campaign to Reform the "Waters of the U.S." Rule

In May, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jointly released a final rule that amends the definition of "Waters of the U.S." NACo is working to educate the agencies and members of Congress on potential impacts of the final rule on county-owned roadside, irrigation and drainage ditches, flood control channels and stormwater systems.

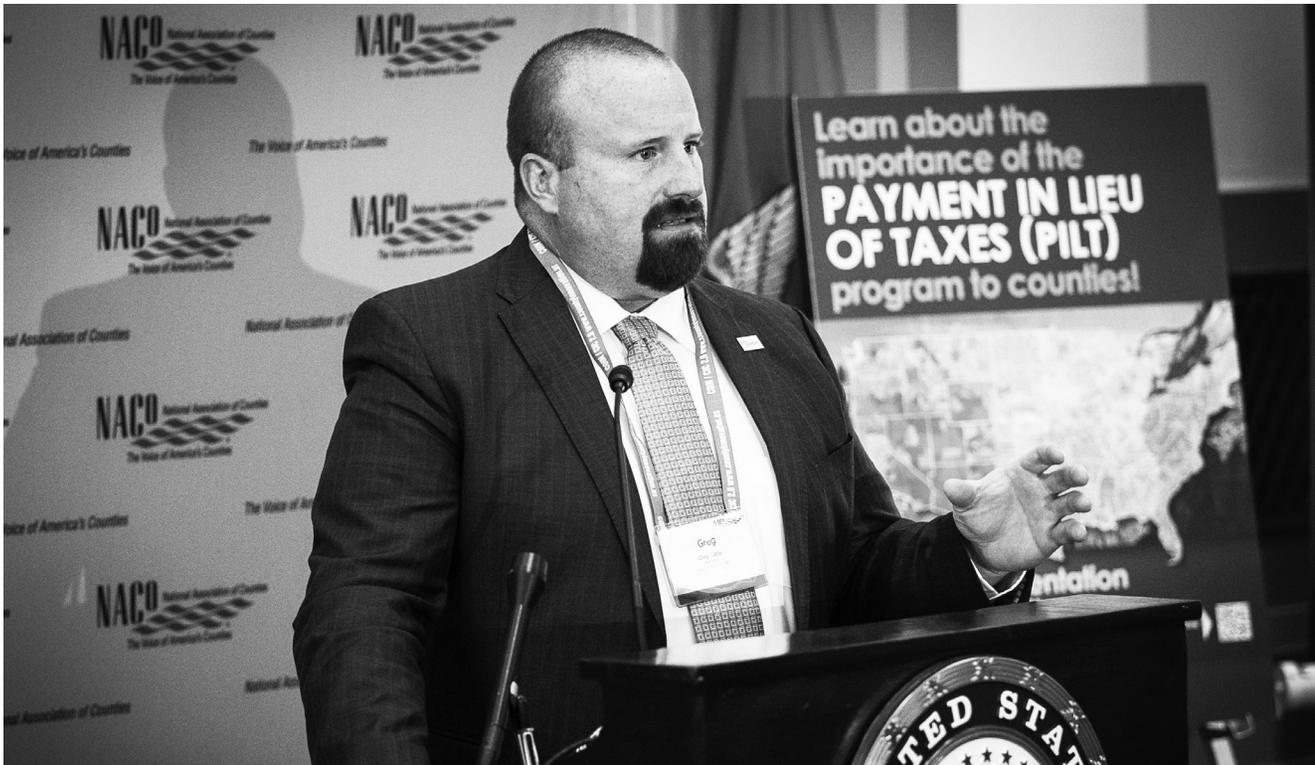
NACo has testified four times before Congress on the proposed rule, including a special bicameral joint hearing and both House and Senate agriculture committees on the county impacts on both rural and urban counties. At the same time, the U.S. House Appropriations Committees included language in a FY16 appropriations bills working their way through Congress that would block implementation of the rule. To help counties take action on the rule, NACo created an online information hub that contains comprehensive analysis, draft comments and social media content.





NACo testified four times before Congress on the "Waters of the U.S." rule including a special bicameral joint hearing





NACo Helps Win Two-Year Extension of Secure Rural Schools Program

Working closely with Congressional champions of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS), NACo helped secure a reauthorization of the program for FY14 and FY15 as part of H.R. 2, the so-called “Doc Fix” legislation, which was signed into law on April 16. SRS was enacted in 2000 to compensate for steep reductions

in revenues from timber harvests, which resulted from national policies that substantially diminished revenue-generating activities within federal forests.

Without SRS, forest counties nationwide face dramatic budgetary shortfalls. NACo is continuing to press Congress to renew its long-standing commitment to forest counties by increasing revenue sharing through active forest management while extending SRS as critical transitional funding.

NACo Secures 2015 PILT Funding for Public Lands Counties

With bipartisan support in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate, NACo succeeded in securing more than \$442 million in funds for the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program in FY15. PILT provides payments to over 1,800 counties in the 48 states in which the federal government owns certain types of land. The program compensates counties for lost property tax revenues.

In December of 2014, the House and Senate voted to include funding



for PILT in two pieces of legislation – the annual National Defense Authorization Act provided \$70 million, with the remaining \$372 million provided in the “Cromnibus” end of the year appropriations package. NACo continues to advocate for a long-term, mandatory funding authorization for the PILT program to provide assurance that the federal government will continue to uphold its commitments to counties.

NACo Keeps Pressure on Congress to Protect Municipal Bonds

NACo has been keeping the importance of municipal bonds before the White House and members of Congress. Working closely with two former county officials, Reps. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.) and Randy Hultgren (R-Ill.), NACo gathered more than 110 signatures from representatives on a letter to Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio) and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), urging support for municipal bonds and opposing proposals that would cap or eliminate the tax exemption for municipal bond interest. Although comprehensive tax

reform seems unlikely this year, an effort to find a path forward in both chambers of Congress continues.

Tax reform will be a multi-year process and NACo continues to engage Congress through efforts like the municipal bond “Dear Colleague” letter and congressional staff briefings to educate members on the importance of municipal bonds to counties and the nation’s public infrastructure.

NACo Protects Local Decision Making in Workforce Investment Act

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (PL 113-128) into law. WIOA updates the rules governing federal employment and training programs. NACo was successful in maintaining local governance authority in the law, while also adding needed flexibility to provide training for in-demand jobs to meet the needs of businesses and jobseekers.

Both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan and legislation. The previous workforce

legislation expired in 2003. With the WIOA legislation taking effect July 1, 2015, NACo is working with state and local intergovernmental partners and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on implementation, offering training for NACo members and submitting substantive comments on DOL’s proposed regulations to implement the new law.

“NACo continues to advocate for a long-term mandatory funding authorization for the PILT program.”



NACo Honors Former County Officials Serving in Congress

Eighty-five sitting U.S. Senators and Representatives have served in county government prior to their election to Congress. During this year's Legislative Conference, NACo members gathered together at a special event to honor these members and strengthen their ties

to counties. With help from county officials and state association staff, NACo presented members of Congress with the "2015 County Alumni Award" in recognition of their service and continued commitment to our nation's counties.

This event brought together members and officials from both sides of the aisle to honor common bonds and shared constituency. Honorary

Co-Hosts for the evening included: Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and Reps. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-N.M.) and David Joyce (R-Ohio).

Working to Address Burdensome Regulations

NACo is working with state and local government partners and the White House Office of Management and Budget as part of the administration's "retrospective regulatory review" to address regulations that are the most burdensome to state and local governments. Topics included Medicaid exclusion for pretrial inmates, environmental compliance, transportation and infrastructure project delivery, and other related issues. NACo's policy committees have compiled a working list of priority federal regulations for elimination, amendment or clarification.

