



Capitol Connection E-Newsletter- October 2014

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2014 Fall District Meetings Are Two Weeks Away!

The 2014 Fall District Meetings are now two weeks away! The meetings are set to help prepare county officials for the months ahead that will mark the start of the 2015 legislative session. During the meetings, the ACCG policy staff will outline county legislative priorities and brief attendees on issues of significance to counties. Meeting attendees will also hear from various state legislators as they will provide their perspectives on key issues. This year’s meetings are scheduled for November 6-24, 2014. Click [here](#) for meeting details such as times and locations and to register.

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

Time to Designate Your County Legislative Coordinator

In 2010, ACCG established a network of [county legislative coordinators \(CLC\)](#) to help improve communication with members while the General Assembly is in session. Each county was asked to designate a county legislative coordinator to: 1) help keep county commissioners and county management updated on legislation of importance to counties and 2) provide county-specific information to ACCG, as requested, to help legislators assess the impact of proposed legislation. County chairs were asked to officially designate the county legislative coordinator by passing a resolution at a commission meeting.

As we head into the 2015 legislative session, ACCG wants to update the list of county legislative coordinators by doing the following:

1. **If your county legislative coordinator is the same person designated for 2014**, please confirm and send their current contact information.

- 2. If your county legislative coordinator has changed or your county did not designate a legislative coordinator in 2014 and you would like to do so for 2015, ACCG recommends that a [resolution](#) be brought before the commission for consideration. Once the resolution passes, ACCG will need a copy of it for our files as well as the name title, office, and cell phone numbers and email addresses of your county's designee. **Please fax the resolution to (404) 589-7843.****

Please [click](#) here to review the list of counties that need to confirm (from 2013 for this year) or appoint their CLC. To update, confirm, or appoint a CLC, please contact ACCG Legislative Policy Coordinator Ines Owens at iowens@accg.org.

2015-2016 Final County Platform Available for Review

The final version of the 2015-2016 County Platform was approved by the ACCG membership at the 2014 Legislative Leadership Conference on October 9, 2014. Each policy committee report was presented and received a vote from the membership. In many instances, language has been added or deleted from existing association policies to shorten the policy statement. Also, some language has been added that strengthens the association's position and actions which have already been accomplished have been removed. Questions regarding any of the policies should be directed to the appropriate policy staff member by calling (404) 522-5022 or (800) 858-2224.

The Final County Platform can be viewed [here](#).

Also available for review are the Legislative Priorities Briefs. Access the links below to review each priority brief. Staff contact information is provided for each issue.

[Juvenile Justice Funding](#)- ACCG Associate Legislative Director Debra Nesbit, dnesbit@accg.org

[Property Tax Administration Reforms](#)- ACCG Legislative Director Clint Mueller, cmueller@accg.org

[Transportation Funding](#)- ACCG Associate Legislative Director Shaun Adams, sadams@accg.org

Get Ready to File Your 2014 Immigration Report

The deadline to submit the annual immigration report to the Department of Audits and Accounts (DOAA) is December 31, 2014. This year's report covers the reporting period of December 1, 2013 through November 30, 2014. No changes were made to the reporting system or county requirements during the 2014 legislative session. The DOAA recently sent a letter to each county containing an overview of the requirements and a list of resources that they have made available for assisting with the reporting process. A copy of that letter can be found [here](#). Please start preparing early to ensure that you have all information needed to file the report by the specified deadline. If you have any questions about filing the report, please contact the DOAA at immhelp@audits.ga.gov or visit the DOAA website at www.audits.ga.gov/.

Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention Programs RFP

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is offering local communities a funding opportunity to assist with the implementation of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention Programs. The aim of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention Programs is to improve juvenile accountability for offending behaviors through increased accountability programming for juvenile offenders and improved juvenile justice system accountability to juvenile offenders. This offering is being made to address the need for prevention activities for at-risk youth in local communities in the initial stages of justice involvement.

Click [here](#) for more information.

ACCG Introduces “Legislative Series on Local Government”

ACCG has recently introduced a webinar series titled “Legislative Series on Local Government”. The webinars are geared toward state legislators to provide them with information on local government topics and will be held frequently throughout the year. All webinars will be archived on the ACCG website, www.accg.org, so that they may be viewed at a later date.

The very first webinar was hosted on October 21, 2014, and at the request of several legislators, focused on local sales tax. During the webinar, ACCG discussed the various types of local option sales taxes such as SPLOST, LOST, HOST, ESPLOST, TSPLOST, and others. Information on how each tax was created, how they are used as well as differences in the tax base was provided. ACCG also discussed some recent proposed changes to the laws that govern the local option sales taxes.

The October 21, 2014, webinar may be viewed [here](#).

Please continue to watch for information on upcoming webinars. Contact ACCG Legislative Director Clint Mueller if you have any questions or if you would like to suggest a topic for a future webinar. He can be reached at cmueller@accg.org or (404) 522-5022.

GDOT Transportation Plan Survey Available

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) would like counties’ feedback and participation in an online survey to hear their ideas on how Georgia’s transportation funding should be spent over the next 25 years. The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP)/Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP) is being updated and a major component of the process is considering how transportation spending will impact the state’s economic prosperity and the quality of life for all Georgians.

By identifying what aspects of the transportation system are most important to counties and other stakeholders, GDOT will use this information to make informed transportation decisions in the future. The online tool allows stakeholders to input how they would like transportation funding to be allotted, see how it affects the performance of the system, and compare their

results to other users. The survey is expected to take 5-10 minutes to complete and responses are completely confidential.

The survey can be accessed at www.gdot2040.com. Please complete the survey by **November 21, 2014**. All comments or questions should be sent to sstp@dot.ga.gov.

NACo Launches Comprehensive PILT Action Center

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has launched an online Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Action Center to assist counties in advocating for full funding for this federal program. The PILT Action Center provides information and resources such as individual county PILT profiles, a draft letter to Congress on PILT, a sample Op-Ed on PILT, as well as other NACo resources. County officials may access the PILT Action Center by visiting www.naco.org/PILT.