



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION OFFICIALS

An Affiliate of National Association of Counties and the National Recreation and Park Association

NACPRO LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Approved September 29, 2014

I. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

- **Congressional Action:** NACPRO asks legislators to re-authorize full and dedicated funding for LWCF. NACPRO strongly supports a mandated provision for a minimum 40% of total LWCF appropriations to the LWCF State Assistance program in FY15 and subsequent fiscal years.
- In absence of authorizing legislation, exercise discretionary appropriations power to allocate at least 40% of the total LWCF funding in FY15 to the State Assistance Program.
- **NACPRO** opposes the previous Department of Interior's proposal to implement a Department of Interior (DOI) administered grant program, if such a program were to use LWCF State Assistance funds. We ask appropriators to specify that \$0 State Assistance dollars are to be used for this purpose. We have no objection to such a program if it comes from the LWCF Federal side funding without causing a reduction in LWCF State Assistance.
- **NACPRO** will not oppose the use of Federal side LWCF funds for America's Great Outdoors Projects.

On February 14, 2013 Senators Max Baucus (D-MT), Richard Burr (R-NC) and Ron Wyden (D-OR) introduced **Senate Bill 338**, legislation to **re-authorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund** (LWCF). They were joined by cosponsors Mark Udall (D-CO), Jon Tester (D-MT), Lindsay Graham (R-SC) and Tom Udall (D-NM).

On July, 18, 2013 Rep. David McKinley, introduced **House Bill 2727** to support the reauthorization of, and full and dedicated funding for, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Along with full and dedicated funding for the LWCF, the bi-partisan legislation which would require a minimum of 40% of the annual LWCF appropriations are allocated to the State Assistance Program.

II. Transportation

- **Congressional Action:** Dedicated funding for active transportation options, including trails and pedestrian projects primarily through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Combined, these programs, found in the federal surface transportation bill “MAP-21”, provide approximately \$800 million annually for bike and pedestrian projects and to promote pedestrian and bicycling safety in local communities. MAP-21 is due to expire in September of 2014. This means continued dedicated funding and NOT simply maintaining these activities “eligibility.”
- **NACPRO** places a high priority on national and state policies that encourage walking, biking, and the development of alternative transportation networks that will create more connected, livable and healthy counties and regions and promote economic development and redevelopment.
- **NACPRO** supports the Safe Routes to School Program. This program helps communities fund transportation infrastructure and education to keep kids safe on their bike rides and walks to school and to parks for afterschool programming.
- **NACPRO** believes Special Park Districts should be treated similar to localities and counties and be included as eligible recipients of direct federal transportation funding. They operate and manage thousands of miles of regional paved trail networks throughout the Country which provide safe alternative routes of transportation, yet because they are not a city or county government they are not always eligible to compete for direct federal funding.
- **NACPRO** supports **Safe Streets Act (H.R. 2468 and S 2004)**. The Safe Streets Act would ensure that all streets are designed, planned and built with all users in mind. The bill provides guidelines for what a complete streets policy should have, provides states flexibility to decide what such a policy looks like at the local level, and ensures that all modes of transportation are considered in the planning and design stage including walking, biking and public transit.
- **NACPRO** supports the Opportunities for **Bicycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure Financing Act (H.R. 3978)**. Introduced by Representative Sires (D-NJ), this bi-partisan legislation would provide local communities with low-cost loans to build safe and accessible networks of sidewalks, bikes lanes and paths as part of the federal transportation financing program known as the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA). Twenty-five percent of the loan financing for this program must be used to help low-income communities.
- Legislation must ensure that the use of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues for transportation infrastructure will not negatively impact funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).
- Given the critical role the LWCF plays in conservation and providing outdoor recreational resources, funding must not be diverted from LWCF to pay for transportation infrastructure.

- NACPRO supports reauthorization of multi-year or permanent enhanced federal tax incentives for conservation and trail easements as a tool for creating regional trail and greenway corridors while keeping lands in private ownership.