“NACo presented members of Congress with the “2015 County Alumni Award” in recognition of their service and continued commitment to our nation’s counties.”



Why Federal Health Policies Matter to Counties

NACo Supports Legislation to Fund Health Programs Important to Counties

President Barack Obama signed H.R. 2, the "Medicare Access and Reauthorization Act" into law on April 16. NACo supported provisions in the so-called "Doc Fix" bill extending the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Community Health Centers, and other programs that counties use to maintain our health care systems.

H.R. 2 extends funding by two years for CHIP, Community Health Centers, National Health Service Corps, Teaching Health Centers, and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, each of which increases access to health care services for lower income and underserved populations.

It also permanently extends the Medicaid Qualifying Individuals and Transitional Medical Assistance programs benefitting low-income seniors and working families. Additionally, it delays scheduled reductions to Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments by one year, allowing the 960 county-supported hospitals that serve Medicaid beneficiaries to continue to stabilize local health care systems.



\$69.7 billion

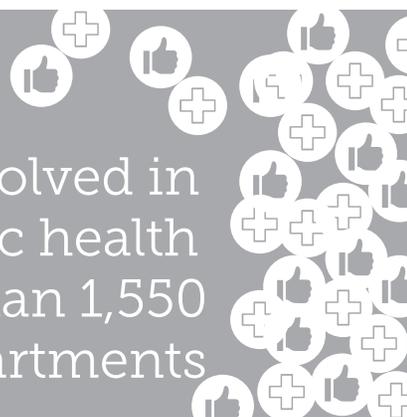
Amount that counties invest for community health and hospitals annually

976

COUNTIES SUPPORT 976 HOSPITALS WITH A TOTAL OF 100,378 BEDS THAT SERVE MORE THAN 15 MILLION PATIENT DAYS

1,550

Counties are involved in promoting public health through more than 1,550 local health departments



692

Counties own 692 nursing homes, which represent 75 percent of publicly owned nursing homes

“RAC members were invited to meet with representatives from the White House Domestic Policy Council.”

NACo Continues Efforts to Bolster Rural Exports

NACo continues to work with the White House Rural Council on the “Made in Rural America” export and investment initiative. Over the course of the past year, NACo members hosted three regional forums in coordination with the White House Rural Council to highlight rural exporting operations and showcase key local, state and federal resources. NACo’s participation with this initiative continued in 2015 as the White House Rural Council added programming and resources to help connect rural businesses with exporting opportunities.

Rural Action Caucus Collaborates With White House Rural Council

RAC members were invited to the White House to meet with representatives from the White House Domestic Policy Council to discuss a wide range of rural priorities and initiatives including the “Build America Initiative” and the Grow America Act, the President’s “America’s College Promise”, the 2015 White House Conference on Aging and the “Rural Impact Initiative.” Over the course

of the next year, RAC will be working with the White House Rural Council to address many of these initiatives.

County Officials Urge Export-Import Bank Reauthorization.

Six NACo members participated in the U.S. Export-Import Bank Fly-in on February 24-25, organized by the Exporters for Export-Import Coalition to urge Congress to pass a long-term reauthorization of the U.S. Export-Import Bank. To support the lobbying effort, NACo produced county profiles, which cover 2007-2014, showing how many businesses received export financing support from the Export-Import Bank, how many are small businesses, the value of the export financing support to them and the value of their exports.

NACo Releases New Tools to Support Advocacy Efforts

NACo released several new tools designed to support county officials in advocating for county legislative and regulatory priorities, including:

- ★ “Waters of the U.S.” analysis, action alert and online information hub

- ★ Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) action hub and county profiles to support full funding. The individualized county profiles show not only the PILT amount received by each county, but also the difference between the estimated county property tax generated per taxable acre and the PILT amount the county receives per federal acre
- ★ Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) county profiles showing county and state CDBG funding in 2015 and the change since 2010
- ★ Secure Rural Schools (SRS) county profiles produced to advocate for extending SRS
- ★ Marketplace Fairness Act – state profiles showing the estimated uncollected sales taxes on remote sales by state and local governments and the forgone revenue from internet access taxation
- ★ Endangered Species Act (ESA) county profiles showing the number of endangered and threatened species listings, new listings and de-listings over the last 10 years to foster and better understand the diversity of endangered and threatened species across counties, and
- ★ 2016 Presidential Elections: Counties Connect America toolkit created.

New Tools Support Advocacy



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

SUPPORTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

CDBG FUNDING, FY 2010: \$ 3.9 B
CDBG FUNDING, FY 2015: \$ 3.0 B
CDBG PERCENT CHANGE, FY 2010 - FY 2015: -24.0%

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM
 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program provides critical funding to counties to improve their local communities and serve their most vulnerable residents. Counties use the flexibility of CDBG to partner with the private and non-profit sectors to address economic development, infrastructure and human service needs, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses.

OUR ASK
 Counties urge Congress to provide \$3.5 billion for CDBG in FY 2016 to support local community and economic development, job creation and retention projects.

SUPPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

CDBG FUNDING DECREASED 24% NATIONALLY FROM FY 2010 - FY 2015

CDBG FUNDING IS CRITICAL FOR SERVICES INCLUDING:

- HOMEOWNERSHIP
- PUBLIC WORKS
- COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- SMALL BUSINESS
- HEALTH AND SENIOR CARE

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DELIVERING UNCOLLECTED REVENUE

SUPPORT THE MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS ACT

Congress should act now on this critical legislation for counties by combining the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA) and a temporary extension of the Internet Tax Freedom Act (ITFA) and passing the measure by the end of the year.

- MFA is not a new tax. It would allow state and local governments to collect existing sales and use taxes on remote sales.
- MFA would enable state and local governments to collect sales taxes that are already owed each year that could be dedicated to providing important local services such as infrastructure, public safety, education and economic development.
- The ITFA was originally intended to be a temporary measure to provide a boost to the then-flagging Internet. A temporary extension of the ITFA would preserve the intent of the original bill.

\$6.8 BILLION \$26.1 BILLION
 (1998-2010) (2010-2015)

MISSING REVENUE IS CRITICAL FOR SERVICES INCLUDING:

- ROAD AND BRIDGE MAINTENANCE
- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- PUBLIC HEALTH
- EDUCATION
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL
- ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

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2016 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

COUNTIES CONNECT AMERICA

OUR NATION'S 3,069 COUNTIES STAND READY TO WORK TOGETHER TO NOT ONLY ENSURE A ROBUST INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIP, BUT TO ALSO LEVERAGE OUR COLLECTIVE STRENGTHS TO HELP MEET THE CHALLENGES AHEAD.

2016. GET INVOLVED.

#countiesconnectUS

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES

COUNTIES ON FINAL WATERS RULE:

DEFINITIONS CREATE MORE UNCERTAINTY THAN CLARITY

After more than a year of voicing serious concerns and calling for clarity on the federal proposal to redefine "waters of the U.S.," the National Association of Counties (NACo) has expressed disappointment that counties went unheard in the final rule that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released on May 27.

Despite having provided detailed feedback and congressional testimony on multiple occasions on the potential impact of the proposed rule on counties, and despite repeated attempts to have a meaningful consultation process with the federal agencies, many issues remain unresolved.

NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase said, "Counties support clean water and work every day to protect water resources. Even non-federal waters are protected by state and local regulations — sometimes even more strictly than federal rules. This is why it is so disconcerting that the federal agencies paid little heed to vast amounts of expertise from state and local leaders on the ground.

