



# County Courier

**June 2017**

## National Conference of Republican County Officials

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NCRCO is completing another exciting and successful year. At the July 2016, Annual Meeting in Long Beach, we had as our speaker Gale Gitcho, former Republican Governor's Association Communications Director, one of the most talented communications professionals in politics today. She gave us her perspective on how campaigning has changed (and how much campaigning has remained the same). It was a well-received, fascinating presentation.

Then at the February 2017, Legislative Conference in D.C., we were honored to have U.S Representative John R. Carter from Texas' 31<sup>st</sup> Congressional District speak to us. Congressman Carter serves as Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Appropriations and also serves on the Commerce, Justice and Science Subcommittee, and the Defense Subcommittee.

Chairman Carter was a county official (District Judge) for 20 years prior to being elected to Congress in 2002. At our Reception we were honored to present to him, on behalf of NACo, the 2017 NACo Former County Official's Award.

we also heard from one of our own, Robert Artlett a Sussex County Delaware Councilman, about his inside involvement in the Trump Campaign and Transition. Another fascinating talk.



We are finalizing our arrangement for our speaker at our July 2017 Annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio. We are hopeful to have another top-notch person talk to us. We do have dates and times. Please put these on your calendar:

**Business Meeting**

Sat. July 22 5:15 — 6:00 p.m.

Room B242-243  
Columbus Convention Center

**Reception**

Sat. July 22 6:00.— 6:30 p.m.

Room B244-245  
Columbus Convention Center

[www.ncrco.org](http://www.ncrco.org)

In addition to Chairman Carter,

(continued on page 2)

## President's Message (continued from page 1)

NCRCO continues to be very active in the Leadership of NACo. Judge Glen Whitley is a NACo Past President/NCRCO Past President; Current NACo President Desloge as well as 2nd VP Greg Cox are also members of NCRCO.

NCRCO members on the NACo Executive Board in addition to Brian Desloge and Greg Cox include Commissioner Cindy Bobbitt and Commission Chair Christian Leinbach, both NCRCO Past Presidents, and Commission Chair Gordon Cruickshank, NCRCO Region Director. Other current NCRCO Officers/Directors now serving on the NACo Board include Commissioner Joe Briggs, Judge Jon Burrows, Judge J.D. Clark, Commissioner Lew Gaiter, Justice of the Peace Connie Hickman, Commissioner Chip LeMarca, Commissioner Michael McGinley, and Surveyor Kent Ward.

In addition, several of the NACo policy steering committees, standing committees and caucuses are chaired by NCRCO members. These include: Commissioner Joe Briggs chairman of the Telecommunications and Technology Steering Committee; County Judge J.D. Clark chairman of the Rural Action Caucus; Commissioner Lew Gaiter III chairman of the Information Technology Standing Committee; Commissioner Chip LaMarca chairman of the Finance, Pensions and Intergovernmental Affairs Steering Committee; Judge Executive Gary Moore chairman of the Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee and Commissioner Nancy Sharpe chairman of the Human Services and Education Steering Committee.

This list is far from complete as it does not list the many NCRCO members who serve as vice chairs of NACo committees, active members of the various NACo steering committees, Caucuses and Task forces nor all of our NCRCO members serving on the NACo board of directors who are not also NCRCO officers and directors. It suffices to say that NCRCO is an important element in the leadership and activities of NACo.

We continue to be grateful to the McLane Group for again being a Platinum Sponsor for 2017. Please read the sponsor page at the end of the Newsletter.

Hope to see you in Columbus on July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Jon

### New NCRCO Treasurer

As was reported in the January County Courier, Robert Boyd who was elected to be our Treasurer last July was unable to serve out his term. VP Joe Briggs stepped in and performed the duties of the Treasurer on an interim basis until a successor for Robert could be appointed.