III. Children in Nature

- **Congressional Action:** Authorize **H.R. 4706 Healthy Kids Outdoors Act (HKOA)**. This legislation provides funding to states for the development of comprehensive strategies related either to expanding environmental education through the school system and finding other means of getting kids and families more physically active in the outdoors.
- **Congressional Action:** Authorize (**S. 1306/H.R. 2702**) **No Child Left Inside (NCLI)**. Introduced by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Congressman Sarbanes (D-MD), NCLI would amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). It would strengthen and expand environmental education in classrooms by providing funds to encourage partnerships between school districts and parks, as well as other community based organizations
- **NACPRO** regards improving children’s access to nature as a regional and national policy priority. **NACPRO** believes that public parks and recreation are vital to the national effort to provide safe, healthy ways to explore nature and enhance environmental education.
- **NACPRO** believes that county and regional park systems are uniquely qualified to provide large-scale open space and natural experiences that are “close to home” for many urban, suburban and rural communities. They provide a place where children may discover their past; splash in the water; play in a safe environment; learn to swim; play on a team; follow a trail; catch a fish; and celebrate their heritage. Children who engage in these activities are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-images, and lead more fulfilled lives.
- **NACPRO** encourages dedicated funding at the regional level to support these efforts.

IV. Health and Wellness

- **Congressional Action:** Fund prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control that create substantial and sustainable community level programs that prevent and control obesity and other chronic diseases through physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco-free living and community preventive services. These grant programs support state and local government entities such as park and recreation agencies.
- **Congressional Action:** Authorize the **Fit for Life Act. H.R. 4765** reintroduced on May 29 by Rep. Marsha Fudge (D-OH). This health bill that includes multiple programs and initiatives pertinent to park and recreation agencies, such as creating grants to support joint or shared use agreements, promote physical fitness and activity in low-income neighborhoods with high concentration of childhood obesity. This bill would also provide

funding to renovate foreclosed and abandoned properties to create spaces that encourage physical activity.

- **Congressional Action:** Authorize the **Summer Meals Act (S. 2527/H.R. 5102)** introduced on June 25 to improve the efficiency of summer meals by Sens. Kristin Gillibrand (D-NY) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Reps. Don Young (R-AK) and Rick Larsen (D-WA). This legislation would help expand and support USDA summer nutrition programs at parks and recreation agencies that ensure low-income children have access to healthy food throughout the summer.
- **Congressional Action:** Reauthorize the **Child Nutrition Act /Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act**. This legislation authorizes funding for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Programs (CACFP) which are managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provides free meals to low income children while school is out of session and will be up for renewal in FY 2015. In addition, yearly funding for the SFSP and CACFP is through the Agriculture Appropriations. Park and recreation agencies are the largest public provider of healthy meals and snacks to children outside of schools.
- **Congressional Action:** Authorize the **Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act (S.1562)**. This Legislation was introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and would reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965. It addresses the health, welfare and economic needs of older individuals by promoting senior center modernizations and evidence based chronic disease management and falls prevention.
- **Congressional Action:** Authorize **Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act (H.R. 956)**. [The PHIT Act](#) would allow individuals and families to use their flexible spending accounts and health savings accounts on physical activity expenses such as recreation or fitness facility fees, youth and adult sports league fees, exercise classes, organized running event registration fees, etc.
- Health and Wellness for ALL People of ALL Abilities – **NACPRO** believes that opportunities for active as well as passive recreation are critical to an individual's and a region's health and wellness. We advocate for legislation that supports the growing role of public parks and recreation in improving individual and regional health through increased physical activity in a natural setting, the prevention of chronic disease, and the opportunities for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all activities.

V. Park Development

- **Congressional Action:** Authorize the **Community Parks and Revitalization (CPR) Act (H.R. 2424)**. Sponsored by Representative Sires (D-NJ), this legislation would provide matching federal grants for park and recreation infrastructure in metropolitan areas including Special Districts and Counties. Specifically, this legislation would authorize the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide funding to local park and recreation agencies, through three grant programs: Rehabilitation and

Construction, Innovation and Recreation Program and Recovery Action Program. The bill also includes innovative financing for park infrastructure (known as PIFIA).

- **Congressional Action:** Continue to support funding for **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** which historically provides up to \$100 million annually for park and recreation infrastructure.
- **Congressional Action:** Support the **Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program's (UPARR)** inclusion in the FY 2015 Interior Appropriations package. Special Districts and Counties must also be included in urban park funding opportunities.

VI. Affiliate Legislative Support

- NACPRO, as an affiliate of the National Association of Counties (NACo) and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), fully supports the legislative platforms and agendas of NRPA and those items related to Parks and Recreation for NACo.