"From day one, this has been an issue of practicality — not politics — for us. As co-regulators of Clean Water Act provisions, counties are not just another stakeholder in this discussion. We will continue to work with county experts — county engineers, public works directors, stormwater managers and county legal staff — to analyze the final rule and its potential impacts on counties. NACo will also work with the federal agencies and Congress to address outstanding questions."

After a preliminary review, there are several areas that are unclear and potentially problematic for counties.

[Click here to view the chart NACo created, outlining key components of the current rule compared with the proposed rule and the final rule.](#)

Definition of "Waters of the United States" Under the Clean Water Act
 Summary of Final Regulation Published by EPA and Corps

Regulation	Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Final Rule
1. Waters of the United States (WOTUS) include:	WOTUS include:	WOTUS include:	WOTUS include:
• All navigable waters;			
• Waters that flow into, from, or through navigable waters, including waters that connect to navigable waters, intermittent waters, and wetlands;	• Waters that flow into, from, or through navigable waters, including waters that connect to navigable waters, intermittent waters, and wetlands;	• Waters that flow into, from, or through navigable waters, including waters that connect to navigable waters, intermittent waters, and wetlands;	• Waters that flow into, from, or through navigable waters, including waters that connect to navigable waters, intermittent waters, and wetlands;
• Waters that are adjacent to navigable waters;	• Waters that are adjacent to navigable waters;	• Waters that are adjacent to navigable waters;	• Waters that are adjacent to navigable waters;
• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;
• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;	• Intermittent waters and wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waters and that have a significant nexus to navigable waters;

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NACo National Association of Counties

ENDANGERED SPECIES, MAY 2015

MAUI COUNTY, HI

ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES LISTINGS, MAY 2015	COUNTY	STATE	NATIONAL
1987-MAY 2015	153	423	1,560

1987-MAY 2015 LISTINGS (blue line) and DELISTINGS (red line) from 2004 to 2015.

COUNTY ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES LISTINGS, MAY 2015	COUNTY POPULATION, 2014	ENDANGERED SPECIES LISTINGS, 2015	THREATENED SPECIES LISTINGS, 2015	NEW LISTINGS OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES, 2004-2015	DELISTINGS OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES, 2004-2015
MAUI COUNTY, HI	163,019	148	5	26	0

99.4% OF COUNTIES HAVE AT LEAST ONE LISTED SPECIES WITHIN THEIR BOUNDARIES

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www.NACo.org/CountyExplorer #CountyExplorer

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

SUPPORTING CRITICAL SERVICES IN FOREST COUNTIES

U.S. COUNTIES AND SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS (SRS)

SRS PAYMENT TO COUNTIES, FY 2013 RECEIPTS YEAR:	25% FUND PAYMENT TO COUNTIES, FY 2014 RECEIPTS YEAR:	PAYMENT PERCENT CHANGE, FY 2013 - FY 2014 RECEIPTS YEAR:	NATIONAL PERCENTAGE OF FOREST SERVICE LAND:
\$276.1 M	\$54.3 M	-80.3%	26%

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination (SRS) Act was enacted in 2000 to compensate for steep reductions in revenues from timber harvests, which resulted from national policies that substantially diminished revenue-generating activities within federal forests. For FY 2013, the SRS program provided \$270 million for roads and schools and other critical services in 729 mostly rural counties, parishes and boroughs across the United States. Since that time, the authorization for SRS has expired.

OUR ASK

Without SRS, forest counties nationwide face dramatic budgetary shortfalls. Counties urge Congress to renew its long-standing commitment to forest counties by increasing revenue sharing through active forest management and extending SRS as critical transitional funding.

SRS PAYMENTS ARE CRITICAL FOR SERVICES INCLUDING:

- TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE
- SCHOOLS
- FOREST MAINTENANCE
- ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION
- PROTECTION FROM WILDFIRE
- SEARCH AND RESCUE
- EMERGENCY SERVICES

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Exchange Ideas

Build Leadership Skills and Networks

Forum Fosters Discussion on Health, Justice and Public Safety

NACo sponsored the *2015 Health, Justice & Public Safety Forum: Optimizing Health, Justice and Public Safety in Your County* that was held in Charleston County, S.C. in January to foster discussion among county officials interested in health, mental health and criminal justice. The forum was designed to lead members

of the NACo Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee and the Healthy Counties initiative toward a common mission on issues that both committees are addressing.

The forum brought together experts on racial and ethnic disparities in county health and justice systems, securing health insurance coverage for jail inmates and how behavioral health and justice can cooperate

to lower county costs and achieve better outcomes.

Community Dialogues Lead to Improving County Health

Community Dialogues to Improve County Health were held in three counties – Washington County, N.C.; Wayne County, N.C.; and Fulton County, Ga. – during the past year.



The community dialogues bring together county officials and local leaders for a day of brainstorming and strategizing on the challenges facing the local government in addressing community health. As a result of the dialogue, a strategic plan and action steps are developed that the county and community partners can use to improve the overall health of the county.

The community dialogues are a joint project of NACo, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

Coal Communities Innovation Challenge Helps Retool Economies

In partnership with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation, NACo launched the *Innovation Challenge for Coal-Reliant Communities* in 2015. This program provides resources and support to counties and regions in coal-reliant places that are seeking new ways to approach economic diversification, job creation and workforce training. The center-

piece of this program is a series of three training workshops designed to boost the innovative potential of counties and regions in retooling their economic strategies. Counties and regions were invited to form teams comprising multi-sector stakeholders to compete to win a spot to attend a workshop and access pre- and post-workshop support. NACo hosted the first workshop from April 22-24 in Pike County, Ky.; future workshops are planned for fall 2015. More information is available at naco.org/innovationchallenge.

County Prosperity Summits Help Build Economies

In 2014, NACo launched a competition for rural and mid-size counties to apply to host a County Prosperity Summit. Among many high-quality applicants, five counties were selected to host a summit in spring 2015. At these events, NACo worked with the host county to convene local leaders to identify ways to deepen and sustain county economic development activities. The five county summits took place in Titus County, Texas; Shasta County, Calif., Scott

County, Ky.; Cheatham County, Tenn.; and Cape May County, N.J. More information is available at naco.org/prosperity.

New Web Portal Fosters Economic Diversification

NACo unveiled a new web portal this year stocked with special reports, interactive tools, case studies and other resources designed to support places looking for assistance on retooling their economies. The Resources for Transitioning Economies website (found at [here](http://diversifye-</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=).' The 'FEATURED RESOURCES' section includes two items: 'Cultivating a Competitive Advantage: How Rural Counties are Growing Economies with Local Assets and Regional Partners' (under 'PUBLICATIONS') and 'Innovation and Opportunity: A Closer Look at the New CEDS Content Guidelines' (under 'TOOLS AND TRAINING'). On the right side, there are two subscription options: 'SUBSCRIBE VIA RSS' and 'SUBSCRIBE VIA EMAIL' with a 'Subscribe' button. Below that is a 'SEARCH BY TOPIC' section with a list of topics: Arts, Asset-Based Economic Development, Business Support, Defense, Entrepreneurship, Education, and Energy."/>

“NACo has continued using podcasts as a digital tool to reach members and the public with valuable information.”

conomies.org) is a free resource that any county can use to access information from a variety of sources, and it will continue to grow as new resources become available.

Initiative Helps Counties Grow and Prosper

The Resilient Counties initiative released several new issue briefs, highlighting how counties can recover energy from waste to save money and capitalize on renewable energy resources, and how counties can protect critical infrastructure systems to sustain safe communities. Additionally, Resilient Counties hosted workshops, webinars and podcasts sharing tools and resources counties can use to enhance county physical, fiscal and environmental sustainability. More information is available at naco.org/resilientcounties.

