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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY'S MATT MACHADO ADVOCATES FOR TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Santa Cruz County Deputy CEO, Director of Public Works Matt Machado joined county leaders from across the country in Washington this month to call for fair and sustained federal investment in local roads, bridges and transportation safety.

Hosted by the National Association of Counties (NACo), the two-day fly-in brought county representatives from 15 states to Capitol Hill to meet with lawmakers and agency staff about how federal policies affect the roads and bridges people use every day.

"Counties manage almost half of our nation's transportation infrastructure, so it's important that we're investing time at the table to advocate for fair and equitable funding. Safety remains our highest priority, and sharing these local perspectives helps shape federal transportation policy that works for all communities. Every trip, no matter the mode, starts and ends on a local road; those roads deserve the investment needed to keep our residents safe," said Matt Machado, Deputy CEO, Director of Public Works.

Attendees championed priorities developed in partnership with the Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition, aimed at addressing five major areas:

- Expand access to federal formula funds so local governments can better maintain the infrastructure they own and operate.
- Simplify grant programs to reduce administrative barriers and make it easier for counties to complete critical projects.

- Support local planning and project selection to ensure federal dollars benefit locally led efforts.
- Fund rural planning organizations (RTPOs) to help smaller communities compete for resources on par with urban areas.
- Streamline environmental reviews to avoid costly delays for small or low-impact projects.

“Counties own 44 percent of public road miles and 38 percent of bridges nationwide,” said NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase. “We are important stakeholders in our nation’s transportation system, and keenly aware of the need to invest in locally owned infrastructure. The priorities laid out for the surface transportation reauthorization are rooted in that desire to see transportation infrastructure that’s safe and robust enough to meet the needs of our residents and support economic growth in our counties.”

Since the start of this year, NACo has been vocal in sharing its priorities with partners on Capitol Hill and in the Administration. This includes submitting letters [to the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure](#) and the [U.S. Department of Transportation](#) outlining policy priorities for the next surface transportation reauthorization bill. By following up on these requests, fly-in participants reinforced the importance of these priorities and highlighted their potential impact in counties of all sizes.

For more information about surface transportation reauthorization, click [here](#). For more information about NACo’s broader advocacy in transportation and infrastructure, click [here](#).

ABOUT THE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

CDI serves all unincorporated areas in the county. The department’s mission is to improve customer service, streamline projects, and to align public infrastructure and private development to further County goals in attainable housing, reliable transportation and sustainable environment. For more information, visit <https://cdi.santacruzcountycalifornia.gov/> or follow the department on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [Nextdoor](#).

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

The National Association of Counties (NACo) strengthens America's counties, including nearly 40,000 county elected officials and 3.6 million county employees. Founded in 1935, NACo unites county officials to advocate for county government priorities in federal policymaking; promote exemplary county policies and practices; nurture leadership skills and expand knowledge networks; optimize county and taxpayer resources and cost savings; and enrich the public's understanding of county government. www.naco.org.

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