

## 2018 (FY19) FEDERAL PRIORITIES FOR NC COUNTIES: *A Quick Guide to Our Issues*

Go to [www.ncacc.org/federalissues](http://www.ncacc.org/federalissues) for more information.

**Support Remote Sales Tax Collection**—North Carolina and its counties lose an estimated \$200-\$350 million annually in sales tax through untaxed remote sales. Collecting remote sales taxes is neither a new tax nor a tax increase—these revenues are already due and payable by law. Do not weaken or overturn the Supreme Court decision.

**Support Funding and Legislation to Expand High-Speed Broadband Access**—Adequate digital infrastructure is essential for education, economic development, health care and social services; however, many portions of NC counties still do not have internet access. NC counties urge Congress to provide digital infrastructure funding and adopt legislation that clarifies FCC definitions for speed thresholds and unserved areas.

**Support Funding for Payment In Lieu of Taxes, Agricultural, Workforce, Economic Development and Infrastructure Programs, Including School Construction and Education Capital, that Help Counties Meet Public Needs**—Funding for programs that maintain partnerships between federal and county governments in meeting demand for public services should remain a priority for Congress. In both rural and urban areas, NC counties rely on federal-local partnerships to support community and economic development, and public infrastructure.

**Support the Stepping Up Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illness in County Jails**—In North Carolina, almost 13% of the prison population requires some type of intervention due to behavioral health issues. Without appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses can continue to cycle through the criminal justice system. Legislation and federal funding are needed to promote the Stepping Up Initiative to help counties develop and efforts to reduce the number of people with mental illness in county jails.

**Support Funding for Behavioral Health Programs and Services to Address the Opioid and Substance Abuse Epidemic**—The United States is in the midst of an unprecedented opioid and substance abuse epidemic. NC counties are on the front lines of this battle working with the state to develop and fund substance abuse and overdose inhibition programs, but progress is limited without consistent funding and support from Congress.

**Support Funds for Health, Human and Economic Services Programs Including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Federal Block Grants, and Food and Nutrition Services**—Counties are the first responders providing services to the public locally and, in particular, our nation's vulnerable populations. Since many of these services are mandated by federal law the federal government provides funding to assist states and counties in meeting local demands—this funding should be protected in upcoming budgets.

**Oppose Unfunded Mandates to Counties**—Reductions in federal deficits should not be accomplished by shifting costs to counties, imposing unfunded mandates. NC counties also oppose any legislative or regulatory initiatives that undermine local government decision making authority or pre-empt county programs and taxing authority. Work to have H.R. 50, the Unfunded Mandates and Information and Transparency Act, introduced by Congresswoman Virginia Foxx (NC-5), signed into law.

**Protect the Tax-Exempt Status of Municipal Bonds**—NC counties appreciate the preservation of municipal bond tax exemption during the recent tax reform debate and urge Congress to do so again if additional reforms are considered, including the reinstatement of advanced refunding bonds.

**Support Increased Funding for Military and Veteran Programs and Communities, Including Impact Aid and Veteran Support Services, as well as Rule Changes to Accurately Count Deployed Military Personnel and Their Families in the Census**—NC counties are home to nine military bases supporting tens of thousands of service members and their families. Additional funding is needed for communities with military families and veterans, including sufficient and accurate Impact Aid funds as well as veteran housing, economic and health services.

**Support Legislation to Allow Individuals to Receive Federal Health Benefits While Awaiting Trial**—Counties are required to provide adequate health care to individuals who pass through jails each year, while federal statute prohibits Medicaid funds from paying for that care even if the individual is eligible and enrolled.

