

July 18, 2025



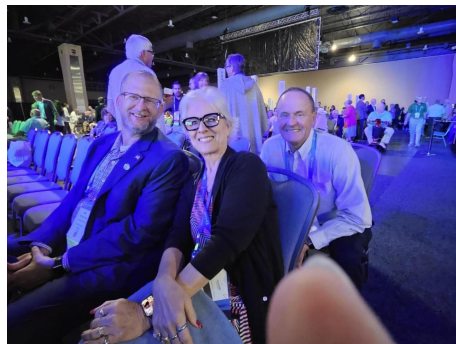
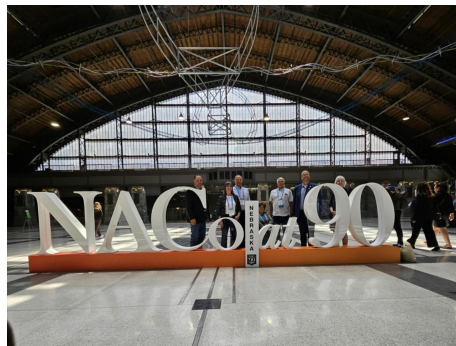
The Ninety-Three

NACO Leadership Attends National Association of Counties Annual Conference

NACO leadership recently joined county officials from across the nation at the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

The week was filled with meaningful collaboration, as attendees discussed federal policies affecting counties, shared best practices, voted on policy resolutions, and celebrated county achievements - including Nebraska becoming a 100% NACo member state.

Newly elected NACo President J.D. Clark [highlighted the role of "County Storytellers"](#) in sharing the impact of local government. We're excited to support his initiative by sharing unique stories from Nebraska's counties.





***KETV*: Nebraska County Officials Look to Texas Floods for Lessons**

Emergency response falls on the shoulders of our local leaders. [Check out this article from *KETV*](#) about how Nebraska's county officials prepare for emergencies and the importance of investing in emergency management infrastructure to keep our communities safe.

BEAD Policy Revision Creates Challenges for Rural Nebraska

As you may be aware, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) released a revised policy for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program on June 6, 2025. You can view the full policy notice here:

[\[BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice \(PDF\)\]](#).

One of the most immediate impacts of this new policy is the removal of more than 15,000 premises from Nebraska's BEAD-eligible map. These areas are now considered "served" due to the presence of unlicensed wireless providers — a concerning interpretation given the known performance limitations of such services, especially in rural and agricultural regions.

Perhaps most concerning is the revised scoring rubric, which no longer prioritizes fiber-optic infrastructure. Instead, fixed wireless and satellite services are now scored alongside fiber. While fiber typically carries higher upfront costs per premise, it also offers a stronger return on investment over time through lower maintenance, greater capacity, and better reliability.

The new defined project area definitions will also limit opportunities to bring fiber to areas that were previously targeted under the original NBEAD framework.

During last year's challenge process, NACO and many of our partners worked diligently to secure additional resources for Nebraska. That effort brought \$105 million in additional BEAD funding to the state. However, if funding decisions are now based solely on upfront cost rather than long-term impact and infrastructure sustainability, we fear much of this money may go unused and returned to the federal government.

Wireless and satellite are good, cost-effective broadband options for areas of Nebraska; however, there are many benefits to fiber deployment, especially in areas where telehealth, precision agriculture, and remote learning demand reliable, high-capacity internet.

In response to these policy changes, we've engaged in multiple in-person and virtual meetings with NACO, NTIA, the Nebraska Broadband Office, and state and federal policymakers.

In these meetings, we are emphasizing the economic and public health stakes of this issue:

Fiber broadband supports the precision technologies that drive Nebraska's agricultural economy.

Our aging population, especially in areas with limited long-term care options, needs dependable broadband to age in place.

Telehealth access is becoming critical as rural hospitals face closures and staffing shortages.

Nebraska was allocated \$405 million under the BEAD program. These funds should be used to implement the broadband strategy originally developed by the Nebraska Broadband Office and approved by NTIA - one that reflected input from local stakeholders across the state.

To learn more how your county was impacted by the policy change, please visit <https://broadband.nebraska.gov/nebraska-broadband-maps/>.

Joint Public Hearing Postcard Reminder & Upcoming Webinar July 24th, 3pm CST

NACO will host a webinar on July 24, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. central to discuss the Joint Public Hearing postcard and hearing process as well as provide walkthroughs on legislative changes in LB647 (Authority Computation in Budget (cap), growth harmonization and public safety notice on tax statement).

You can register for the webinar with the link below.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Yv-tTam_SMqu4LJtsrg2Wg

Email candace.meredith@nebraskacounties.org if you have any questions or concerns.

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Save the Dates - 2025 Annual Conference

ANNUAL CONFERENCE IMPORTANT DATES

Aug. 18

Sponsor & Exhibit Hall Registration Opens - 8 AM CST

Sept. 10

County Official Registration Opens - 8 AM CST
Hotel Reservation Form Available - 2:30 PM CST

Oct. 10

Hotel Reservation Form Deadline

Nov. 21

County Official Pre-Registration Deadline - 11:59 PM CST
Registration Cancellation Refunds No Longer Available

Dec. 17

Conference Begins

Send Us Photos of Your County Fair!

NACO wants to share photos of your county fair! Snap pictures of the rides, the food, the animals, or any other fun moments, and email them to lauren.franken@nebraskacounties.org so we can feature your county fair on our social media!

NACo Legislative Landscape Webinar: Prescription Drug Costs & County Impacts

There is significant legislative activity at both the federal and state levels focused on prescription drug costs. These developments have important implications for employer-sponsored health plans, including how counties administer their prescription drug benefits and broader healthcare offerings.

This webinar from NACo's Public Promise Insurance will provide an overview of the current legislative landscape and highlight key trends expected to shape county benefit plans in 2025 and beyond. Hear directly from Leanna Gassaway, Vice President of Government Affairs at CVS Health, on what's unfolding in Washington and what it means for your county.

When:

Wednesday, July 23 - 12:00-1:00pm CST

What will be covered:

- Overview of the prescription drug benefit landscape
- 2025 legislative proposals and litigation at both the federal and local level
- Potential impact on health insurance coverage, including implications on cost for plan sponsors
- Opportunities for you to engage on this important issue

Register for the Webinar

Call for Nominations: Nebraska Representative to the NACo Board of Directors - Deadline Wednesday!

With 100% membership in the National Association of Counties (NACo), the NACo Board of Directors is now accepting nominations for the second Nebraska Representative to the NACo Board of Directors.

The individual selected for this position will be responsible for attending NACo Board of Directors meetings and providing quarterly reports to the NACo Board during its regular meetings throughout the year as the Membership Ex Officio Director.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity or would like to submit a nomination, please contact Candace Meredith at candace.meredith@nebraskacounties.org or **402-540-4831**.

The deadline to submit nominations is July 23, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

What is a NACO Business Member?

Support provided by our generous business members helps NACO continue to expand our educational programming for Nebraska county officials. Business members enjoy a number

of benefits, including features on our website and social media pages. We also offer our business members a complimentary exhibit booth at the County Board Workshop, discounts on sponsorships, and 15% off the cost of booking our NACO West Training Center in Ogallala.

Click the button below to learn more about becoming NACO business memberships.

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