Key Community & Economic Resiliency Reports

- ★ Capital Investments: Counties Drive Economic Growth with Transportation & Infrastructure

- ★ Waste Energy Recovery: Renewable Energy from County Landfills
- ★ Improving Lifelines: Protecting Critical Infrastructure for Resilient Counties
- ★ Cultivating a Competitive Advantage: How Rural Counties are Growing Economies with Local Assets and Regional Partners
- ★ Partnering in Government Innovation: County Leadership in Action
- ★ Planning Resilient Water Systems: Coastal Resiliency County Case Studies
- ★ Severe Weather Adaptation: Coastal Resiliency County Case Studies

Podcasts Tout County Innovation

NACo has continued using podcasts as a communication tool to reach members and the public with valuable information. Since July 2014, NACo has produced 33 podcasts covering a variety of topics, including health coverage in jails, transportation and infrastructure, economic devel-

opment, indigent defense and early childhood development.

In the fall of 2014 NACo launched a new podcast site, www.nacopodcasts.org. This mobile-friendly site provides fast access to all NACo podcast episodes, as well as the ability to subscribe to the podcast feed and comment on each episode. Since its launch in October, the site has had over 4,600 sessions and more than 9,100 page views. You can find NACo's podcasts at nacopodcasts.org, on iTunes, and through RSS feeds.



Innovation

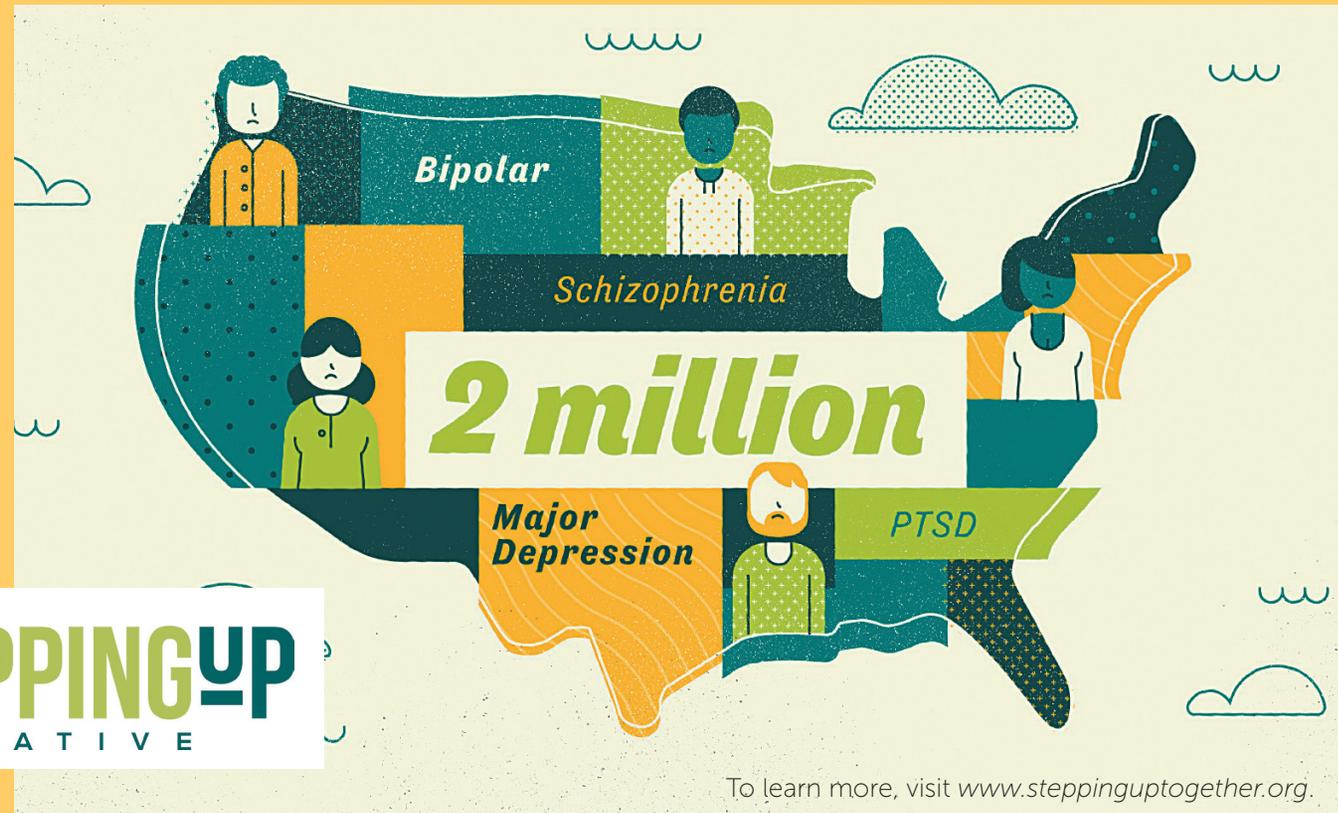
Pursue New Ideas and Solutions

Initiative Seeks to Reduce the Number of Mentally Ill in Jail

NACo partnered with the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation (APF) to launch Stepping Up: A National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails, an unprecedented national collaboration designed to generate community action.

The number of people with mental illnesses in U.S. jails has reached a crisis point: 2 million adults with serious mental illnesses—such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression—are admitted to jails each year, many of whom also have drug and alcohol use problems. Allowing them to continually cycle through jails does little to improve public safety, stresses strained budgets and hurts people with mental illnesses and their loved ones.

Stepping Up provides counties with a clear direction for developing an action plan that makes effective use of budgets to facilitate access to



To learn more, visit www.stepsuptogether.org.

treatment and promote appropriate alternatives to jail. The initiative was launched in May at news conferences in Washington, D.C.; Johnson County, Kan.; Miami-Dade County, Fla.; and Sacramento County, Calif.

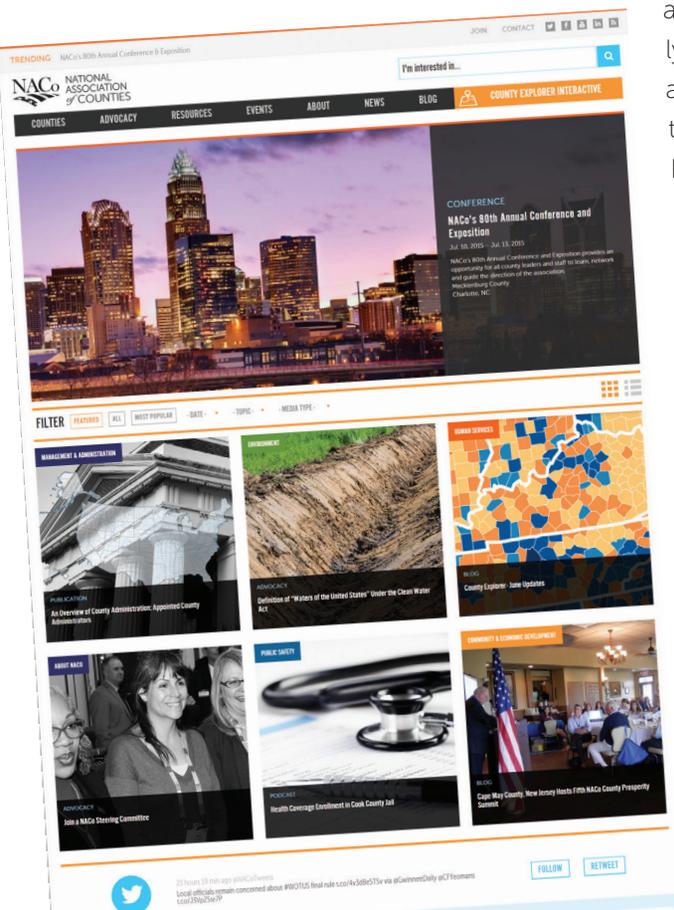
The launch of the Stepping Up campaign generated significant media coverage nationally and in local media markets where launch events took place. Print, online

and broadcast stories appeared in outlets including *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Kansas City Star*, *Atlantic Media's Route Fifty*, *The Crime Report* blog, *Daily Business Review*, WFOR (CBS-Miami) News at 6, KCUR-FM (Kansas City) and KCTV (CBS-Kansas City) News at 5.