At our February Board meeting Commissioner Mike McGinley of Beaverhead County Montana was affirmed as our new Treasurer and is now performing those duties. Accordingly, the address for correspondence with the treasurer has changed and is now:

NCRCO Treasurer  
c/o Mike McGinley  
521 South Dakota St  
Dillon, MT 59725

## Nominating Committee Report

Nominating Committee:

Cindy R. Bobbitt, Chair, Immediate Past President  
Jon Burrows, Member, Current President  
Glenn Whitley, Member, Active Past President  
Rob Arlett, Member, Regional Director  
Gary Moore, Member, Member-at-large



In accordance with the NCRCO Bylaws the Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following slate of individuals for the nomination of NCRCO Officers and Region Directors at the Business Meeting on July 22, 2017 to serve for fiscal year 2017/18.

President – Joe Briggs, Cascade County Commissioner (MT)  
Vice President – Darry Stacy, Cleveland County Commissioner (OK)  
Secretary (2 year term) – J.D. Clark, Wise County Judge (TX)

Regional Directors:

Region 1 – Toni Pappas, Hillsborough County Commissioner (NH) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 2 – Christian Leinbach, Berks County Commissioner (PA) - (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Region 3 – Rob Arlett, Sussex County Councilman (DE) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 4 – Chip LaMarca, Broward County Commissioner (FL) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 5 – Chris Bowen, Forrest County Supervisor (MS) - (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Region 6 – Kent Ward, Hamilton County Surveyor (IN) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 7 – Tim Dolan, Sherburne County Commissioner (MN) - (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Region 8 – Ryan Wescoat, Cass County Auditor (MO) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 9 – Jason Brinkley, Cooke County Judge (TX) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 10 – Lew Gaiter, Larimer County Commissioner (CO) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Region 11 – Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner (WA) - (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Region 12 – Demar Dahl, Elko County Commissioner (NV) – (running for 2<sup>nd</sup> term)

NCRCO members may nominate from the floor any member for any position at the meeting and all elections shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order. All Officers shall be a current NCRCO dues paid member and be a current elected or appointed Republican County Officials.

The President, Vice-President, and Immediate Past President shall hold office for a term of one year, or until their successor takes office. The Secretary and Treasurer shall each serve a two year staggered term, with the Secretary elected in odd number years and the Treasurer elected in even number years. Officers may hold only one office at a time and may not serve simultaneously as an Officer and as a Regional Director.

Mike McGinley, Beaver Head County Commissioner (MT) will be serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the term for Treasurer and therefore is not up for re-election or election. Jon Burrows, Bell County Judge (TX) will be serving as the Immediate Past President per bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy R. Bobbitt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cindy R. Bobbitt, Chair NCRCO Nominating Committee  
NCRCO Immediate Past President

## Summer Reflections—Darry Stacy

As we go through the summer months and celebrate Memorial Day and Independence Day, I reflect on those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Constitutional rights and freedoms. I remember the Americans who have courageously fought to give us freedom, as freedom is not free. We must continually pray for their safety and remember the loved ones they have left at home. As my boys grow, I have had the opportunity to watch as they began to understand first-hand the sacrifices that are being made for their freedoms.

While my boys were in middle school we had the opportunity to visit Washington DC. When my oldest son informed his teachers we would be going, one asked him to look up one of his good friends, a fellow soldier who died while serving in Vietnam. Unknown to the teacher, my son tore off a piece of paper and wrote the name on it.

We visited Arlington Cemetery and watched the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns with thankful reverence. We toured numerous battlefields where Americans had shed their blood and walked solemnly through memorials commemorating heroes from our past. As we began making our way through the memorials in downtown DC, my son remembered that crumpled piece of paper that he had brought with the name written on it and pulled it from his pocket.

As a family, we soon made our way to the Vietnam Memorial wall and walked reverently as we looked at all the mementos that were left in memory. My boys sought out a volunteer veteran who kindly explained to them the way to look up a fallen soldier's name and showed them how to make a rubbing of it. We searched through the thousands of names and eventually found the very name he had written on the paper. As the boys made a rubbing of the name it was an emotional experience for the entire family.

However, it was not near as emotional for me as the phone message I received when we returned home from the trip. His teacher called and with a trembling voice left a deeply heartfelt message, thanking us for taking the time to teach our son such an important lesson about sacrifice. He went on to say how he never thought that my son would remember and how special it was when he received that copy of his fallen friend's name. He continued by saying he had to leave the classroom when he got it because he did not want to break down in front of the kids.

