

November 9, 2017

RE: WEEKLY UPDATE

- I. State Issues
- II. Federal Issues
- III. 102nd Annual League Conference

Dear Mayor:

We hope to see you all at the League's 102nd Annual Conference next week. We are sending our weekly recap one day early because of the observance of Veterans Day tomorrow. There will be no weekly update next Friday, November 17 or on Friday, November 24. The next weekly recap will go out on Friday, December 1. We will, however, continue to update you on emergent matters.

I. State Issues: Post-Election and Lame Duck

On Tuesday the voters selected Ambassador Phil Murphy to be the next Governor of the State of New Jersey. Today, the Governor-elect announced that Lieutenant Governor-elect Sheila Oliver, former Assembly Speaker, will be nominated to serve as the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs.

Also today, the New Jersey State Senate reorganized and re-elected Senator Steve Sweeney to again serve as the Senate President. Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto announced today that he will not seek another term as the Assembly Speaker and expressed support for Assemblyman Craig Coughlin to be Speaker, the office which he will likely be elevated to when the Assembly reorganizes on Monday.

As these decisions unfurl over the next seven weeks, the League remains focused on the upcoming lame duck session. As you know, the League's top legislative priority is **the common sense extension of the 2% cap on interest arbitration awards**. The League is working closely with the Conference of Mayors and the Association of Counties to extend this proven tool to curtail property tax increases. We are now 46 days away from the expiration of the 2% cap on interest arbitration. Your current and newly elected Legislators need to hear from you today! The evidence and facts are clear and unambiguous. The 2% interest arbitration cap has proven to be an effective tool to curtail property taxes.

Here's what you can do:

1. If you haven't done so already, please adopt the League's model resolution (word or [pdf](#)) urging the State Legislature and Governor to extend the 2% interest arbitration cap.
2. Please communicate regularly with your State Legislators and those recently elected to take office in January. Please be sure to urge them to push for the extension when the Legislature reconvenes.

3. Please educate your residents on this issue and urge them to contact their Legislators as well.

Resources:

- [Please click here](#) for the League's 2% IA cap page.
- Please [click here for the League's Town Crier](#) blog post on this issue.
- Editorial boards across the State support our call to extend the interest arbitration cap. To read these, please see the [League's 2% IA cap page](#).

Contacts:

- Michael F. Cerra, Assistant Executive Director, mcerra@njslom.org, 609-695-3481 x120
Lori Buckelew, Senior Legislative Analyst, lbuckelew@njslom.org, 609-695-3481 x112

II. Federal Issues

a. Deadline for First Local Action on 2020 Census Just Weeks Away

The U.S. Constitution, in Article I, Section II, requires Congress to conduct a census every ten years. And while 2020 may seem like a long way off, the first deadline (December 15) for local governments to ensure a complete and accurate enumeration of their residents is just weeks away.

The Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program is the once-a-decade opportunity for governments to add, correct, or delete addresses on the lists and maps used to conduct the decennial census. It represents the first step to ensuring an accurate and complete count in your municipality. But, in order to participate in the [Local Update of Census Addresses](#) program, you will need to register, **by December 15**. The Census Bureau should have already mailed LUCA registration forms and instructions to every municipality. You can also access all the forms and information needed to register at the links available online at the [LUCA Operations Page](#).

The 2020 Census will face a number of challenges. For the first time, the Census Bureau will primarily rely on the internet to conduct the enumeration, though in-person contacts and telephone responses will be allowed. The Bureau will encounter a heightened climate of fear, among those who distrust any government program and agency, those who are concerned about internet security, the technologically challenged, and among those who might fear arrest or deportation. Inadequate funding means that there will be half the number of Regional Census Centers, half the number of local offices and half the number of census takers. Finally, the Census Director's recent, unexpected resignation has created a leadership vacuum at the agency.

A complete and accurate census is needed for a number of reasons. It will ensure equal representation in Congress. This is particularly important in New Jersey, as our State could lose,

yet again, at least one seat in the House of Representatives if we are under-counted. It will also ensure a fair distribution of the \$600 billion in Federal resources that are distributed, every year, based on population counts. It will similarly affect State redistricting and allocations of certain State aid. And it will help local governments, as they plan to address the needs of local populations.

Registering to participate in LUCA is an important opportunity that every New Jersey municipality should seize. As we move forward, we will work with our partners at the National League of Cities and advise you of educational opportunities and further steps that you can take to protect the interests of your communities. But for now, LUCA registration, by December 15, is a priority.

We also encourage you to reread our [2020 Census Preparation Webinars](#) notice, which we transmitted this past Monday, November 6.

Thanks for your attention to this matter and the upcoming December 15 deadline. **Contact:**

Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njslom.org, 609-695-3481, x121.

b. Senate Tax Overhaul Bill Could Differ From House Proposal

And, in one important particular, not in a good way.

Later today, the House Ways and Means Committee is expected to conclude consideration of that Chamber's Tax Reform Bill. We discussed that proposal, at length, in last week's Update. Also today, the Senate Majority is expected to unveil its proposal, which, according to reports, could include specific differences.

Most important to you, the States that are leading the fight to preserve the State and Local Taxes (SALT) deduction in the House – New Jersey, New York, Illinois and California – are not represented by any Republicans in the Senate. Leadership in the Upper House, therefore, has much less incentive to compromise on this matter.

