



Capitol Connection E-Newsletter- July 2014

- **Second Round of Policy Committee Meetings Begin Next Week**
- **Please Review: Draft ACCG Policy Platforms**
- **EPA Definition Change of “Waters of the U.S.”: Possible County Impacts**
- **NACo Legislative Update: Marketplace Fairness Act and Internet Tax Freedom**
- **EPD Proposes Significant Revisions to Georgia’s Drought Management Rule**
- **Joint Study Committee on Transportation Infrastructure Funding Announced**
- **ACCG Policy Staff to Deliver Update at 2014 Legislative Leadership Conference**
- **Time to Appoint Your County’s Voting Delegate**

Second Round of Policy Committee Meetings Begin Next Week

Registration is still available for the second round of policy committee meetings. Meetings will begin on Tuesday, July 29 and are scheduled to run through Wednesday, August 13. ACCG is once again offering commissioners the opportunity to join the policy discussions remotely via webinar. At the time of registration, attendees may choose to attend the actual meeting or to sign up for the webinar. A video of each meeting will be posted on the ACCG website at a later date.

Click [here](#) to register and to obtain additional information.

Please contact ACCG Legislative Policy Coordinator Ines Owens if you have any questions. She can be reached at (404) 522-5022 or iowens@accg.org.

Please Review: Draft ACCG Policy Platforms

Policy committee members have been working all summer to draft their policy platforms that will be included in the 2014-2015 County Platform. ACCG asks that county officials review the draft platforms that will be voted on during the second and final round of policy committee meetings. Please access the links below to view the platforms. Contact information for the ACCG policy staff member over each policy area is provided for anyone that may have questions or concerns.

[Economic Development and Transportation](#)- Shaun Adams, sadams@accg.org

[General County Government](#)- Todd Edwards, tedwards@accg.org

[Natural Resources and the Environment](#)- Todd Edwards, tedwards@accg.org

[Health and Human Services](#)- Debra Nesbit, dnesbit@accg.org

[Public Safety and the Courts](#)- Debra Nesbit, dnesbit@accg.org

[Revenue and Finance](#)- Clint Mueller, cmueller@accg.org

EPA Definition Change of “Waters of the U.S.”: Possible County Impacts

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are currently considering a rule that would amend the definition of “Waters of the U.S.” and expand the range of waters that fall under federal jurisdiction. The proposed rule is open for public comment until October 20, 2014. While supportive of a rule to provide clarity on “jurisdictional” waters, ACCG and the National Association of Counties have several significant concerns with the proposed rule and are seeking clarification in several key areas, particularly involving county ditch and stormwater infrastructure activities.

ACCG Associate Legislative Director Todd Edwards recently presented these concerns during a meeting with EPA’s Local Government Advisory Council in Atlanta. To view Todd’s testimony, please click [here](#).

For a more comprehensive review of possible county impacts of the proposed rule change, please visit NACo’s website: www.naco.org/wous.

Please contact ACCG Associate Legislative Director Todd Edwards at (404) 522-5022 or tedwards@accg.org.

NACo Legislative Update: Marketplace Fairness Act and Internet Tax Freedom

Members of the United States Congress recently introduced the Marketplace and Internet Tax Fairness Act (MITFA). MITFA combines two key issues important to counties: the Market Place Fairness Act which allows state and local governments to enforce existing sales taxes on remote sellers and the Internet Tax Freedom Act which prohibits counties from collecting a tax on Internet access (typically a subscription service) until November 1, 2014. MIFTA includes the marketplace Fairness Act as passed by the U.S. Senate in 2013 with a few minor technical corrections and provides a ten-year extension of the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

Click [here](#) for further details on this proposed legislation and to read the official legislative update from the National Association of Counties.

EPD Proposes Significant Revisions to Georgia’s Drought Management Rule

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) is proposing several major revisions to Georgia’s Drought Management Rule. While the proposed rule has yet to go out for public comment, EPD has provided a draft that will impact local water systems significantly. EPD has asked ACCG and others to provide comment on this proposal by August 5, 2014. For additional information see:

- 1.) [EPD’s PowerPoint](#) presentation outlining the proposed changes; and

2.) [EPD's draft rule proposal](#).

ACCG is currently developing its comments and your feedback to Todd Edwards (tedwards@accg.org) is appreciated. Or, if you would like to submit comments directly to EPD, please provide them by August 5 to:

James A. Capp

Chief, Watershed Protection Branch, EPD

2 Martin Luther King Jr., Drive, Suite 1152 East

Atlanta, GA 30344

RE: Drought Management Rule- Stakeholder Meeting #2

Or by email to tim.cash@dnr.state.ga.us; Subject: Drought Management Rule- Stakeholder Meeting #2D

Joint Study Committee on Transportation Infrastructure Funding Announced

Appointees for the Joint Study Committee on Critical Transportation Infrastructure Funding have recently been announced. State Senate and House members and representatives from other stakeholder groups will convene on August 5.

Click [here](#) to view the tentative schedule and the complete list of study committee appointees.

ACCG Policy Staff to Deliver Update at 2014 Legislative Leadership Conference

The ACCG policy staff will help prepare commissioners for the upcoming legislative session during the 2014 Legislative Leadership Conference on October 8-10, 2014 at the Classic Center in Athens-Clarke County. The policy staff will provide an update on various policy issues in each of the seven policy areas on Thursday, October 9 at 8:30 a.m. County officials will receive a report on each topic area in order to vote on the 2014-2015 ACCG County Platform during the business session.

Click [here](#) to learn more information about this year's Legislative Leadership Conference.

Time to Appoint Your County's Voting Delegate

The 2014 Legislative Leadership Conference presents an opportunity for counties to approve the final County Platform. Counties must appoint a voting delegate to vote during the business session on Thursday, October 9 at 4:45 p.m. at the Classic Center in Athens-Clarke County. Please complete and return the [voting delegate form](#) **no later than Friday, September 26**. All completed forms may be submitted by fax to (404) 525-2477 to the attention of Rhonda Ligons or scanned in an email to rligons@accg.org.