

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Study Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: February 5, 2013 **Time:** 1:30 pm **Length:** 30 minutes

Presentation Title: Approval of 2013 Federal Legislative Agenda

Department: Public and Government Affairs

Presenters: Gary Schmidt, Jared Anderson and Chris Lyons

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Public and Government Affairs is seeking Board approval of the County's 2013 federal legislative agenda.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Each year Clackamas County adopts a federal legislative agenda which serves as a blueprint for County funding and policy priorities at the federal level. This agenda is not the final word on the County's legislative priorities. As issues arise during and throughout the year, the Board of Commissioners will be asked to comment and determine support or opposition to developing legislation.

The first months of the 113th Session of Congress will be spent addressing the national debt, spending cuts, entitlement reform and government funding. If agreements can't be reached, the federal deficit will be automatically reduced resulting in major federal budget cuts. This could reduce federal funds to state and County programs.

Clackamas County's federal legislative agenda focuses primarily on protecting federal funding for key county programs and services (public safety; health, housing and human services; juvenile services; emergency management and communications), extending county timber payments and supporting responsible federal forest management, and finalizing funding for the Sunrise System.

This agenda reflects feedback from the Board of Commissioners, County Administration and department directors. A legislative planning session was held on January 30 to narrow this agenda. Today, the final federal legislative agenda is presented for review and approval.

Also attached is the National Association of Counties (NACo) 2013 Federal Legislative Priorities. All of NACo's federal priorities are compatible with Clackamas County's federal priorities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

The County's federal legislative agenda supports continued federal funding for key county programs and services and extending county timber payments. Loss of these revenues would result in potential cuts to County programs and services.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

N/A

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

N/A

OPTIONS:

1. Approve the County's 2013 federal legislative agenda.
2. Direct staff to investigate or research additional priorities for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board approve the County's 2013 federal legislative agenda, so that it may be promoted during and in advance of the County's annual visit to Washington, D.C. the week of March 4-8. The agenda will be revised and updated throughout the year as issues arise and develop.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Clackamas County's 2013 federal legislative agenda.
2. National Association of Counties 2013 federal legislative priorities.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _s/Gary Schmidt_

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Gary Schmidt @ 503-742-5908

CLACKAMAS COUNTY 2013 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

COUNTY FINANCE

Municipal Bond Market

Support measures to preserve the tax-exempt municipal bond market, which plays a critical role in financing essential infrastructure investments. By exempting municipal bond interest from taxes, the government creates an incentive for investors to buy them, which helps hold down borrowing costs of counties, cities and other entities that issue them. States and localities argue that limiting the tax break would curtail a vital funding source for schools, libraries, bridges and roads.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Federal Forest Management and O&C Lands

Support legislation for responsible management of federal forest lands, including O&C Lands, which improves counties' financial stability and creates a predictable, long-term solution to county revenue needs. Federal forest legislation should balance economic, social and environmental values so that significant areas of federal forest are focused on producing forest products and significant areas of federal forest are also focused on environmental protection.

Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act

Support future reauthorization or extension of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act or similar legislation. Extending the Secure Rural Schools Act would continue critical funding to timber dependent counties in Oregon while Congress works to enact legislation to allow for responsible management of federal forest lands. This historically important source of revenue, derived from federal O&C lands, is critical to timber-dependent counties in Oregon, including Clackamas County. From 2001-2010, the Act provided the County approximately \$12 million per year for the county road and general funds.

HEALTH, HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES

Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)

Oppose future discretionary funding cuts to the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program (formerly known as Section 8) provides assistance to families that rent units in the private rental housing market. An 8% reduction in Federal funds would require the County to subsidize the Federal Housing Choice Voucher program by approximately \$120,000 per year or reduce service levels by 75 families.

Support reform of the Housing Choice Voucher Program to reduce administration, streamline process, and benefit clients. Over the past 3 years, funding to the County to administer the Housing Choice Voucher Program has been reduced, yet the administrative rules, regulations, and processes have not lessened commensurately. Many housing authorities are at risk of not meeting compliance standards simply because staff levels needed to complete the required documentation have been reduced to bare minimums.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) & HOME Funding

Restore Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funding to 2011 levels. If funding remains unchanged, Clackamas County programs would face significant funding cuts up to 25 percent. CDBG funds are the only funds available to the County to construct infrastructure improvements in low income areas, while the HOME program is a keystone in the development of any affordable housing project in the County. In addition to the social impacts, there is a significant economic impact from the expenditure of these funds in the County. It is estimated that last year, through a combination of CDBG, HOME and leveraged funds, the County was able to create/maintain 107 direct jobs.

Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS)

Support continued funding for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), which provides key information for local communities to plan investments and services. This information is crucial to the administration of the CDBG program. Without this data identifying eligible low income areas, the County will be required to expend significant amounts of limited administrative funds to conduct area surveys.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Support reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). In Clackamas County, the WIA funds education and job training for adults, dislocated workers and youth. Job seekers receive services ranging from job search assistance to intensive occupational training. Community Solutions for Clackamas County utilizes WIA funds to serve vulnerable populations with significant barriers to employment, such as public assistance recipients, offenders, veterans and individuals utilizing public housing resources.

Older Americans Act (OAA)

Support reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA). The OAA is considered to be the major vehicle for the organization and delivery of social and nutrition services to seniors. In Fiscal Year 11/12, over 248,000 meals were provided to seniors by the 10 senior centers operating in Clackamas County.

Support reforms that increase flexibility at the local level related to meal funding, which would enable the merging of two nutrition funding streams and allow local agencies to fund nutrition programs to meet local needs. Oppose reforms that would give states more authority over some types of OAA funding, which could allow the withholding of Health Prevention dollars from locally-operated Area Agencies on Aging. Although Clackamas County only receives approximately \$20,000 per year for Health Promotion activities, these dollars are able to be contracted out to the network of 10 senior centers in the County.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Oppose reductions to the Department of Health & Human Services' Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Clackamas County receives approximately \$1 million per year in federal energy assistance to help over 3,000 low income households in Clackamas County keep their heat and lights on.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Oppose reductions to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp program. The SNAP program has grown significantly in Clackamas County over the past 5 years, from 19,330 recipients in 2007 to 44,380 as of October, 2012. It is an essential benefit to many individuals and families.

TRANSPORTATION

Sunrise System

Secure \$26 million to complete the Tolbert Overcrossing component of the Sunrise System. The Sunrise System is a package of transportation projects totaling \$184 million, which are designed to improve local and regional access for freight, motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians to the Clackamas Industrial Area, while significantly improving regional economic competitiveness and community livability. The Tolbert Overcrossing remains the last unfunded component of the System. The project will construct a new overcrossing of the Union Pacific Railroad that will serve the Lawnfield Industrial Area and provide needed access to Camp Withycombe, a Department of Defense (DOD) facility that recently expanded. In 2010, DOD authorized \$11.4 million for distribution in 2016 through the Base Relocation Act, but those funds have not yet been appropriated. This authority presents an opportunity to secure \$11.4 million for the project from DOD.

Transportation Reauthorization

Advocate for passage of a surface transportation authorization bill that adequately funds the maintenance and construction of roads in order to improve the reliability and safety of our transportation system and meet the needs of our interconnected economy.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Juvenile Justice Funding

Support increased federal funding for juvenile justice. Federal allocations for juvenile justice services have dropped significantly in the past decade. Since 2002, funding for the State Formula Grants Program has declined 55%, the Delinquency Prevention Program has declined 79% and the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant has declined 88%. These reductions result in more youth incarcerated in adult jails; erode and jeopardize nationwide progress on juvenile justice improvements that have led to historic low rates in youth-offending across all U.S. states; and eliminate support for cost-effective delinquency prevention programs and alternatives to incarceration shown to increase public safety and decrease recidivism, while producing cost savings to the public.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

Support reauthorization and continued appropriations for COPS grants to local governments. The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), which advances the practice of community policing in law enforcement agencies, has awarded more than \$2.7 million in grant funding to Clackamas County since 1999. The County's Interagency Methamphetamine Initiative has been funded multiple times, including funds for enforcement teams, technology upgrades, youth outreach and improved juvenile detention efforts. The Clackamas County

Sheriff's Office has been a leader in creating and implementing innovative community policing strategies, as well as developing regional and interagency partnerships, which exemplify the types of investments the COPS program seeks to make.

Emergency Management

Support continuation of grant funding for the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Program. EMPG is the backbone of the nation's emergency management system and provides key assistance in building and implementing the county's emergency management capabilities. The grant includes funding for staff and program materials for emergency management plan updates, relationship building, response and recovery. It is important that funding continue in order to support local emergency management as the number and frequency of natural disasters in the United States continues to rise.

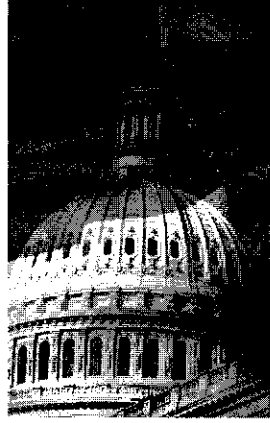
WILLAMETTE FALLS LOCKS & HERITAGE AREA

Willamette Falls Locks

Support continued operation and restoration of the Willamette Falls Locks so that they may continue to be an economic, recreational and historic driver to the region. The Locks bridge the upper and lower stretches of the Willamette River, without which the Willamette becomes two disconnected rivers for navigation purposes. The Locks were operated safely under a reduced schedule until November 2011, when an inspection discovered the gates were in danger of fracture and could not be safely operated. Clackamas County remains a member of the One Willamette River Coalition and seeks federal support to repair and reopen the Willamette Falls Locks.