Redesigned NACo Website Offers Fresh, Updated Look

NACo launched a redesign of our website at the 2015 Annual Conference in July that provides a robust new tool for members and other audiences. The new website features a fresh, updated and responsive design suitable for all devices, a streamlined reconsolidation and reorganization of content based on topic, a morphing

search feature that allows users a highly engaging way to access content across the site, and a much higher integration and contextualization of site resources.



**NACo.org
continued
growth and
engagement**

941,000

9 percent
more visits
than 2014

**1.6 million
PAGE
VIEWS**

390,000

Unique visitors
13% more than 2014

16,000

Users reached
on Facebook,
18% more
than 2014



290,000

Impressions
on Twitter,
76 percent
more than
2014



13,706

Minutes of
video watched
on NACo
YouTube
65 percent
more than 2014



**NACo Social
Channel
Activity
Increase**

Media Coverage of County Economic Tracker Release

County Economic Tracker 2014 Shows Recovery Sluggish from Recession

In January, NACo issued the second study in a series of annual reports helping counties identify where our economies are on the recovery trajectory. The study showed that 2014 was a year of growth, but recovery from the recession remains sluggish in certain aspects. By 2014, the economic output (GDP) in 55 percent of all county economies recovered or did not decline as measured over the last decade. Home prices were in a similar situation.

Job growth accelerated with 63 percent of county economies witnessing faster job gains than in 2013. This job growth helped unemployment decline in almost all county economies during the past year, but it was not sufficient to bring most county economies to levels seen before the recession. Nearly three-quarters of county economies were still below their pre-recession employment levels and unemployment was not back to pre-recession rates in 95 percent of county economies last year.

Job growth accelerated with 63 percent of county economies witnessing faster job gains than in 2013. This job growth helped unemployment decline in almost all county economies during the past year, but it was not sufficient to bring most county economies to levels seen before the recession. Nearly three-quarters of county economies were still below their pre-recession employment levels and unemployment was not back to pre-recession rates in 95 percent of county economies last year.

(the "long-term" trend) for all the 3,069 county economies. The report has a companion web interactive that provides economic data and individual profiles for each of the 3,069 county economies, allowing counties to explore the dynamics within their economy. U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) prominently featured the findings during a Senate Finance Committee hearing in January.

Study Shows the Essential Role Counties Play in Economic Development

To support a healthy economic base, good-paying jobs for residents and maintain our capacity to provide services, counties invest more than \$25 billion annually in economic development activities. In summer 2014, NACo released an in-depth study on the role of counties in economic development. *Strong Economies, Resilient Counties* features a national analysis, 35 case studies and a web-based interactive map of the case studies.

This unique research has helped raise awareness within the White House, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Economic Development Administration about

65

More than 65 major national and regional newspapers (including *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal* and *U.S. News and World Report*) covered the release

35

Radio spots profiled the report and talked about county economic challenges and successes

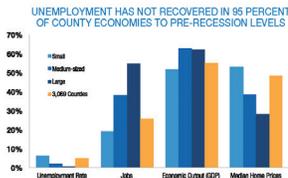


KEY FINDINGS

County economic trends are an essential measure of the well-being of county residents. The conditions of a county economy constrain and challenge county governments, residents and businesses, while also providing opportunities. This analysis of county economic conditions identifies patterns of growth and recovery in 2014 across the 3,069 county economies by listing annual changes in jobs, unemployment rates, economic output (GDP) and median home prices. In addition, it shows 2013 wage dynamics, by adjusting average annual wage in county economies for the local cost-of-living and inflation. The overall analysis reveals that:

95% HAVE NOT RECOVERED ON UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY 2014

1 2014 was a year of recovery, but unemployment has yet to return to pre-recession lows in most county economies. Economic output (GDP) surpassed the peak recorded before the latest downturn in an additional 95 county economies relative to 2013. Housing prices recovered in just under half of county economies. Employment levels recovered in an additional 130 county economies in 2014. At the same time, nearly three quarters of county economies are still below their pre-recession employment



Notes: This report examines only the economies of counties with county governments. Large

22

TV news spots featured the release

18,000

Viewers visited the County Economic Tracker tool on the NACo website, double the number in 2013

the essential role counties play in economic development. In addition, NACo members and staff have used the key findings in media interviews and presentations before Congress, think tanks and coalition partners.

Research Project Examines County Pretrial Practices

In 2015, NACo launched a three-part national research project on county pretrial practices. The first study, published in June 2015, examines pretrial release options for county jails. This research is the first of its kind in terms of the type of release practices analyzed and the extent of geographical coverage.

The research provides evidence on the size of the pretrial population in county jails and their risk level, challenges that county jails face and pretrial release mechanisms they employ. By examining the pretrial population and release practices in county jails, this project provides vital context on the importance of pretrial to counties.

Key Statistics from *Strong Economies, Resilient Counties* Project



“Our residents can now save on all health services through one program.”

Live Healthy Program Offers Prescription, Health & Dental Discounts

NACo announced in March a new, unified health discount solution for counties and our residents by adding the dental program to the NACo Prescription & Health Discount Program. The new program, Live Healthy – U.S. Counties, offers residents discounts on prescriptions, dental treatments and health costs – including vision, hearing aids, lab work, diabetes supplies and much more. The savings range from 20 to 75 percent depending on the program.



\$613 MILLION

SAVINGS TO COUNTY RESIDENTS THROUGH PRESCRIPTION DISCOUNT PROGRAM

47 MILLION

NUMBER OF PRESCRIPTIONS FILLED

26%

OVERALL AVERAGE SAVINGS RATE

NUMBER OF COUNTIES PARTICIPATING IN PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM

1,355

45%

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTIES PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAM

54 NUMBER OF COUNTIES SIGNED UP FOR DENTAL AND HEALTH PROGRAMS WITH MORE BEING ADDED EACH WEEK

34 NUMBER OF STATE ASSOCIATIONS ENDORSING THE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM; **16** STATE ASSOCIATIONS ENDORSE THE HEALTH PROGRAM AND **13** ENDORSE THE DENTAL PROGRAM.

U.S. Communities Provides Savings of \$150 Million

Counties and other local governments saved more than \$150 million through the U.S. Communities cooperative purchasing program in 2014. U.S. Communities, created by NACo in 1996, is the leading national government purchasing cooperative that reduces the cost of goods and services by aggregating the purchasing power of public agencies nationwide.

U.S. Communities provides participants with access to a broad line of competitively solicited contracts, including facility, office and school, technology, and specialty solutions with national suppliers that have committed to providing their lowest overall pricing. With 8,000 new registrants last year, U.S. Communities now includes more than 70,000 public and nonprofit entities.



U.S. COMMUNITIES[™]
GOVERNMENT PURCHASING ALLIANCE



New contracts through the program offer savings on utility, transportation and golf vehicles; Oracle products; pharmaceutical and medical solutions; offender monitoring products; traffic and parking control products; and workforce management solutions. For more information, check the program's website, www.uscommunities.org.