As I gaze on our beautiful flag I often remember the first time my boys understood what sacrifices had been made for them from Americans who gave their all.

That boy has now grown into a man and is now teaching me what the true meaning of sacrifice is, as he also has joined the Army and has been deployed overseas multiple times. How ironic that at such a young age he understood so much more than me.

I encourage you as you gaze on our Stars and Stripes to consider what it means to you personally and maybe even write down your thoughts and feelings. And, as you do, please pray for Gods protection on all those that are sacrificing for our freedoms and give thanks for all those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Without the ultimate sacrifice of others we would not be able to call ourselves Republicans and most importantly Americans.

Darry Stacy  
Secretary

## Minutes of the 2017 Leg Conference Meeting Secretary Darry Stacy

Minutes of the 2017 Legislative Meeting  
Monday February 27, 2017  
5:00-5:30 PM Hoover Room

The meeting was called to order by President Jon Burrows (TX), who also welcomed members and guests.

Christian Leinbach (PA) opened in prayer.

Cindy Bobbitt (OK) led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken by sign in sheet. A quorum was declared present.

President Burrows recognized the continued sponsorship of McLane Group.

Committee reports

Secretary Stacy introduced the minutes from the 2017 Annual Conference and the motion passed unanimously.

Finance Report was introduced by Interim Treasurer /VP Joe Briggs. Motion passed unanimously.

President Burrows made interim appointments of Treasurer Mike McGinley and Secretary Darry Stacy.

Motion was made and unanimously passed to accept a \$5000 donation from the McLane Group.

Keynote speaker Congressman John Carter was introduced and spoke to the conference.

No old business to report.

No new business to report.

Meeting was adjourned to reception.

Darry Stacy  
Secretary



A limited number of the **NCRCO "Challenge Coins"** are still available for purchase by our members for the low price of **only \$10**.

**Order yours online at [NCRCO.org](http://NCRCO.org) or purchase it at the upcoming NCRCO event.**

## Issues Committee Report Waters of the US

### Comments from State and Local Governments Being Accepted until June 19

On May 27, 2015 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) finalized their Definition of Waters of the U.S. under the Clean Water Act. Since that proposal, the National Conference of Republican County Officials (NCRCO) and the National Association of Counties (NACo) has expressed multiple concerns on the rule's impact on county-owned and maintained roadside ditches, flood control channels, drainage conveyances and wastewater and storm water systems.

On April 19, 2017 the EPA and the Corps held a consultation meeting with NACo and other national state and local government associations regarding the agencies' upcoming "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rulemaking under the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 13132—Federalism. EO 13132 requires federal agencies to consult with elected state and local government officials (or their respective national organizations) on yet-to-be-proposed rules that impact state and local governments.

The meeting was a result of President Trump's February 28 Executive Order (EO) on "Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the 'Waters of the United States' Rule." The EO directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to revisit and rewrite the 2015 WOTUS rule.

The EPA and the Corps briefed state and local governments on their two-step process to withdraw and rewrite the rule. First, as part of the withdrawal effort, the agencies will move to reinstate preexisting regulations and guidance that were in place prior to the 2015 WOTUS rule. Second, the agencies plan to develop a new WOTUS definition based on Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's opinion in *Rapanos v. United States*, 547 U.S. 715 (2006). In *Rapanos*, the Corps was challenged over its intent to regulate isolated wetlands under the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit program. In a 4-1-4 split decision, Justice Scalia's plurality opinion stated that federal jurisdiction should only include waters with a relatively permanent flow.

During the meeting, the EPA and the Corps provided a PowerPoint presentation that included several options under consideration, including how "relatively permanent" waters and wetlands with a "continuous surface connection" should be defined. For example, should "relatively permanent" waters be limited to streams that carry water throughout the year or should the definition be expanded further to include "seasonal" streams? Likewise, should wetlands with a "continuous surface connection" through non-jurisdictional features be regulated? Further, what type of metrics could be used to demonstrate a "continuous surface connection?"