Other possible differences include: a phase-in of the Corporate Tax reductions; a provision allowing corporations to increase stockholder dividends, as a mechanism to lower corporate taxes; retaining the estate tax; and keeping the mortgage interest deduction at its current level. At this point, we cannot be certain if any or all of these or any other differences will materialize.

We will keep you posted as the debate continues.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njslom.org, 609-695-3481, x121.

c. Progress on Reauthorization of National Flood Insurance Program Delayed

And that might not be a bad thing.

The House Rules Committee delayed a Tuesday, November 7, hearing on a bill reauthorizing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) amid questions about whether the legislation had enough support to move forward this week. Without Congressional action, the NFIP will expire on December 8.

The program was extended 17 times between 2008 and 2012 and lapsed four times in that period. Several Representatives from coastal districts have pushed back against the House bill, since it was released by the House Financial Services Committee this summer.

In June, Senator Robert Menendez, joined by Senator Cory Booker, introduced [S-1368, the Sustainable, Affordable, Fair and Efficient \(SAFE\) National Flood Insurance Reauthorization Act of 2017](#). This legislation addresses a need that the League of Municipalities formally recognized at our Annual Conference, just last November. That need found expression when Resolution 2016-01 was unanimously adopted by representatives of our 565 member municipalities. The bill has bipartisan support and co-sponsorship. New Jersey Congressmen Frank Pallone and Bill Pascrell, Jr. later introduced companion legislation in the House. We had previously reported on the bipartisan Senate bill, which we strongly support, in our [August 25 Weekly Update](#) and in our [July 7 Weekly Update](#).

Unfortunately, that is not the bill awaiting approval in the Rules Committee.

Please contact your Representatives in Washington, urging them to stand firm in favor of an affordable and sustainable NFIP reauthorization.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njslom.org, 609-695-3481, x121.

d. Fast Approaching Federal Budget and Debt Deadlines

While Congressional leaders remain focused on tax reform, the needs for a new spending plan and an increase in the debt limit are being given little attention.

As you may recall, Congress adopted a Continuing Resolution at the end of September, which allowed the federal government to remain in operation, pending action on an actual spending plan for the current fiscal year (or another Continuing Resolution). That September resolution will expire on December 8. In other late September action, the debt limit was raised, allowing our Federal government to meet its obligations. According to the Department of the Treasury, the new limit will be reached in mid-January.

Three different appropriations proposals have been advanced, to date. The Administration wants to increase defense spending and cut non-defense discretionary spending by \$54 billion, each. House majority leaders have called for non-defense spending cuts of \$5 billion dollars, while they would increase defense budgets by \$72 billion. The Senate leadership's proposal would hold spending levels steady.

Please contact your representatives in Congress, urging them to consider the impact of any reductions of federal programs and services on the quality of life in the municipalities of our Garden State.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njslom.org, 609-695-3481, x121.

III. 102nd Annual League Conference

We are now just 5 days away from the start of the 102nd Annual Conference. Now is the time to finalize your plans.

a. 2017 Conference Smart Phone App is Available

The 2017 Conference App is available now. [Visit your device's App Store to download.](#) Download the app to view the full session schedule, including descriptions. Filter the schedule by CEU or group hosting. View the full exhibitor listing and create a custom schedule.

You must download and register for the 2017 version to view information for the 102nd Annual Conference; the 2016 version will not be updated.

The 2017 Conference App is Exclusively Sponsored by Phoenix Advisors, LLC.

b. Don't Use Unauthorized Hotel Reservation Services

Every year there are unauthorized firms soliciting housing and hotel reservations from attendees at the Annual League Conference.

We assure you that the only firm authorized to handle our conference housing reservations is A.C. Central Reservations.

This information is on the top of the official conference housing form sent to all municipal clerks and posted on our website: <http://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/302/2017-Conference>

c. Plan Now for November: Exhibit Highlights

The Exhibit Hall at the League's Annual Conference offers a wide variety of services and products. Each day at the conference, take the opportunity to enjoy the exhibit floor by stopping in for a nice lunch and visits to the booths for every municipal need, concern, and interest.

Begin to make your list of exhibitors to visit including current favorites and the 62 new exhibiting companies—or contact them now! Plan today by visiting our interactive map at <https://shows.map-dynamics.com/NJLM2017/>

d. NJLM 2017 Conference CEU List Has Been Posted!

The first version of Annual Conference CEU list has been posted. You can view this list by clicking the following link: <http://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/347>

Please note, the Annual Conference CEU list is not final, please continue to check the conference page <http://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/302/2017-Conference> frequently for updates.

e. Don't Forget! CEU Tracking System Procedures for 102nd Annual NJLM Conference

Badge Scanners will be used to track CEU Credits and Attendance at the NJLM 102nd Annual Conference.

For Sessions that Have CEU credit Available

- All Attendees looking to earn credit must scan-in and scan-out of these qualifying sessions* to earn their CEU credits.
- Attendees will claim their certificates after the conference via the League website <http://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/300/Conference>

For more information or for a complete list of procedures please click the following link for <http://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/302/2017-Conference>

** Please note, the procedures described above only apply to educational sessions. **Business Meetings and vendor sessions are not included** in the scanning system.*

Sincerely,

Michael J. Darcy, CAE
Executive Director