Helping 1.5 Million County Employees Save for Retirement

NACo is celebrating 35 years of helping county employees save for retirement. Partnering with Nationwide Retirement Solutions, the NACo Deferred Compensation Program offers county employees a voluntary, tax-deferred savings opportunity that supplements employer-sponsored retirement plans.

The program has helped more than 1.5 million county employees in more than 3,000 local governments save for the future. NACo also partners with Nationwide to offer 401(a) match and stand alone defined contribution programs and a post-employment health program.



Together, NACo and Nationwide also sponsor four scholarships for graduating high school seniors whose parent is a participant in the NACo Program. In 2015, NACo and Nationwide launched the "Aspire Award: Honoring Innovative Leadership in Promoting County Employee Retirement Savings" to recognize the efforts of county plan sponsors to promote retirement readiness among employees.

New Partnership Helps Counties Manage Investments

NACo has partnered with Multi-Bank Securities, Inc. (MBS), endorsing eConnectDirect® as an essential tool for members to manage their fixed-income investment needs. This proprietary tool gives county treasurers visibility to thousands of fixed-income offerings in a market with little transparency. It arms investors with the necessary tools and confidence to select and transact within the

“eConnect Direct allows customers to be self-sufficient, while being able to work with licensed account executives in a dynamic way...”

fixed-income marketplace. There are 63 counties and six state associations using eConnectDirect®.

While eConnectDirect® allows customers to be self-sufficient, the service also allows them to work with licensed MBS account executives in a dynamic way—working side-by-side with clients on fixed-income investment decisions they wish to make or to answer any questions clients have.

Bond Financing Alternative – An Aid to Economic Development

In the first quarter of 2015, the Public Financing Authority announced that it had closed more than 100 transactions representing \$2.65 billion in financings in 36 states since it was created in 2010. The PFA, of which NACo is one of the sponsors, was created to provide a financing method that complements traditional municipal bonds.

A national conduit issuer of taxable and tax-exempt bonds, PFA partners with local governments to assist in the financing of public projects that create temporary and permanent

jobs, build affordable housing, construct community infrastructure and improve the overall quality of life in communities. Learn more at www.pfauthority.org.

Publications, reports provide solutions

NACo produced a number of publications in the past 12 months that offer valuable information on key county issues. These include:

- ★ County Leadership in Juvenile Justice Reform: Highlights and Examples from Jurisdictions Guiding Innovation
- ★ Health Coverage and County Jails: Inpatient Exception
- ★ Health Coverage and County Jails: Suspension vs. Termination
- ★ Excise Tax on High - Cost Employer – Sponsored Health Coverage: What Counties Need to Know
- ★ Examining the Health Insurance Marketplace, Small Business Health Insurance Options Program and Private Exchanges

- ★ NACo Community Dialogues to Improve County Health Final Report
- ★ Social Determinants of Health



Civic Engagement

Enrich the Public's Understanding of County Government

County Explorer Provides a Wealth of Data

In July 2014, NACo launched County Explorer, a unique tool dedicated to county data and information. This tool helps NACo members and the public with benchmarking, advocacy and communications. It allows NACo to employ evidence-based advocacy and to become the top source of county data in the country.

Built by NACo staff, the County Explorer map interactive and extraction tool is a one-stop-shop for more than 90 datasets, 700 indicators and 11 sets of individualized county profiles, ranging from PILT and CDBG payments to county health departments to the number of roads and bridges in each county. This data tool is updated monthly and since inception it has had more than 95,000 visitors.

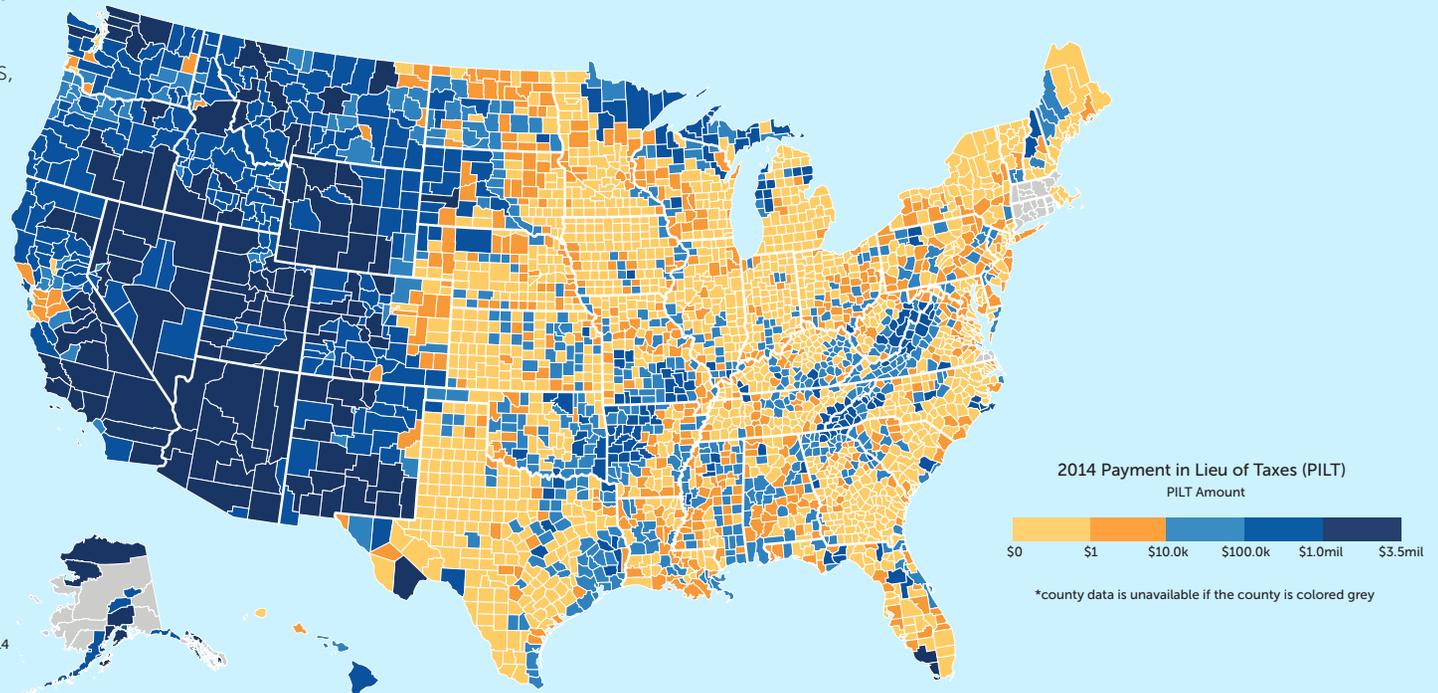
What the County Explorer Offers

96 Datasets

764 Indicators

11 County profiles

95,151 Visitors to the site





Study Examines Appointed County Administrators

Counties are responsible for providing human services, criminal justice, public welfare, infrastructure and other basic services to communities of all sizes across America. To ensure the efficient and cost-effective delivery of these essential services, an increasing number of county boards around the country appoint county administrators or managers.

In June 2015, NACo released an analysis of county administrators and managers in county governments. This report examines the extent to which counties have a county administrator/manager function determined by state law and the variation in responsibilities of these positions. This report educates the public through state level profiles, national analysis and easy-to-use interactive maps.

County Health Benefits 2014 Looks at Counties as Employers

County governments not only provide vital health services to residents but also serve as major public employers, offering health benefits to our employees, dependents and retirees. NACo produced an anal-

ysis of 2009-2014 data on county employee health benefits coverage, changes and current challenges. This study provides a trend analysis of the health care market in county governments and explores an important aspect of county government as a major employer in the country.

