



## NEWS RELEASE

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### MEDIA CONTACT:

[Jim Philipps](mailto:jim.philipps@nacounty.org), 202.942.4220

## **Harrison Moody, Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors Chairman helps shape national policies affecting counties during NACo Annual Conference**

**PITTSBURGH, P.A.** – Harrison Moody chairman of the Dinwiddie County board of supervisors joined 1,800 fellow county officials from across the country July 13-17 to adopt policies and share ideas to help lead the nation toward economic recovery during the National Association of Counties' (NACo) 2012 Annual Conference and Exposition in Allegheny County/Pittsburgh.

NACo's Annual Conference is the most important gathering of county officials of the year. Decisions made each summer during the conference allow counties to speak with a strong, clear and unified voice to the Administration, Congress and the American people on issues ranging from transportation infrastructure, access to health care, and court and jail systems.

Moody said the conference was productive and informative.

"We are not alone in the challenges we are facing here at home to deliver services and programs during these tough economic times," Moody said. "Only by talking with our fellow county officials sharing best practices and practical solutions will we be able to kick-start our economy. NACo's educational workshops are a terrific vehicle for that interaction and engagement.

"The bottom line is that while recovery begins here at the county level, the federal government must be on the same page as us," Moody said. "That's why our involvement in NACo is so important. It's our voice in Washington."

Harrison Moody serves on the NaCo Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee and the Rural Action Caucus Steering Committee. Mr Moody was also elected to serve on the NaCo Board of Directors for the 2012-2013 year.

NACo President Lenny Eliason, Commissioner, Athens County, Ohio, said the nation's counties are deeply concerned about funding for a variety of federal programs, which directly affect counties and communities and new federal regulations under consideration.

“The Administration and Congress need to be reminded almost daily how the decisions they make affect us at the county level and the services we provide directly to the American people,” Eliason said. “We work tirelessly all year to preserve local governing authority and caution Washington when they try to shift federal costs onto states and local governments.”

Counties in most states are responsible for providing essential services to communities, including maintaining roads and bridges, operating airports and other transit systems, delivering critical health care services, providing law enforcement, courtroom and jail services, funding schools, and numerous human services for seniors, children and families. Counties are the first line of defense for natural disaster emergencies and pandemic preparedness and response.

During the Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, county officials through NACo’s 11 policy steering committees set the county agenda and legislative priorities for 2012-13 so counties can speak with one voice before the Administration and Congress. Issues addressed included budget and revenue; rural and urban development, green government; transportation; public safety; emergency preparedness and response; housing and more. Policy resolutions adopted at the conference will be posted soon at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

Conference participants also attended a variety of educational workshop sessions to gain greater understanding of issues affecting county government and how many counties are finding innovative, cost-effective way to provide services and programs.

Mr. Moody attended several subcommittee meetings of the Ag and Rural Affairs committee as well as the final Ag committee meeting which set the priorities for the committee that was forwarded to the full delegation for ratification. Also, Mr. Moody attended the Rural Action Caucus committee and the NaCo Board of Directors meetings. Finally, Mr. Moody was able to attend several workshops sessions dealing with global trade, social media and leadership as well as the Vaco delegation meeting.

During Tuesday’s Election of Officers and Business meeting, NACo membership elected and installed its 2012-13 officers: President: Chris Rodgers, Commissioner, Douglas County, Neb.; First Vice President: Linda Langston, Supervisor, Linn County, Iowa; Second Vice President: G. Riki Hokama, Council Member, Maui County, Hawaii; and Immediate Past President Lenny Eliason, Commissioner, Athens County, Ohio.

On Monday, President Eliason announced that Matthew D. Chase has been named the association’s new Executive Director. He will replace the retiring Larry E. Naake this fall. Chase joins NACo from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), which represents the nation’s local government-based regional planning and development organizations. He has served as NADO’s Executive Director since 2003 and was previously the Director of Legislative Affairs and Deputy Executive Director.

In addition, conference attendees heard from experts and prominent national speakers throughout the five-day conference including Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack; political journalists Mark Halperin and John Heilemann; retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor; and author Jay Wilkinson. See below or visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) for summary of remarks.

For more information about the 2012 NACo Annual Conference, contact Jim Philipps at [jphilipps@naco.org](mailto:jphilipps@naco.org) or 202.942.4220.

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# 77<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Exposition

Allegheny County/Pittsburgh  
July 13-17, 2012

## Guest Speakers

### **Sandra Day O'Connor**

During her remarks, Justice O'Connor, founder of iCivics, said American students are falling behind in their knowledge of civics, and it's as much a cause for alarm as lagging math and science scores. "Statistics show this problem is real and it's undeniable," she said, adding that two-thirds of American students scored below proficiency on the last nationwide civics assessment test.

O'Connor is addressing the problem through iCivics a nonprofit she founded after leaving the high court that provides online civics education resources for students and teachers — including educational games and lesson plans. NACO partnered with iCivics to create the "Counties Work" and is working on a second game called "County Solutions."

### **Jay Wilkinson**

Greatness runs in the Wilkinson family. Jay Wilkinson's father Bud was a championship football coach for the University of Oklahoma 1947-1963, where his record 47 straight wins still stands. But above all things, he was a caring father. It is his letters to Jay which form the framework for the book *Dear Jay, Love Dad: Bud Wilkinson's Letters to His Son*.

Wisdom, guidance and love are the core principles of the book which also infuses a sense of purpose, integrity, commitment and passion in others. In the book, Jay shares 47 letters his father wrote to him revealing his father's deep love for his son, as well as the philosophy and values that led to his remarkable success in sports and in life. He concluded the session urging all county officials to reinforce these core principles in everything that they do. "It doesn't matter what your job is, it is doing your best at all times with dignity and respect," Wilkinson said.

### **Tom Vilsack**

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack outlined USDA's new framework for rural prosperity, which rests on the four pillars of production agriculture, bio-based products, expanding local and regional food systems, and conservation and forestry. He spoke about the need to preserve rural values and support returning veterans who embody those values. "When you grow up in a rural area you realize you can't keep taking from and not giving back."

### **Mark Halperin and John Heilemann**

Political junkies got a good fix from political journalists Mark Halperin and John Heilemann, who brought their years of acquaintance with President Barack Obama and presumptive Republican Presidential Nominee Mitt Romney to bear on the upcoming election also at the general session.

The authors of the "Game Change," which chronicled the 2008 presidential race, agreed that the election would hinge on whether the narrative remains on jobs and the economy. If that is the case, and the race becomes a referendum on the Obama administration, Romney will prevail. Halperin said if the Obama administration succeeds as George W. Bush did in 2004 to depicting Romney as unqualified, Obama would win a second term.

As for vice presidential selections, Heilemann was confident Joe Biden would remain Obama's running mate and Halperin has a hunch Romney would pick Ohio Senator Rob Portman. "He's not going to go with an exciting pick," he said. "He's going to say 'we're adults and we know how to fix the economy.'"

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