Willamette Falls Heritage Area

Support designation of the Willamette Falls Heritage Area. Designation as an historic area will strengthen the identity of the historic working communities of Oregon City and West Linn by preserving and promoting their distinctive natural, cultural, scenic, recreational and industrial resources. Clackamas County remains an active partner in the Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition and fully supports federal designation of the Willamette Falls as a National Heritage Area.



2013 Legislative Priorities

The members of the National Association of Counties (NACo) support federal policies and programs that provide the tools, resources, and solutions needed to spur job growth, improve quality of life, and increase the economic competitiveness of America's local counties and communities.

The nation's 3,068 county governments provide the essential building blocks to create healthy, vibrant, and safe communities. This includes supporting and maintaining key public infrastructure, transportation, and economic development assets; creating and sustaining a skilled workforce to meet the needs of private industry; ensuring public health and public safety needs to protect our citizens; and implementing a broad portfolio of federal, state, and local programs in a cost-effective and accountable manner.

People depend on counties to provide services that protect their homes, schools, and neighborhoods. Counties maintain safe roads, bridges, airports, and transit systems and ensure

that we have clean water and effective wastewater systems. Counties operate our courts and jails, and maintain our parks and recreation programs, libraries, waste and recycling facilities.

Counties also provide access to health care, especially for the uninsured and indigent, and serve as the community "safety net" for our children, elderly, disabled, mentally ill, and anyone in need. Counties are also instrumental in moving their communities forward by providing the business conditions, critical infrastructure, and capital necessary for private industry to flourish.

At a time when federal, state and local budgets have been slashed, counties have had to balance their budgets yet continue shouldering so many of the critical programs and services that people, industry and communities depend upon. Therefore, we urge Congress and the Administration to establish a sustainable path forward for our country and encourage a balanced approach to deficit reduction.

The following are America's counties' top priorities for the 113th Congress:

Protect Federal-State-Local Partnership for Medicaid

NACo members support maintaining the federal-state-local partnership structure for financing and delivering Medicaid services. We also oppose cuts, caps, block grants or any other measures that would further shift federal and state Medicaid costs to counties.

Support Key Federal Investments in Programs that Promote Local Job Creation and Economic Growth

NACo members support fully funding key federal programs and investments that support the nation's future economic growth and improved local conditions, including HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and HOME Program, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), investments in local workforce development programs, and investments in highway, transit, aviation, port and water

infrastructure development. We support investments in programs that support the federal safety net, including Medicaid, social services, justice and public safety programs and other domestic programs that are essential to creating and maintaining jobs and high quality communities.

Oppose Unfunded Mandates

NACo members oppose legislative or regulatory initiatives that undermine local decision-making authority at the county level and contribute to reductions to our economic prosperity and workforce.

Support Federal Land Revenue Sharing and Payment in Lieu of Taxes Programs

NACo members support extending full mandatory funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program as well as legislative efforts to reform and fund the expired Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program. PILT compensates counties for tax-exempt federal land within their boundaries.

2013 Legislative Priorities

Promote County Priorities within Immigration Reform

NACo members oppose federal efforts that would place the financial burden of immigration on the backs of counties without sufficient funds for health, public safety, and education services. We support comprehensive immigration reform that includes a modernized legal immigration system, establishes a temporary worker program, provides an earned path to citizenship, and enhances border security.

Protect County Revenue and Investment Strategies

NACo members support the preservation of the federal deductibility of local property and income taxes and the tax exempt status of municipal bonds that provide critical funding for infrastructure and development. Furthermore, we support legislative initiatives that permit the collection of existing sales and use taxes from remote sellers. We oppose any efforts that would preferentially treat any industry seeking to create its own special immunity from state and local taxation.

Support Rural Development Initiatives and the Farm Bill

NACo members support federal investments in rural development and will work to prioritize and increase the national and local flexibility of these investments through a Farm Bill reauthorization and funding for USDA Rural Development programs. These programs assist rural counties in their efforts to partner with all sectors to develop water/wastewater infrastructure, community facilities, broadband, electric, housing, renewable energy and capital for businesses.



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About the National Association of Counties

The National Association of Counties (NACo) assists America's counties in pursuing excellence in public service by advancing sound public policy, promoting peer learning and accountability, fostering intergovernmental and public-private collaboration, and providing value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money.

Founded in 1935, NACo provides the elected and appointed leaders from the nation's 3,068 counties with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to provide fiscally responsible, quality-driven, and results oriented policies and services for healthy, vibrant, safe, and fiscally resilient counties.