WOTUS is a term used in the Clean Water Act to define which waters (and their tributaries) fall under federal or state jurisdiction. In 2015, the Obama Administration finalized a new definition of WOTUS, which was immediately challenged in the courts. Since the rule was originally proposed, NACo has expressed numerous concerns about the rule's impact on county-maintained ditches and other water infrastructure.

The EPA and the Corps are accepting substantive comments from state and local governments until June 19. Please send written comments to EPA staff at [CWAwotus@epa.gov](mailto:CWAwotus@epa.gov). Please forward your comments and responses to Julie Ufner, NACo staff at [jufner@naco.org](mailto:jufner@naco.org).

## Vice President's Ruminations



I have titled this column “Ruminations” because that conjures a picture in my mind of a cranky old man pontificating on the wonders of days gone by. That is rather how I feel, at the moment, so I think it fits. I am not actually old enough to feel this way but as Indiana Jones said “It’s not the years, it’s the mileage”.

I started my involvement in politics my senior year in High School forty one years ago and have never escaped. For thirty one of those years I have been either an officer of the Republican Party itself, an officer of one of the RNC allied organizations, a Republican elected official or a combination of two or more. The other ten years I served as a campaign volunteer or a campaign consultant.

In that time, I have seen a great many changes, some good and many bad. I have had the pleasure to meet and work with many great leaders and dedicated public servants as well as far too many self-serving buffoons making decisions based on the current political wind. I might add that neither major party has an exclusive right on buffoons, we both have too many.

When I first stepped on this path some 41 years ago, “politician” was an honorable profession and partisan was a noun meaning a firm adherent to a cause. Now “politicians” rate somewhere at the bottom of the trusted scale slightly above murderers, arsonists and other nefarious characters. “Partisan” is now an adjective meaning “exhibiting blind, prejudiced and unreasoning allegiance”.

It is perhaps this desire for the simpler days of dedicated public service that led me ultimately to run for office at the county level. At the county level, we do not have the luxury of making enemies with our fellow commissioners since we have to work with them on a routine basis. We still understand that in politics as well as real life, today’s adversary may be tomorrow’s ally and we actually solve rather than create problems.

That being said, signs of change are occurring at the county level and WE need to address them before we become viewed through the same lens as members of congress and governors. At this point, you may be saying, “Ok you old parsnip... how”?

In response to the increasingly nasty tone of politics some at the county level have opted to purport themselves to be nonpartisan in an effort to get along. We are sometimes scolded at NACo conferences that even having a Republican group or a Democrat group is wrong, I disagree.

Each of us has core beliefs and a philosophy that guides us. If we pretend that we do not or if we hide it behind a nonpartisan label, how will voters know what to expect from us in office? Too many elections are already beauty contests about who has the best media rather than about issues and qualifications. Is that really how the greatest nation in the world should choose its leaders?

What we have to do as local elected officials is to be partisan in the old context of being “a firm adherent to our cause” without villainizing everyone who disagrees with us.

Democrats are not bad people, they simply see the world differently than we do. Why should our standing up for what we believe be a personal assault on the other side of the aisle? Why do some Republicans take it as a personal affront when our Democrat counterparts stand up for what they believe? Being a “partisan” is an important part of a participatory government. It does not require being nasty, but it does require adults.

We must lead by example and demonstrate that being a partisan for our cause is not evil. Getting along and being polite during disagreements does not require surrender of our principles. We do not have to be rude to get our point across. We must learn again how to disagree without being disagreeable. We all learned these things as children but sadly, too many adults have forgotten.

## NCRCO in NACO

NCRCO is more than just a subset of NACO, through the involvement of our members, we are a driving force in NACO and Washington voicing Republican solutions to America's County Issues.



