

2020 National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference
Washington Hilton
1919 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, DC 20009
February 28- March 6, 2020

Travel Report:

The National Association of Counties (NACo) unites America's 3,069 county governments. Founded in 1935, NACo brings county officials together to advocate with a collective voice on national policy, exchange ideas and build new leadership skills, pursue transformational county solutions, enrich the public's understanding of county government and exercise exemplary leadership in public service.

The NACo Legislative Conference, held annually in Washington, D.C., brings together over 2,000 elected and appointed county officials to focus on federal policy issues that impact counties and our residents. As a sitting member of the NACo Board of Directors, this was an opportunity to engage with legislators from rural and urban counties, from both large and small budgets to come together for education, networking and sessions designed to help improve our residents' lives and the efficiency of our county government. In addition to President Trump, participants heard from members of the administration and Congress including:

- U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson
- U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt
- U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.)
- U.S. Representative John Katko (R-N.Y.)
- U.S. Representative Stephanie Murphy (D-Fla.)
- Gen. Colin L. Powell, former Secretary of State and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Robert Redfield, M.D.

Saturday, February 29, 2020

- 1) Policy Coordinating Committee Meeting
 - a. Proposed Interim Resolution on U.S. Forest Service Workforce Capacity
 - b. Proposed Interim Resolution on the Council on Environmental Quality's Revisions to the National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations
 - c. Proposed Interim Resolution on the Use of Targeted Grazing for Wildland Fire Management
 - d. Proposed Interim Resolution in Support of Flexibility in the Elections Section of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS)
 - e. Proposed Interim Resolution in Support of Stopping the Annual Five Percent Drawdown of Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination (SRS) Payments to National Forest Counties
 - f. Proposed Interim Resolution Supporting Increasing Timber Harvests from National Forest System (NFS) lands to 1987 Levels
 - g. Proposed Interim Resolution Supporting a Moratorium on Wilderness Designations
 - h. Proposed Interim Resolution Supporting No Net-Loss of Access to Federal Lands
 - i. Proposed Interim Resolution Supporting No Net-Increase in Public Land Ownership
 - j. Proposed Interim Resolution Urging the United States Secretary of the Interior and the United States Secretary of Agriculture to Reinstate All Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) Charters and Confirm All Nominations—Hon. Hon. Larry Don Suckla, Commissioner, Montezuma County, Colo.; Hon. Darius Allen, Commissioner, Alamosa County, Colo.
 - k. Proposed Interim Resolution on Inclusion of Full Payments In-Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination (SRS) Funding in the President's Annual Budget—Hon. Mark Whitney, Commissioner, Beaver County, Utah
 - l. Proposed Interim Resolution Requesting Action to Decrease Methane Emissions to Maximize Financial
 - m. Return for American Taxpayers from Oil and Gas Development on Federal Public Lands—Hon. Anna Hansen, Commissioner, Santa Fe County, N.M
 - n. County Credit Rating: What's in Store for the Future of Your Bond Rating?
 - i. For many local leaders, a municipal bond rating is the most important assessments on a municipality's fiscal health and creditworthiness. But, changing evolving threats to municipalities' fiscal health have resulted in changing assessment criteria. Join us to here hear from national agencies and market experts to discuss how growing threats such as equity, climate

risks, pensions and cybersecurity are shaping the future of municipal bond ratings

- ii. Diversity and Inclusion: Financial Services, Public Policy and the Role for America's Counties
- iii. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is an evolving priority for the nation's business community. Federal, state and local policymakers are also implementing policies and practices to ensure they are fully engaging all constituents and businesses.

2) Public Lands Steering Committee Business Meeting

- a. Public Lands Steering Committee's Business Meeting to discuss proposed policy resolutions:
- b. Proposed Interim Policy Resolution on the Council of Environmental Quality's Revisions to the National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations
- c. Proposed Interim Policy Resolution to Amend Federal Regulations and Policies Allowing Naturally-Caused Fires to Burn During a Wildfire Season Declared by a State
- d. Proposed Interim Policy Resolution Supporting the Utilization of Sheep and Cattle Grazing as a Cost-Effective and Viable Method for Hazardous Fuels Reduction Goals In Executive Order 13855, Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Rangelands and Other Federal Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk.