Key Statistics from the County Health Benefits 2014

43%
OF COUNTIES
1,322 HAVE AN
APPOINTED
ADMINISTRATOR

2.5 million
County employees
with county health
benefits

68%
Of counties offer
health benefits
to retirees

**\$20 billion to
\$24 billion**
Annual county
investment in health
insurance premiums

2.4 million
Dependents of county
employees with
county health benefits

93%
Of counties offer
health benefits
to employees at
retirement

Media Effort Generates 1,000 Hits

NACo officers, committee leaders and staff generated more than 1,000 media hits on a wide range of legislative, policy and programmatic topics.

- ★ NACo was cited, quoted or featured in national print, digital and broadcast media outlets including *PBS NewsHour*, *CNBC's Squawk Box*, *MarketPlace* from American Public Media, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *CQ Roll Call*, *The Hill*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Politico*, *Governing*, *US News & World Report*, *Bond Buyer*, *Bloomberg* and *The Los Angeles Times*.
- ★ NACo also appeared in many local and statewide publications including *Alaska Public Radio*, *The Arizona Republic*, *The Colorado Springs Gazette*, *Dallas Morning News*, *The Denver Post*, *The Kansas City Star*, *The Maui News*, *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *The New Jersey Star Ledger*, *The Reading Eagle*, *The Salt Lake Tribune*, *The*

Tallahassee Democrat, *The Times-Picayune*, *The Toledo Blade*, *The St. Paul Pioneer Press* and many others.

Students Learn About Counties through Online Game

Counties Work, the online game that NACo developed in partnership with iCivics, enables students to learn about county government by running their own county. Students are taking advantage of the opportunity, with more than 216,000 game plays during the past year.

Since the game was first launched in September 2011, there have been 773,878 game plays.

Teachers are also using County Solutions, the curriculum developed with iCivics. In the past year, there have been 998 downloads of the curriculum. Since County Solutions was introduced in November 2012, there have been 2,476 downloads by teachers.

Since the Counties Work game was first launched in September 2011, there have been 773,878 game plays.



County News continues to provide enterprise coverage of county issues, programs

County News continued its commitment to spotlight the county role in national stories, reporting on trends that could impact county government and analyzing federal legislation. Examples include a story on the efforts by Dallas County, Texas, to secure the public's health and security as Ebola panic spread

in county and a feature about how counties are beginning to encourage the use of crowdfunding in economic development. The immigration debate, "Waters of the U.S." and crude oil train derailments also received expanded attention over the past year.

County News published two popular special Hot Topics reports. A July 2014 Hot Topics, *The Road Ahead for Counties*, took an in-depth look at the transportation challenges and opportunities counties face in a cli-

mate of scant funding and increased demand; and in February 2015, a second Hot Topics on *Public Lands* explored the critical role federal payments play in the services provided by county governments in public lands-rich jurisdictions.

The print version of *County News* is mailed directly to an average 33,000 elected and appointed county officials across the country. *The County News Alert*, the emailed version of *County News*, is distributed to an additional 39,000 addresses.

NACo National Association of Counties
County News
 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES • WASHINGTON, D.C. VOL. 46, NO. 10 • OCTOBER 8, 2014

Dallas County takes on Ebola
 Younger Langenhahn lengthens his line's legislative legacy

Grants target domestic-violence homicides in three counties

Redistricted "County Explorer" maps even more county data

NACo National Association of Counties
County News
 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES • WASHINGTON, D.C. VOL. 46, NO. 11 • DECEMBER 1, 2014

Immigration battle looms over executive action
 19-page letter details NACo's "Waters of the U.S." concerns

House bill to restart "waters of the U.S."

Stepping Up initiative kicks off around the country

NACo National Association of Counties • WASHINGTON, D.C. VOL. 46, NO. 12 • MARCH 16, 2015

Regulating the rails
 DOT releases rule on state and ethanol fuels

House bill to restart "waters of the U.S."

Stepping Up initiative kicks off around the country

County News SPECIAL EDITION
 JULY 4, 2014

Hot Topics

Transportation Challenges and Opportunities
 THE ROAD AHEAD FOR COUNTIES: Transportation Challenges and Opportunities

House bill to restart "waters of the U.S."

Stepping Up initiative kicks off around the country

Public Stewardship

Exercise Exemplary Leadership in Public Service

**Engage
Membership,
Partners,
Affiliates
and State
Associations**

**MEMBERSHIP
NUMBERS**

**2,281
MEMBERS**

**75%
PERCENTAGE OF
AMERICA'S COUNTIES
THAT ARE MEMBERS**

**98%
MEMBERSHIP
RETENTION RATE**

**10
NUMBER OF YEARS
RETENTION RATE
HAS BEEN ABOVE
97 PERCENT**

**\$323,000
AMOUNT THAT
MEMBERSHIP REVENUE
IS ABOVE REVENUE
BUDGET OF
\$4.14 MILLION**

**1,342
NUMBER OF COUNTY
OFFICIALS AND STAFF
SERVING ON NACO
COMMITTEES**

**26%
PERCENTAGE OF
COUNTIES REPRESENTED
ON NACO COMMITTEES**

**20%
PERCENTAGE OF
COUNTIES THAT
ATTENDED A NACO
CONFERENCE IN PAST
12 MONTHS**

20 STATES THAT HAVE 100 PERCENT NACO MEMBERSHIP

Alabama	Maryland	North Dakota
Arizona	Minnesota	Oregon
Arkansas	Montana	South Dakota
Delaware	Nevada	Utah
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NACo Officials Represent Counties on National and Federal Boards and Committees

Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health

Bureau of Land Management - National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board

Carl Vinson Institute - National Center for the Study of Counties

Emergency Management Accreditation Program Commission

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) Advisory Board

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FCC's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

FEMA Mitigation Framework Working Group

FEMA National Advisory Council

FEMA R III Regional Advisory Committee

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FirstNet PSAC

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National Association of Regional Council's Board

National Conference on Correctional Health Care

National Drought Resiliency Partnership

National Homeland Security Consortium

National Ocean Council, Governance Coordinating Committee

President Obama's Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience

Project SAFECOM (DHS)

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Rural Assistance Center Advisory Board for HHS

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Shared Services Learning Committee Technical Advisors Team – Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Technical & Operational Advisory Committee (TOAC) for Southern Rural Development Center