Three of the four NACO Regional Representatives are active members of the NCRCO. Pictured here left to right: NCRCO Past President Christian Lienbach the current NACO North-East Region Representative. NCRCO Director Gordon Cruickshank the current NACO West Region Representative and NCRCO Immediate Past President Cindy Bobbitt the current NACO Central Region Representative. This photo was taken at the recent WIR and NACO board meeting held in Sunriver Oregon. Other NCRCO officers in attendance at the meeting but not pictured include President Jon Burrows, Vice President Joe Briggs and Treasurer Mike McGinley.

## NCRCO On the Hill

NCRCO Immediate Past President Cindy Bobbitt testifying to the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on the importance of county infrastructure to the Nation's future. Cindy was invited by Senator Inhofe to represent NACO in front of his committee. "I told them to think of a map of the U.S. and every piece in that puzzle is a county," she said. "Counties connect counties and connect states, and it's just like our roads and bridges — every one is important. The rural areas that grow our food, our fiber, we have to make sure we have access to our natural resources, whether that be wind farms, oil and gas or others — all those are produced in rural areas."



A video of Cindy's testimony can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZjrU9wDAhA>.



NCRCO Director Gordon Cruickshank joined a panel of local officials to testify on the importance of PILT and SRS programs and forest management reform to the nations' counties.

Gordon's testimony is contained in the video found at <https://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings-and-business-meetings?ID=2DAE5654-0EF0-47A7-9915-D671CB265F25>.

His testimony begins shortly after the 50 minute mark of the hearing.

## Treasurer's report

As you have discovered as you have read this newsletter, I am no longer the Interim Treasurer. Mike McGinley has taken the position as Treasurer but since things have just recently been transferred to his control, it did not seem fair to ask him to write this report. Accordingly, here is one final Treasurer's report from me.

As of June 13th paid membership stood at 66 with cash in the Bank of \$14,896.13 with no outstanding receivables and no outstanding payables.

Although NCRCO operates on a Fiscal year of August 1 through July 31 of each year, our dues and sponsorships are on a calendar year. This of course means that our 2017 dues are now due. Dues remain \$30 per year and can be paid by Cash, Check or Credit Card. If you have not already done so, please make your dues payment on line in advance of the annual meeting.

This simple action will allow us to avoid members having to stand in line to check in at the event. Pre-paid members will find their name badge ready for pickup and you can proceed directly into the meeting rather than being delayed.

Prepayment can be accomplished either by using the secure credit card system (PayPal) that can be accessed from our website or by sending your check for \$30 along with your contact information to the address displayed in the Blue box below.

Mike our new Treasurer will of course be happy to accept payment at the conference as well, but I **still** hate lines, don't you?

Joe Briggs  
 Cascade County Montana Commissioner  
 NCRCO Acting Treasurer (Formerly)



### Simplified Financial Report for FY 2016-2017

Description	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
Starting Balance as of August 1, 2016			\$10,451.06
Transfers	\$0.00		\$10,451.06
Dues	\$1,950.00		\$12,401.06
Reception guest Income	\$40.00		\$12,441.06
Donations	\$5,100.00		\$17,541.06
Merchandise sales	\$10.00		\$17,551.06
FY 16-17 Expenses		\$2,654.93	\$14,896.13
<b>Balance as of June 13, 2017</b>			<b>\$14,896.13</b>

## Regional Director's Reports

### Regions 1 & 5

**REGION 1 Report** - (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont).

By Toni Pappas, Hillsborough County  
Commissioner, New Hampshire

**Maine** - House Republicans are fighting to stop a massive spending spree by House Democrats. In its present form the state budget increases spending by \$800 million dollars. Republicans predict that if the spending goes into effect the hard working people of Maine will be required to pony up hundreds of millions in new tax revenue to the state for the next two years.

**Massachusetts** - Governor Charlie Baker came out against a revised health care overhaul by Congress which represents a critical loss of funds for the Commonwealth. He said in a statement he hopes Congress "reconsiders the amended legislation". He also expressed thanks for the Federal government's willingness to grant flexibility in how it administers the Medicaid system. Baker said, his administration will continue to protect the state's current health system.

**New Hampshire**- GOP Chairwoman, Jeanie Forrester praised President Trump's First 100 Days in office. She said that "President Trump is well on his way to delivering promises made to the American people- nominating a Supreme Court Justice, keeping our borders secure, and boosting our economy just to name a few. President Trump has put the best interests of America first.