2014 NACo Legislative Priorities

- NACo supports protecting counties against unfunded and underfunded mandates. NACo members urge federal policymakers to respect and protect local decision-making authority at the County level. This includes strengthening intergovernmental dialogue and solutions focused on enhancing federal-state-local collaboration and local flexibility.
- NACo supports protecting 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 public facilities, infrastructure and development. Furthermore, NACo supports legislative initiatives that permit the collection of existing sales and use taxes from remote sellers.
- NACo supports Federal Land Revenue Sharing including secure **Rural Schools (SRS) and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)** programs. NACo members support extending full mandatory funding for 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, while SRS provides payments to counties to compensate for significant declines in federal revenue sharing obligations due to reductions in federal land management activities on the National Forest System.
- NACo supports County Priorities in **MAP-21 Reauthorization**. NACo members support County transportation priorities in the reauthorization of the surface transportation bill known as MAP-21. Key priorities include continuing dedicated funding for off-system bridges and policies that expedite project delivery. The nation's counties play a critical role in transportation and infrastructure, owning 45 percent of America's public roads, 230,000 bridges and are involved in a third of the nation's transit and airport systems.

Therefore, NACo also support counties having an enhanced and defined voice in national, statewide and regional transportation planning.

- NACo supports rural development initiatives and the **Farm Bill**. NACo members support federal investments and gap financing for rural development and will work to prioritize and increase 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 essential community and economic building blocks, such as water/wastewater infrastructure, community facilities, broadband, electric, housing, renewable energy and capital for businesses and entrepreneurs.

2014 NRPA Legislative Platform

Conservation

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

NRPA supports the reauthorization of, and full and dedicated funding for LWCF. Along with full and dedicated funding for the LWCF, NRPA support H.R. 2727, bi-partisan legislation introduced by Congressman McKinley (R-WV) which would require a minimum of 40% of the annual LWCF appropriations are allocated to the State Assistance Program.

No Child Left Inside (S. 1306/H.R. 2702)

Introduced by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Congressman Sarbanes (D-MD), this legislation would amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). It would strengthen and expand environmental education in classrooms by providing funds to encourage partnerships between school districts and parks, as well as other community based organizations.

Healthy Kids Outdoors Act (HKOA)

This legislation is expected to be reintroduced in 2014 and provides funding to states for the development of comprehensive strategies related either to expanding environmental education through the school system and finding other means of getting kids and families more physically active in the outdoors.

Health and Wellness

Health and Human Services Appropriations

Funding for prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control that create substantial and sustainable community level programs that prevent and control obesity and other chronic diseases through physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco-free living and community

preventive services. These grant programs support state and local government entities such as park and recreation agencies.

Child Nutrition Act /Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act Reauthorization

This legislation authorizes funding for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Programs (CACFP) which are managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provides free meals to low income children while school is out of session and will be up for renewal in FY 2015. In addition, yearly funding for the SFSP and CACFP is through the Agriculture Appropriations. Park and recreation agencies are the largest public provider of healthy meals and snacks to children outside of schools.

Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act (S.1562)

Legislation introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), which would reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965. It addresses the health, welfare and economic needs of older individuals by promoting senior center modernizations and evidence based chronic disease management and falls prevention.

Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act (H.R. 956)

Introduced by Congressman Kind (D-WI), this bill would expand the IRS definition of medical expenditures to include physical activity as preventative medicine. This would allow individuals to use the pre-tax dollars in Flexible Spending Accounts and Health Savings Accounts to include expenditures such as; membership at a recreation or fitness facility, youth and adult sports league fees, exercise classes, youth camps, organized running event registration fees and other physical activities.

Social Equity

Community Parks and Revitalization (CPR) Act (H.R. 2424)

Sponsored by Representative Sires (D-NJ), this legislation would provide matching federal grants for park and recreation infrastructure in metropolitan areas. Specifically, this legislation would authorize the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide funding to local park and recreation agencies, through three grant programs: Rehabilitation and Construction, Innovation and Recreation Program and Recovery Action Program. The bill also includes innovative financing for park infrastructure (known as PIFIA).

Transportation

Dedicated funding for Active Transportation options, including trails and pedestrian projects primarily through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Combined, these programs, found in the federal surface transportation bill "MAP-21", provide approximately \$800 million annually for bike and pedestrian projects and to promote pedestrian and bicycling safety in local communities. MAP-21 is due to expire in September of 2014.

New Opportunities for Bicycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure Financing Act (H.R. 3978). Introduced by Representative Sires (D-NJ), this bi-partisan legislation would provide local communities with low-cost loans to build safe and accessible networks of sidewalks, bikes

lanes and paths as part of the federal transportation financing program known as TIFIA. Twenty-five percent of the loan financing for this program must be used to help low-income communities.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program

Support UPARR’s inclusion in the FY 2015 Interior Appropriations package. However, funding for UPARR should not be done at the expense (or “in lieu of”) of support for LWCF State Assistance.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Continue to support funding for CDBG which historically provides up to \$100 million annually for park and recreation infrastructure.