U.S. Dept. of Justice Global Advisory Committee

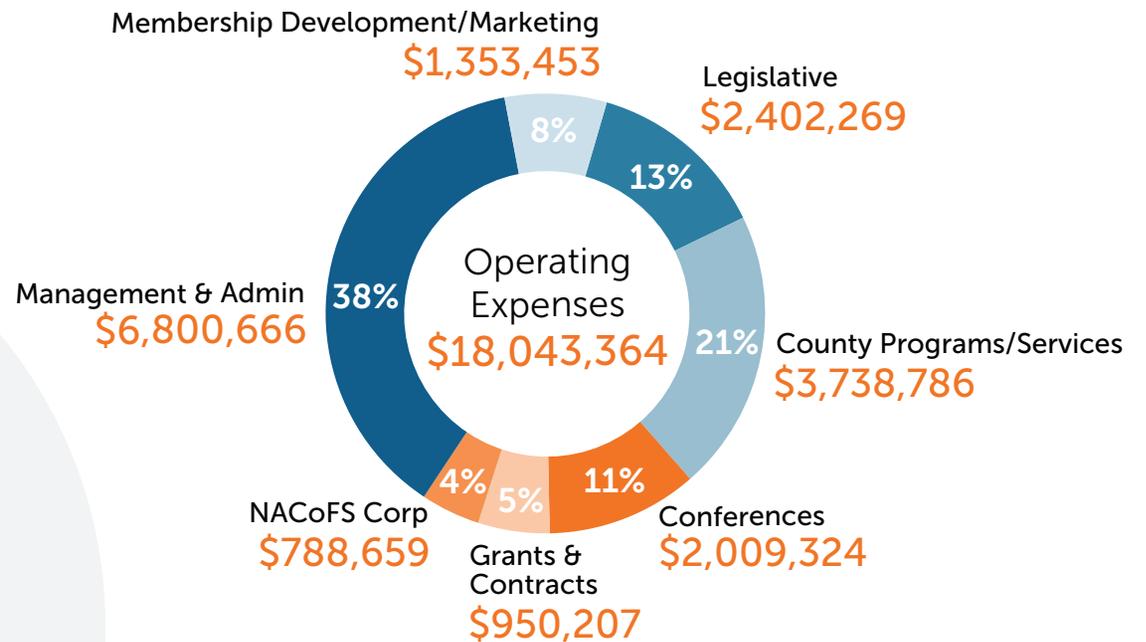
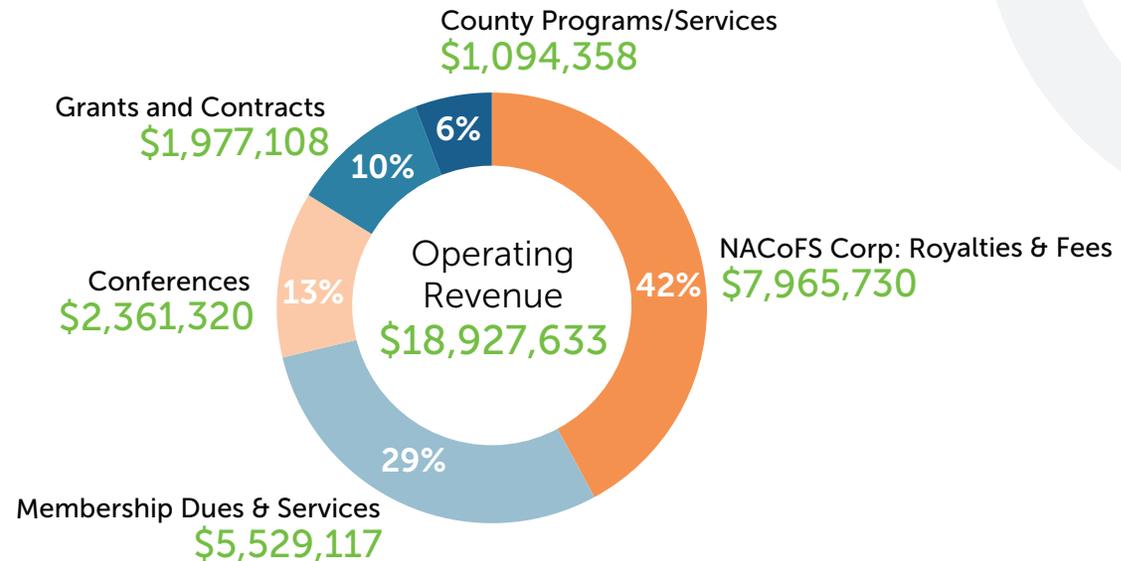
Wildland Fire Executive Council

Financial Stewardship

NACo ended our fiscal year in December 2014 with an operating surplus of \$894,269 or 4.7 percent of gross revenue. The surplus is the result of higher than anticipated revenue from membership and conference attendance, as well as the non-dues revenue sources such as the U.S. Communities cooperative purchasing program. In addition, NACo's reserves provided a 4.81 percent return on the investments. The reserve funds are the association's contingency reserve as well as the Board of Directors' designated fund for the national headquarters.

In late 2016, the association will be re-locating with the National League of Cities to a new building on Capitol Hill.

The new, leased space will give the associations two distinct and separate offices, yet also allow for improved collaboration. The building will feature a joint conference center focused on local government leadership and innovation.



Presidential Initiative: Safe and Secure Counties



Sallie Clark
NACo President
2015 – 2016

Counties play an essential role in keeping America's communities safe and secure by preserving public health and well-being, protecting public safety and promoting local economies and resiliency.

Under the leadership of President Sallie Clark, NACo is embarking on an initiative in 2015 and 2016 to strengthen the safety and security of the nation's 3,069 counties and the people we serve.

In order to remain healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient, America's counties must anticipate and adapt to all types of challenges and changes. Through the Safe and Secure Counties Initiative, NACo is working with county leaders and partners to bolster our nation's ability to thrive amid changing physical, social and economic conditions.

The Safe and Secure Counties Initiative will focus on strengthening counties' capacities in three distinct areas:

★ **Protecting public safety:** Counties invest more than \$70 billion annually in justice and public safety services to keep

our communities safe and secure by providing law enforcement and promoting crime prevention. Counties patrol the streets, combat human trafficking, protect against cyber threats, operate and maintain county jail and detention facilities, and serve as an arm of the county courts and the judicial system. We also operate 911 emergency call centers, emergency transport agencies and provide children and adult protective services. Counties assist our communities with emergency preparedness, response and recovery from economic, natural and man-made disasters. Key players in the justice system include county sheriffs and law enforcement, emergency managers, judges, district attorneys, public defenders, court clerks, jail administrators and coroners, among others.

★ **Preserving public health and well-being:** Counties invest another \$70 billion annually in support systems to keep residents healthy for their entire lives. Many counties operate hospitals and health facilities that provide clinical services, cancer and cardiac care, and emergency and trauma care.

County nursing homes offer restorative care and rehabilitation, and promote quality of life and wellness to the elderly. County Veteran Service Officers help veterans and their families by connecting them to resources in our communities. We also provide behavioral and mental health services to those in need. County public health departments address needs in communities across the country including preventative measures such as immunizations and flu shots, educating the public with important life-saving information, response to public health-related emergencies and food-borne illnesses.

★ **Promoting local economies:** Strong county economies are the building blocks of safe and secure counties. Residents' well-being is directly linked to counties' economic vitality. That is why counties invest more than \$25 billion each year into economic development efforts and are committed to helping residents obtain the skills necessary to compete in the global marketplace. Counties are at the forefront of innovative technology and data analyses, investing in

NACo Leadership

transportation, infrastructure and workforce development – critical components of fostering financial security and improving Americans' quality of life. From building schools and hospitals to cleaning up storm debris and safeguarding drinking water, county services and functions are the basis of strong economies and safe and secure counties.

Through the Safe and Secure Counties Initiative, NACo is exploring ways that counties are working to implement locally driven strategies to strengthen our communities and help the people we serve. NACo will assist counties in identifying ways to leverage changing conditions and take advantage of new technologies and proven practices.

As part of the initiative, NACo will convene public, private and philanthropic leaders, produce special reports, develop webinars and podcasts, facilitate peer learning and host symposiums, workshops and roundtable events.

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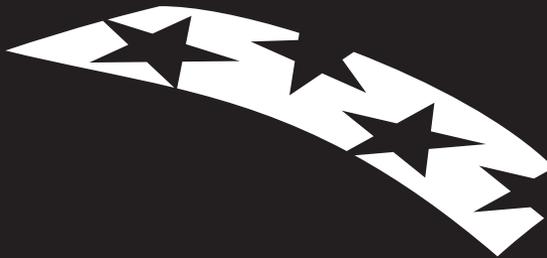
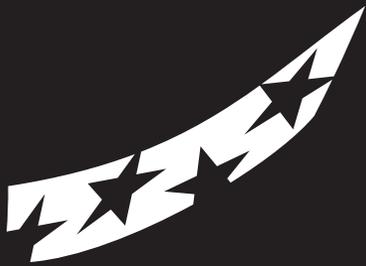
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