**REGION 5 Report** – (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee)

By Paul Boyd, Shelby County  
Probate Clerk, Tennessee

Greetings from the Mid-South, and the heart of the modern day GOP, Region 5. It has been an exciting and eventful year. First off let us congratulate our friends in **Kentucky**. The commonwealth has elected a Republican majority in the state house for the first time in 95 years. The GOP controls the Governor's mansion and both chambers of the legislature; we expect great things from the bluegrass state.

Similarly we have great expectations for the heart of Dixie, **Alabama**. 59% of all elected partisan officials in Alabama are Republicans. On November 8, 2016 the Alabama GOP won 70% of the races on the ballot.

Our good friends in **Mississippi** are busy this year with municipal elections. By the time you receive this newsletter we know the good people of the Magnolia state will have, once again, shown their desire for conservative, limited government at all levels.

That brings me to my home state of **Tennessee**, where we continue to enjoy a super majority in both houses of the state legislature as well as having the Governor's mansion, 2 of the best Senators in Washington DC, and hold 7 of TN's 9 congressional seats. While being an overwhelmingly Red state, we are still a very diverse state with large areas of rural, urban, and suburban people. One of the most recent examples of our leaders coming together, using common sense conservatism, to benefit all is a bill recently signed by Gov. Haslam that makes 2 years of community college or technical school free to all adults in TN.

I want to end this report by saying I have enjoyed my 2 years serving region 5, and look forward to seeing many of you in Ohio. But, even more than that I hope to welcome you all to Tennessee next year when Nashville will be the host city for NACO. Please make plans to come and enjoy our Southern Hospitality and get lost in the incredible music and food that our entire state is known for. If I can be of any service, please do not hesitate to ask.



**McLANE GROUP**  
*Leading the Charge*

## Regional Director's Reports

### Regions 8

#### REGION 8 Report – (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska)

By Ryan Wescoat, Cass County  
County Auditor, Missouri

**Iowa** experienced a very active legislative session with several hot-button issues and bills. The legislature took up the issue of voter ID and when Governor Terry Branstad signed the bill into law, Iowa became the latest state to protect and ensure the integrity of the election process. The legislature also approved new caps on medical malpractice and worker's compensation claims. The legislature also defeated measures to increase the state's minimum wage while enacting some of the broadest gun rights legislation in the state's history. The legislature also approved some new restrictions on abortions performed in the state but the Iowa Supreme Court issued an emergency order stopping the enforcement of the new law. This will be a much watched case as it progresses.

**Kansas** is experiencing a challenging legislative session with the budget at the heart of many disagreements. Unlike their neighbor to the east, the Kansas legislature doesn't have a scheduled endpoint to their legislative session and are still busy debating critical pieces of legislation. One such piece is that of school funding. As the legislature takes up the school funding issue, they do so with the Kansas Supreme Court paying close attention. The Senate has passed a \$236 million increase over the next two years and the house passed a \$280 million increase for the same period. As the two chambers conference, it will be a wait and see if it meets the Kansas Supreme Court's threshold. Other points of interest in this session include several bills that would have rolled back many of the tax cuts Governor Sam Brownback championed in 2012. The house explored full repeal of the tax cuts while the Senate looked at a measure that would raise \$600 million in new taxes. As of now all of those bills have been defeated and the tax cuts stand.

**Missouri** is enjoying having all but one state wide office held by Republicans. The legislature just finished a special session which was called by the Governor to pass the "Steel Mill Bill." This bill allows for lower electricity rates to manufacturers in the southern part of the state which will allow for the creation of hundreds of jobs. The regular legislative session's highlights included passing right to work legislation, political infighting, and serious budget discussions. Governor Eric Greitens signed legislation early in this session that made Missouri the 28th right to work state. After the right to work legislation moved rapidly through both houses the remainder of the session saw fighting between the Governor and the Senate and a slow pace in that chamber. The budget was a huge focus with major cuts requested by the Governor. The legislature produced a balanced budget with the education formula fully funded. It waits now for the Governor's signature.

