

2024 Federal Legislative Priorities

Ben Canada, Chief of Staff

January 8, 2024



@wakegov



wakegov.com

What do we need from Board today?

- Approve federal priorities for next year
 - General guidance
 - Top 3 list
 - Opportunity list
- Next steps
 - Share with federal lobbyist and consider next steps with advocacy

Approach Legislative Priorities in Three Ways

General Guidance

- Policy guidance to CMO and contracted lobbyists to:
 - 1) reflect ongoing Board interests, and
 - 2) allow discretion to react quickly to legislative actions

Top Three Asks

- To speak with a single, clear voice, Board needs to set a short list of top priorities

Opportunity List

- We can't predict what issues will be "hot" each session. The Board will approve a list of issues that, if an opportunity arises, CMO has discretion to pursue.

What to Expect from Congress in 2024

- 2024 is a Presidential and congressional election year
- Congress...
- Local government priorities not likely to become hot issues

Staff Recommendations

Earmark Requests

- Lessons learned over past two years
- Criteria-based recommendations

Housing Block Grants

- Ask Congress to maintain or increase funding to CDBG, HOME block grant programs

EMS Medication and Supply Challenges

- Ask Congress to pass legislation that encourages production of medicines in short supply, used in EMS operations

Lessons Learned from Earmarks

- Earmarks returned to Congress in 2021 after decade hiatus
- Few earmark requests in 2023 – staff requested time to get internal processes in place
- Equipment requests present the fewest regulatory obstacles
- Avoid construction and facility requests
- Distinguish between earmark partnerships and endorsements
 - Endorsements – BOC letter of support for a request
 - Partnerships – written agreement to jointly administer the project

Earmark Criteria

- Alignment with the County's approved Strategic Plan (or Board Goals)
- Ability to successfully navigate federal regulations and funding timing
- Priority given to State mandated services
- Priority to vetted pilot projects without identified funding or funded projects in CIP planning year

Tentative Priority Earmarks for 2024

- Fire Turnout Gear
- Solar Panels on new Public Health Center and other facilities
- Electric Vehicle charging stations
- 800 MHz Land Mobile Radio Unit Replacement
- 800 MHz Radio System Infrastructure Replacement
- EMS Defibrillators Replacement

*** Will request if there is a legislative “path” ***

What Staff Need from Commissioners

Project Partnership Requests

- County has a robust, active capital improvement plan
- Our project management capacity is full

Letter of Support Requests

- When solicited for LOS or endorsement, please share with Board Leadership and staff
- Staff will ask the organization for text, and will process the letter

Housing Block Grants

- Congress considering substantial funding reductions in domestic programs
- County invests local funds in housing programs, but supplemented by federal funds

EMS Medications and Supply Challenges

- National shortages of emergency medications
- Bring attention to the issue
- Explore legislation to incentive increased manufacture

Opportunity List

- Policy and programs that complement Wake Transit plans
- Fire sprinkler incentives
- “Benefits cliffs”
- Admin and reporting relief
- Nationwide public health data tracking
- 340B drug discount program
- Well and septic regulation
- Water source long-term planning
- Early childhood education
- WIOA flexibility and upward mobility
- *Commitment to Veterans Support and Outreach Act*
- ***Broad band accessibility
- ***Infant mortality outcomes
- ***Maternal health disparity

NACO Legislative Conference

- Under Board approved process, February conference will no longer be a formal part of our advocacy
- Staff will not schedule D.C.-based congressional visits
 - Seek to repeat a Spring session with congressional delegation
- Minimal staff presence at conference

A faint, light blue map of Wake County is centered on the slide. The word "Questions" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font over the map.

Questions