Sunday, March 1, 2020

3) Large Urban County Caucus

- a. The National Association of Counties (NACo) Large Urban County Caucus, or "LUCC," is a bipartisan caucus, LUCC meets in conjunction with the NACo Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. each winter and at the NACo Annual Conference in July. Its annual Symposium, held in the fall, is emerging as the must-attend event for LUCC members to engage with influencers and innovators from world class philanthropic organizations, think tanks, academic institutions and businesses, to foster creative and new public/private collaborations and partnerships. Officials from NACo member counties with populations over 500,000 are eligible to participate in LUCC. LUCC is led by a steering committee with a chair and vice chair, all appointed by the NACo president on an annual basis. LUCC is the premier forum for urban county leaders and is the voice for America's metropolitan counties before Congress and the Administration. Comprised of county executives, governing board members and other senior elected officials, LUCC members focus on urban challenges and solutions, engage in peer-to-peer information exchanges and informal national policy discussions.
- b. Panel Discussion: Urban County Approaches to Affordable Housing Challenges:

- i. Urban county leaders face countless challenges, few of which are as complex and intractable as the challenges presented by homelessness and affordable housing.
 - ii. Across the country, urban counties have risen to meet this challenge head-on, with innovative approaches that leverage local, state and federal resources to formulate a collective, data-informed and sustainable response.
 - iii. Urban county leaders provided promising approaches to addressing homelessness and housing in their jurisdictions, and federal partners will highlight ways in which their agencies' resources can help to address this critical local challenge.
 - c. Corona Virus Update (COVID19):
 - i. Detailed information on spread, origin
 - ii. Response efforts and testing
- 4) Western Interstate Region (WIR) Board of Directors Meeting
 - a. Signing Ceremony for U.S. Forest Service-NACo Memorandum of Understanding
 - i. NACo and the U.S. Forest Service will renew a longstanding memorandum of understanding guiding the priorities of and relationship b. between the two organizations
 - b. A Conversation with the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; The Hon. Vicki Christiansen, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
 - i. Vicki Christiansen was sworn in as the 19th Chief of the U.S. Forest Service on October 11, 2018. Chief Christiansen will spoke on ways his agency would like to engage with county governments to achieve mutual goals of good stewardship of our natural resources, ensuring access to public lands and the creation of good- paying jobs.
 - c. Update from the Bureau of Land Management
 - i. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages approximately one-tenth of the acreage of the United States and 30 percent of its minerals. Deputy Director for Policy and Programs William Perry Pendley will the BLM's initiatives and priorities for 2020, as well as efforts to improve the relationship between federal land management agencies and local governments.
 - d. Inmate Exclusion Policy
 - i. Restoring access to federal health benefits for pre-trial detainees is a key legislative priority for the Health Care and Jails Task Force between NACo and the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA). Over the past several months, Task Force members have worked closely with congressional offices to develop these proposals into legislation
 - e. Waters of the United States Regulations
 - i. On January 23, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unveiled the new Waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulation. In 2017, in response to conflicting court rulings and

regulatory decisions from previous administrations, the Trump administration began the process of reworking the WOTUS rule, which culminated in the repeal of the 2015 WOTUS rule on September 12 and the January 23 announcement

- f. Update from the National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition
 - i. WIR's Public Lands Trust contributes to the National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition (NESARC). NESARC is a broad group focused on improving and modernizing the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NESARC Executive Director Jordan Smith will discuss recent regulatory, legislative and judicial actions related to the ESA
- g. U.S. Forest Service Guidebook and Deferred Maintenance
 - i. NACo has teamed up with the U.S. Forest Service to draft a guidebook for county officials and federal employees to better understand their own roles and the requirements of their governing counterparts.
 - ii. U.S. Forest Service Liaison to NACo Randy Phillips, Sublette County Commissioner Joel Bousman and National Association of Forest Service Retirees Board Member Rich Stem will be briefed on the guidebook's final contents and discuss new data related to jobs and deferred maintenance from the U.S. Forest Service
- h. Legislative and WIR Finance Update
 - i. Update on the legislative priorities and finances of the Western Interstate Region.
- i. Broadband Access Report
 - i. In 2019, NACo launched the TestIT app, which allows individuals to immediately test their broadband speed and capabilities through a mobile phone app
 - ii. Discussion on this tool and new NACo report on the data and its findings

5) NACo Board of Directors meeting

- a. Counties play an instrumental role in the overall public administration and governance of federal, state and local policies, programs and services:
 - i. America's 3,069 county governments provide essential building blocks for healthy, safe and vibrant communities
 - ii. Counties invest nearly \$600 billion each year in taxpayer resources, through the leadership of nearly 40,000 county elected officials and 3.6 million county employees.
 - iii. Counties support and maintain key public and community infrastructure, help nurture and sustain a skilled workforce to support dynamic local economies, and promote public health and safety to residents.
 - iv. Support federal policies and programs that equip county governments with the resources and flexibility needed to effectively serve our residents.
 - v. Preserve local decision making and protect counties from unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority

- vi. Counties own and operate 45% of all public roads and almost 40% of the national bridge inventory and are directly involved in 78% of all public transportation systems and 34% of public airports
- vii. Counties invest \$122 billion annually in maintaining and operating public works, including transportation and water systems
- b. Restore the balance of federalism and optimize intergovernmental partnerships:
 - i. In support of efforts that recognize and respect the unique roles and responsibilities of counties as essential partners—not just stakeholders—in our nation’s intergovernmental system of federal, state, local and tribal government officials. Consistent and meaningful engagement and consultation between intergovernmental partners is vital in the development and implementation of effective policies, programs and regulations. County governments are tasked with both implementing state and federal policies and regulations at the local level and should be included at all stages of the governing process
 - ii. Urge Congress to pass the Restore the Partnership Act (H.R. 3883) and the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act (H.R. 300) to increase transparency to reduce regulatory burden, foster intergovernmental dialogue and unite all levels of government in supporting our unparalleled system of federalism
- c. Promote County infrastructure priorities:
 - i. Urge the Administration and Congress to increase our nation’s infrastructure investments to help promote economic development, public safety and overall mobility through a comprehensive infrastructure package, surface transportation reauthorization and water resources bill.
 - ii. Any federal infrastructure package should reflect county priorities, such as: allocating more federal seed capital and matching funds for locally owned infrastructure, increasing local decision-making authority and flexibility, protecting and restoring tax-exempt municipal financing tools, and streamlining and shortening the federal permitting process while still requiring robust public participation and world-class environmental stewardship
 - iii. The two-year authorization of the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) will address county interests related to ports, inland waterways, levees, dams, wetlands, watersheds and coastal restoration. As owners, users and regulators of water resources and infrastructure, counties are directly impacted by the policies and funding authorized through WRDA authorizations
 - iv. Any water infrastructure legislation should address the needs of counties, including: allocating federal matching funds for local governments to plan for and implement projects that reduce flood damage risks and address habitat restoration, connectivity and resiliency, ensuring counties are consulted prior to the federal government undertaking water resource

projects within county boundaries, and strengthening the federal-state-local partnership in the decision-making process for water projects

Monday, March 2, 2020

1) General Session:

- a. U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson, Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Sen. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.) delivered remarks. Topics included trade, infrastructure investment, workforce training, criminal justice reform and the Corona Virus epidemic.
- b. Counties where the rubber meets the road
- c. Counties source of valuable information for Federal policy
- d. DC as an island surrounded by reality, Congress and Fed agencies don't always know what best for Counties. Counties provide reality.

2) Attendee Luncheon

- a. Capitol Steps event: This one-of-a-kind troupe began as a group of Senate staffers who set out to satirize the very people and places that employed them. Although not all of the current performers are former Hill staffers, taken together, they have worked in a total of 18 congressional offices and represent more than six decades of House and Senate staff experience.

3) NACo Board of Directors meeting

- a. Promotes mental health and substance use treatment and address essential criminal justice reforms:
 - i. These should be sensible measures that promote and advance the overall safety of the public, and enhances federal, state, and local partnerships to provide evidence-based treatment services to justice involved individuals suffering with mental illness and substance use disorders.
 - ii. Advance legislation and regulations that would amend the federal Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy (MIEP) and allow non-convicted individuals to have continued access to necessary treatment through federal health benefits such as Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP and VA health benefits.
 - iii. 10 Million individuals cycle in and out of more than 3000 local jails each year.
 - iv. 20% of jail inmates have a serious mental illness.

- b. Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) & and Secure Rural Schools (SRS):
 - i. Restore full mandatory funding for the PILT program, which compensates public lands counties for untaxable federal land.
 - ii. Extend the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program as a transitional funding mechanism until the federal government fully implements a sustainable, long-term forest management program with adequate revenue sharing for forest counties and schools.
 - iii. H.R. 3043, the Permanently Authorizing PILT Act.
 - iv. S. 2480, the PILT Reauthorization Act would make PILT mandatory for ten years.
 - v. H.R. 3048, S. 430, and S. 1643, the Forest Management for Rural Stability Act, would create an endowment fund to make permanent SRS payments to national forest counties and schools while also granting more flexibility to counties in the use of SRS funds.
- c. Boost advanced broadband deployment and accessibility:
 - i. Deployment and availability of emerging technologies, such as small cell 5G, to all areas of the nation to ensure equitable economic and educational opportunities for all.
 - ii. County officials must also fulfill our responsibilities as trustees of public property and as protectors of public safety and health during this deployment process.
 - iii. By preserving local authority, county governments can ensure that the public interest is being served by communications providers regardless of the delivery platform.
- d. Establish a more effective definition of, "Waters of the U.S."
 - i. Local streets, gutters and human-made ditches should be excluded from the definition of "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) under the federal Clean Water Act.
 - ii. Counties invest \$24 billion in sanitation, storm and water supply systems.
- e. Promote workforce opportunities:
 - i. Counties are confronting increased demand and caseloads for services that help residents overcome barriers to employment, such as skills training, mental health and substance abuse disorders, accessible childcare and housing affordability.
 - ii. County governments face reduced federal and state funding, along with growing federal and state mandates, limitations and oversight at the same time.
 - iii. Despite low rates of unemployment, 2/3 of Counties have poverty rates exceeding the national average.
 - iv. Counties employ 3.6 million residents and provide services to 314 million county residents.
- f. Strengthen election integrity:

- i. Policies should provide flexibility for local decision making and increased federal investments in the nation's elections system
 - ii. As administrators and financers of our elections, counties work to ensure our elections are both fair and secure.
 - iii. 91% of voters nationwide, in the 2018 general elections cast their ballots within jurisdictions where counties play a major role in administering and coordinating elections.
- g. Community resilience through regional and local disaster preparedness:
 - i. In 2018, local governments were impacted by 66 federal declared disasters funded by recovery grants.
 - ii. Congress and the Administration should provide increased federal resources to counties for disaster planning, mitigation and recovery.
 - iii. While state statutes and organizational structures vary, local emergency management responsibilities are most commonly vested in county governments.

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

1) General Session:

- a. Representative John Katko (R-N.Y.), Representative Stephanie Murphy (D-Fla.), Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, and U.S. President Donald Trump delivered remarks. Topics included trade, infrastructure investment, workforce training, criminal justice reform and the COVID-19 epidemic.

2) NACo Transportation Steering Committee Chair Meeting

- a. Met with NACo Transportation Steering Committee Chair Randy Maluchnik to discuss Honolulu's Rail project.

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

1) Rural Action Caucus (RAC) Day of Action

- a. US Department of Veterans Affairs
 - i. Across the country, more than five million of the veterans served by the VA system live in rural areas and drive long distances to access their care
 - ii. Telehealth has become a vital component in reaching these veterans, with VA telehealth visits increasing by 19 percent from FY 2017 to FY 2018
 - iii. In 2019, the VA partnered with public and private organizations to launch its new Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations (ATLAS)

- initiative, which aims to better address the health needs of rural veterans through virtual health appointments
- b. Department of Transportation
 - i. Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) is an initiative to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure
 - ii. Specifically, rural transportation infrastructure's unique challenges need to be considered in order to meet our Nation's priority transportation goals of safety and economic competitiveness
 - iii. The ROUTES initiative will create a council charged with collecting input from infrastructure stakeholders to help identify and create data-driven approaches to better assist rural transportation infrastructure processes and project
 - c. Federal Communications Commission
 - i. Over the past year, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has implemented a number of new initiatives to help expand and improve broadband infrastructure across the county
 - ii. Including over \$240 million for rural broadband investments and taking steps towards improving broadband data collection
 - iii. Discussion with senior FCC officials regarding the findings of NACo's TestIT initiative
 - d. US Department of Homeland Security
 - i. DHS new resource to address safety and security issues surrounding public schools

Thursday, March 5, 2020

- 1) High Line NYC Site Visit
 - a. Built on a historic, elevated rail line, The High Line is a 1.45-mile-long (2.33 km) elevated linear park, greenway and rail trail created on a former New York Central Railroad spur on the west side of Manhattan
 - b. Individuals can walk through gardens, view art, experience a performance, savor delicious food, or connect with friends and neighbors-all while enjoying a unique perspective of New York City
 - c. The abandoned spur has been redesigned as a "living system" drawing from multiple disciplines which include landscape architecture, urban design, and ecology.
 - d. The High Line was inspired by the 3-mile-long (4.8 km) Promenade plantée (tree-lined walkway), a similar project in Paris completed in 1993. Nearly 100% of our annual budget comes through donations
 - e. The High Line is owned by the City of New York and we operate under a license agreement with NYC Parks
 - f. Examination of park to investigate the possibility of converting some of Honolulu's unused developed areas into public living systems

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: June 9, 2020

Traveler: Alan Texeira

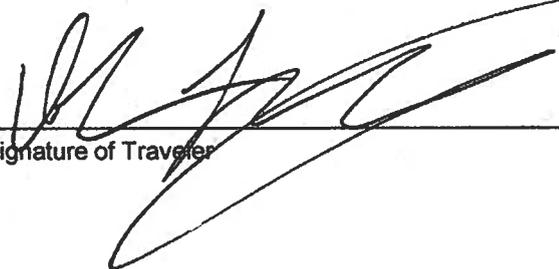
Event: NACo 2019 Legislative Conference

Location: Washington D.C.

Dates: From February 27, 2020 To March 6, 2020

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee		
2. Airfare		
3. Hotel	383.38	
4. Meals		
5. Ground Transportation	151.59	
6. Tips		
7. Other		
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	534.97	

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:



Signature of Traveler

June 9, 2020

Date