**Nebraska** celebrated the 150th birthdate of the state and had an active legislative session that culminated in the legislature passing a balanced state budget and upholding all of Governor Pete Ricketts budget vetoes. The Governor vetoed over \$50 million from the next two budget years. The governor praised the legislature for their work but warned that a special session could be necessary as the year goes on. The state legislature passed new laws increasing the penalty on human trafficking and enacted the Nebraska Religious Freedom Bill, which focused on religious garb in classrooms. The legislature experienced a one third turn over in Senators and left several significant priorities on the "to be continued" list.

## Regional Director's Reports

### Region 9 & 11

#### **REGION 9 Report** – (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)

By Jason Brinkley, Cooke County,  
County Judge, Texas

Republican controlled state legislatures in all four states are in the middle of, or just wrapping up their current sessions. Many conservative backed bills have passed or have made significant progress thus far.

**Arkansas** – Construction continues on the Rockefeller Republican Center in Little Rock, and the structure has already eclipsed the current party headquarters building in size. The Center is an expansion of the GOP the current Republican Party facility.

**Louisiana** – Vice President Pence held a rally just outside of Baton Rouge in May to promote the Louisiana Republican Party. Louisiana GOP Executive Director Jason Dore accepted a new position with the Trump Administration in the Small Business Administration Office. Bo Staples will serve as interim Executive Director.

**Oklahoma** – The Oklahoma Republican State Convention was held in early May in Moore. At the Convention, Republicans took the time to honor many veterans and Purple Heart recipients. Republican Zack Taylor won a special election to fill a vacancy in House District 28 on May 9th.

**Texas** – Texas GOP Chairman Tom Mechler will be resigning from the Republican Party of Texas for personal reasons. An election will be held at the upcoming quarterly meeting on June 3, 2017 to find an interim Chairman to fulfill the remainder of the term. The Republican Party of Texas celebrated the achievements Asian and Pacific Americans in the month of May.

#### **REGION 11 Report** – (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington)

By Gordon L. Cruickshank,  
Valley County Commissioner, Idaho.

##### **Alaska**

Alaska legislature is still in session as they seem to be unable to come to any agreement on anything. Alaska is still dealing with low oil prices that will not pay the budgets passed. The governor proposed to TAX the citizens as they pay nothing now. The Senate is dead set against taxes and the House voted to impose an income tax. There is also a push to change the oil taxation and lowering the credits given by the House and the Senate says “No Way”. Many feel good legislation has passed to recognize special days of the year like “Salmon Days”. The message I received was they work really well at doing nothing other than fight with the Governor. Oh all Alaskans receive a yearly check from the oil sales.

##### **Idaho**

Idaho's legislative session is over with. It started with a several bizarre relationship disasters within the majority party “R's”. Fights between leadership and “underclassmen” were frequent and sharp. Everyone stayed out of the way. Once they got past this they managed to adopt a rational and balanced budget with increases for schools and tax relief through the repeal of sales tax on groceries (which was vetoed by the Governor and started another fight). Local government was spared for the most part. Because of the natural disasters, the Legislature appropriated 52 million in disaster relief and mitigation for local governments. We also saw a re-approved Surplus Eliminator Fund (extra money) to be shared with the State Transportation 60% and Local Road Jurisdictions 40%. Prior to this the State got 100%. Many bills were looked at but nothing that was critical issues to locals.

## Regional Director's Reports

### Region 11

#### Montana

Montana is reported to have had the worst legislative session ever. There was a trend to continue a partisan divide within the Republican Party which divided the approval of any bill with consequences while they control the Legislature. The biggest failure which garnered National Attention was the failure to pass a Mail Ballot Bill for the special election to replace Representative Zinke when he accepted the Department of the Interior position. Also failed was a 100 million bonding bill for the State Infrastructure while Cascade County voters passed a 98 million Bond for School Infrastructure needs. Effective July 1st Gasoline fuel taxes will increase by 4.5 cents and ramp up to 8 cents in 2023. Diesel fuel increases 1.5 cents in FY 18 and ramp up to 2 cents by 2023. Local government will see some additional revenues for transportation. This is the first increase to fuel taxes in 30 years and local help from the state has not been seen since 1993. They also passed increases to vehicle registrations. An attempt was made to return Public Defense back to the counties which would have cost the counties 32 million in expenses. In reflection there were good bills passed and a killing of more bad bills to average out a positive in the end but everyone was crabby and ready to be done.

