



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
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August 26, 2010

Memorandum

TO: Councilmember Todd Apo, Chair
Clayton Wong, City Council Administrative Officer

FROM: Councilmember Romy M. Cachola, Member
NACo Transportation Steering Committee

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Romy", is written over the "FROM:" line of the memorandum.

SUBJECT: Report on National Association of Counties (NACo)
2010 Annual Conference
Reno, Nevada
July 16-20, 2010

I attended the 2010 National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference and Exposition, which was held in Reno, Nevada from July 16-20, 2010. I was among some 3,000 elected and appointed county officials from across the nation who attended the event.

The conference provided county officials with opportunities to learn and gather information to help improve the effectiveness of counties. Attendees heard from top officials, elected new NACo officers, adopted new legislative policies and participated in an extensive array of educational workshops.

Economic recovery and how counties can do more with less during these tough times seemed to be the major themes of the conference. The City & County of Honolulu is not the only county that's struggling to maintain the level of public services in the face of declining revenues and increased costs.

Friday, July 16, 2010

After checking in at the conference, I attended several subcommittee meetings hosted by the NACo Transportation Steering Committee, of which I am a member. The first was the Highway-Highway Safety Subcommittee meeting from 12 noon to 1 p.m. We received an update on the

discussions involving current federal transportation funds, briefly discussed reauthorization of the surface transportation program and discussed new resolutions. From 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., I attended the Mass Transit-Railroad Subcommittee meeting. We also discussed the status of surface transportation reauthorization as it relates to transit, FY 2011 transit budgetary issues and new resolutions.

Later that evening, I attended a reception and dinner at 7 pm hosted by the NACo Transportation Steering Committee. I met other committee members and briefly discussed other topics that the committee would be debating at the conference.

Saturday, July 17, 2010

At 9 a.m. on Saturday, I attended the Transportation Steering Committee meeting until 12 noon. There were several speakers of note, including the Honorable Quentin Kopp, former chairman and current member of the California High Speed Rail Authority, who updated the audience on the progress of the California's plan for an extensive high speed rail network. Kopp also shared his views on high speed rail in the U.S. Another speaker we heard from was Jane Calderwood from the Airports Council International who discussed the state of the American airline industry, our system of publically-owned airports and the outlook for passage of FAA legislation.

We were informed that Congress has made progress on reauthorizing the federal highways and transit programs, but it seems that it will take a few more months, maybe even longer, before a bill is completed. Many people think that a final bill will not be completed by the end of this year, due mainly to opposition to increasing the federal gas tax or any alternative funding source. Since the program expired on September 30, 2009, there have been four extensions, the latest of which will expire on December 13, 2010. The U.S. Senate and the Obama administration are taking a "go-slow" approach on surface transportation reauthorization, but the U.S. House has been more proactive. The House Highways and Transit Subcommittee approved its 775-page draft bill last June 2009. It was developed by Rep. James Oberstar and supported by the Republican leadership of the committee. The House's version is a complex proposal that focuses on a number of major formula programs and eliminates or consolidates about 75 of the 108 existing highway and transit programs. The price tag for the legislation is about \$450 billion over six years, which is a \$163 million increase over SAFETEA-LU, and includes \$337 billion for highways, \$100 billion for transit and \$12.6 billion for highway safety.

As for transportation funding, we were told that the Obama administration submitted its budget request for FY2011, which is being reviewed by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Overall transportation funding has increased by 2.4 percent to \$78.8 billion. The federal highway program was frozen at \$42.8 billion, while the Federal Transit Program was increased by less than 1 percent to \$10.8 billion.

Sunday, July 18, 2010

I attended the Opening General Session from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., which was presided by the Honorable Valerie Brown, NACo president and supervisor of Sonoma County, California. Ms. Brown concluded her term as NACo president at the conference. The special guest speaker for the Opening General Session was economist, author and former U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich. He evaluated the current state of the economy and predicted that recovery from the Great

Recession would be slow and painful. He said that the country faces fundamental economic challenges that will require addressing structural long term debt and creating jobs with good wages. Compounding the problem is that consumers are spending less due to fears of a prolonged economic slump. One way to increase consumer demand, Reich said, is to get people back to work. The government can help by creating jobs and/or extending unemployment benefits. Reich said that the biggest mistake of the Obama administration's economic policy was not making the stimulus package larger than it was. He also advised Congress to keep the George W. Bush-era tax cuts in place for the middle class for the next two to three years but to allow the cuts to expire for wealthy individuals which could help the economy without overly burdening the highest-income earners.