#### Oregon

Oregon is still in session and in their 3rd quarter with more questions than answers I'm told. Oregon is dealing with a 1.6+ billion shortfall in revenue which is 9% of their General Fund. Many factors create this including Health Care and Medicaid Expansion. The counties received some help with a proposed transportation package which has taken years to accomplish. A 10 year 8 billion proposal with, increased gas tax, registration and title increases, a small payroll tax statewide for transit and a vehicle excise tax on all sales. Counties will get 30% of any new money and an agreement to redistribute based on road miles rather than vehicles registered. Elections are playing into the votes on bills and how it will impact their seats. Expected to end their session by July 10th however it looks like they will come back to a special session to finish what didn't get done. Oregon is controlled by the Democrats in both houses and the Governor.

#### Washington

The Washington State Legislature adjourned on April 23rd ending a 105 day regular session. However they failed to complete their work on two constitutional duties to approve a two-year state operating budget and fully fund their education plan, as required by the Washington State Supreme Court. Governor Inslee called the legislature back into session on Monday April 24th for a 30 day special session to finish the above work. However once back in session the legislators can take up any topic or introduce new bills. Their first bill introduced was to create new counties or consolidating existing counties!!! To date of the report they have only met once to do any work of substance since returning. It looks like they are headed to a second special session to complete the work needed.

Proposed new revenue being considered, 7% capital gains income tax, 20% business and occupation tax, surtax on certain activities, increasing the filing threshold, repealing the small business credit, creating a new deduction of \$250,000 and repealing several preferential rates, sales tax on bottled water and out of state shoppers, Graduated real estate excise tax, require marketplace facilitators, referrers, and their sellers to collect and remit sales or use tax, or comply with notice and reporting requirements, expands liability for unpaid tax obligations for sales and use taxes, B&O tax, cigarette taxes and other tobacco product taxes. Senate Republicans are proposing in Billions of locally voted and collected school levies to pay for Education. Washington Counties worked on 3 major issues this session. Local Property Tax Reform (included in a House Proposed Budget). Public Records Reform (Passed, Governor Signing Scheduled). Increase State Contribution to Indigent Defense (No Action). Washington Counties are preparing litigation against the Legislature for violating the unfunded state mandate. The Legislature passed a "Ballot Drop Box Bill" requiring new and increased services without compensation.

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Through the years, Drayton McLane Jr. has shaped a diverse portfolio within the McLane Group. Currently, the holding company is comprised of several entities within global logistics, the technology industry, and food production. Past ventures range from international distribution to a major league baseball team. In addition, Mr. McLane has investments in several joint business ventures within the information technology market.

The McLane name is synonymous with a strong commitment to quality and innovation. Drayton McLane Jr. began his career assisting his father in the family business, building a strong grocery distribution network that grew into one of the largest distributors in the world. Today the heritage continues through McLane's sons Drayton III and Denton, while the family tradition of excellence remains within the collection of McLane companies.

McLane Intelligent Solutions (McLane Intel) is the most relevant company to counties. It is an IT Managed Services company headquartered in Temple, Texas, with offices in Bryan/College Station. The company provides outsourced IT Services to small and medium sized businesses and non-profit organizations throughout the state of Texas. Founded in 1999 as JC Technology Group, the company was acquired by Drayton McLane in the summer of 2004. McLane Intel was founded on a core set of values and business principles that have guided them since its inception.

Those original principles were:

- Communicate in a language the client can understand
- Keep the Client informed
- Always be on time – keep our commitments

Led by an experienced executive management team, McLane Intel possesses exceptional technical skills.

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