From 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m., I attended a workshop entitled "Making Something Out of Nothing: New Models for Financing Energy Upgrades in County Facilities" which was moderated by the Honorable Greg Fox, commissioner from Howard County, Maryland. The speakers included Christian Leinbach, commissioner from Berks County, Pennsylvania, and James Scahill, commissioner from Armstrong County, Pennsylvania. They discussed ways of implementing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in counties without EECBG funding. Considering that there isn't much money in county budgets to make energy efficiency investments, some counties have utilized unique "paid from savings" methods whereby projects are funded with savings generated over the long term. Leinbach and Scahill discussed how their respective counties learned to finance county facility upgrades for energy efficiency using a variety of financing methods—including performance contracting, power purchase agreements and lease-purchase agreements. Leinbach discussed performance contracting and how Energy Service Companies (ESCO) work to help counties save money. He also talked about choosing the right ESCO and how important it is for counties. Scahill talked about his experiences working with an ESCO and how Armstrong County chose their ESCO. He described how Armstrong County implemented its energy conservation project by upgrading lighting, water fixtures and upgraded their boiler/chiller in old county buildings. The county spent \$2 million dollars over a three-year period on the upgrades.

From 2:45 p.m. to 4 p.m., I attended a second workshop entitled "Is Traffic Congestion a Bottleneck in Your County?" Speakers included Scott Haggerty, supervisor from Alameda County, California; Andrew Fremier, Metropolitan Transportation Commission deputy executive director from Oakland County, California; Philip Demery, Department of Transportation & Public Works director from Sonoma County, California; and Lee Gibson, Regional Transportation Commission executive director from Washoe County, Nevada. The speakers discussed various tools and resources that counties can use to reduce the impacts of congestion on its residents. They said that congestion can result when traffic demand approaches or exceeds the available capacity of the system and can be influenced by a number of events including time of day, weather, work zones, traffic incidents, etc. According to the 2009 Urban Mobility Report published by the Texas Transportation Institute, the overall cost of congestion (based on wasted fuel and lost productivity) reached \$87.2 billion in 2007 or more than \$750 for every U.S. traveler.

Monday, July 19, 2010

I attended the General Session from 2:15 p.m. to 4 p.m., which was presided by the Honorable Valerie Brown, NACo president. The featured speaker was Joe Dittmar, World Trade Center Tower 2 survivor. Dittmar's life involved calculated risks ever since he graduated from college. More accurately, it involved calculating risks. As an insurance executive, his professional life revolved around the rationality that kept his business solvent, which involved representing his company at a meeting in New York when nobody else was available. The meeting was in the South Tower of the World Trade Center, Floor 105, at 8:30 a.m., September 11, 2001, just as the North Tower was struck. While he and other meeting participants started to evacuate, officials figured the chances for the occupants' safety were greater inside the South Tower than outdoors where steel and debris was falling from the North Tower. When he was asked to return to the meeting on the 105th floor, he said no, and continued down the fire escape. Close to the 75th floor, he felt the building shake violently as a plane struck the South Tower a few floors above him. As he searches his consciousness, almost nine years later, he continues to put his values through a crucible, reliving the experience every time he recounts the story. He says every decision you make is important—no matter how big or small. It could cost or save a life. Of the 54 people to attend the meeting on the 105th floor, only six others survived.

Tuesday, July 20, 2010

On the morning of the final day of the conference, I attended a workshop from 8:45 a.m. to 10 a.m. entitled "Road Safety Audits Can Help Counties Save Lives on Rural Roads." The workshop was co-sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, NACo and the National Association of County Engineers. The speakers were Thomas McDonald from Iowa LTAP and FHWA/RSA trainer Craig Allred. I learned that the toll from highway crashes is an important health and safety issue. The cost of these highway crashes are estimated to be over \$200 billion annually, so it's essential for county officials to assess causes and reduce the numbers. Road Safety Audits (RSAs) serve to bring an improved understanding of crash cause and appropriate countermeasures to reduce these crashes. The speakers explained how RSAs can help counties reduce crashes and fatalities on rural and isolated roads and why legal issues should not dissuade counties from conducting an RSA. In fact, both speakers said that RSAs and a formal safety performance exam by an independent audit team should be an essential part of every road safety program.

I later attended the Election of Officers and Business Meeting from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. NACo Officers elected for 2010-11 were: President Glen Whitley, Judge, Tarrant County, Texas; First Vice President Lenny Eliason, commissioner, Athens County, Ohio; Second Vice President Chris Rodgers, Douglas County, Nebraska, and Immediate Past President Valerie Brown, supervisor, Sonoma County, California. Upon being installed as NACo President, Whitley announced that he would create a NACo Veterans Task Force to address issues important to veterans.

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City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: August 23, 2010

Traveler: Romy Cachola
 Event: 2010 NACo Annual Conference
 Location: Reno / Washoe County, NV
 Dates: From July 16, 2010 To July 20, 2010

Description	Amount	Notes
1. Registration Fee	\$490.00	Online registration confirmation attached
2. Airfare	\$857.00	DR: 7/15/10 10:39 pm RT: 7/21/10 2:59 pm
3. Hotel	\$802.25	
4. Meals	\$211.14	Statement & receipts attached
5. Ground Transportation	\$36.00	Receipts attached
6. Tips	\$44.08	Receipts & spreadsheet attached
7. Other		
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	\$2,440.47	

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

AUG 24 2010

 Date