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Partnering with Business to Promote International Trade

An Editorial by Bob McEvoy, Managing Editor

We have it within our grasp to help reverse the job losses of our formally strong local manufacturing and retail sector businesses. In our January Issue, Karl Hum, President of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, showed us how to create a strong relationship with local businesses and help them prosper. In this Issue we will learn how to help our local manufacturers and retailers enter the world of international trade.

When I was County Manager of Schenectady County, I was so convinced of this new paradigm, we purchased an available World Trade Center Charter and placed the function at our Community College which began to train our small businesses to participate in the international trade markets. This wonderful experience has stayed with me and accordingly, I'm very honored to introduce the wisdom of one of the world's distinguished international trade experts who is also a local government management professional. I served with Tony Ojeda on the ICMA Executive Board and he has been part of the management of Miami-Dade County since 1974.

Miami-Dade County's International Trade Program

by J.A. Ojeda, Jr., Executive Director Jay Malina International Trade Consortium



When one thinks about typical local government services in the United States, it is unusual to think of international trade and commerce as a local government responsibility. At first glance, it would seem unusual for a local agency in these times of limited financial resources to allocate funds to underwrite such programs. Yet, since 2002, Miami-Dade County, Florida has had an office devoted to international trade related activities and supported with local revenues.

Background

Most persons view South Florida and Miami as a principal tourist destination site blessed with a wonderful climate, excellent beaches, and the latest entertainment for people of all ages. And, while this image is substantially correct, it does not tell the entire story of the emergent Miami as an international metropolitan area with a multiethnic, multiracial, and multilingual community. With a population nearing almost three million people, Miami-Dade County has become the undisputable Gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean. Its unique geographic location at the tip of Florida, and substantially to the East

(continued on page 3)

by Patrick Urich, County Administrator, Peoria County, IL



The national recession continues to have a dramatic impact upon county governments across the United States. As tax revenues have declined, city and county governments have sought out ways to control costs or consolidate services with other jurisdictions, or simply get out of the business. In Cumberland County, Maine, several HUD entitlement communities, including the City of Portland, agreed to give up their entitlement status in order to create a countywide community development program managed by the county. In Peoria County, Illinois, the City of Peoria made the decision to end their 25 year intergovernmental arrangement to provide animal control services countywide and asked Peoria County to assume service delivery.

The pressures on finding ways to live within our means will continue for the foreseeable future. Sometimes, the barriers to service consolidation include the laws of our states or the lack of incentives to encourage service consolidation. In the most recent NACo Operations Survey, conducted in April of this year, 72% of the counties surveyed said their state laws do not allow consolidation, but in the 28% of counties that are in states that do, none of these provide incentives for counties to consolidate.

One place where County Administrators can share their successful, or unsuccessful, efforts to grapple with our current fiscal crisis is at the NACA Idea Exchange. This year, at the annual NACo Conference in Washoe County (Reno) Nevada, the Idea Exchange and General Membership meeting will be held on Sunday, July 18, from 1:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Please plan on joining your peers from across the country as we share ideas on service delivery, intergovernmental relations or anything on your mind. In addition, Washoe County Manager Katy Simon and Deputy County Manager (and incoming ICMA President) David Childs will be hosting a tour of a couple of interesting buildings and intergovernmental operations on Monday, July 19. From 11:00 a.m.–2:15 p.m., County Administrators can leave the convention center by bus to see these Washoe County facilities:

- *Regional Public Safety Training Center / Combined Dispatch and Emergency Operations Center*
- *Regional Animal Services Center*

The trip will conclude prior to the NACo Conference's general session.

Please plan on attending the NACA events at this year's NACo Conference, and thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of professional county administration!

See Page 11 to Register for NACA Events at the NACo Annual Conference in Washoe County

Registration Deadline: July 12

Don't miss Washoe County Site Visits to two Regional Facilities: The Washoe County Regional Public Safety Training Center/Combined Dispatch and Emergency Operations Center, and the Washoe County Regional Animal Services Center



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(“Miami-Dade County” from page 1) of the southern hemisphere has given the community access to a rapidly developing market of over 300 million people. And, the County government elected officials led by the Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, have over the years undertaken an aggressive program to support an unparalleled infrastructure expansion at Miami International Airport and the Port of Miami which are both owned and operated by the County government and which provide employment opportunities to over 250,000 people in the metropolitan area.

In 2008 the volume of merchandise trade in U.S. Customs District No. 52, which includes South Florida, amounted to \$79 billion. This area was only one of two in the United States with a positive trade surplus amounting to approximately \$19 billion. Of the total volume of trade approximately \$57 billion represents trade with South America, Central America, including Mexico, and the Caribbean (World City.) Our top four trading partners are: Brazil (\$11 billion), Colombia (\$5.6 billion), Venezuela (\$4.3 billion), and the Dominican Republic (\$3.8 billion). Trade with the Caribbean countries alone amounted to \$9 billion (World City). And while, in general, these figures are lower than in previous years and reflect the general downturn in the world economy, they reveal the still substantial importance that international trade and commerce have for the economic well being of Miami-Dade County.

Miami International Airport (MIA) has become the number one international freight airport in the United States and number nine in the world. It is the only U.S. airport with most direct daily flights to Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, most of the perishables products imported from that area are imported through Miami International Airport (Miami-Dade Aviation Department). On the other hand, the Port of Miami has become the Cruise Capital of the World serving twenty two cruise



ships and processing over 4 million passengers, and it is one of the largest container ports in Florida with a volume of 800,000 TEUS (twenty foot equivalent units) of freight (The Port of Miami Annual Report). Both MIA and the Port of Miami are undergoing significant capital expansions amounting to several billion dollars including the construction of two state-of-the-art terminals at the airport and an under the bay tunnel to facilitate cargo access to the Port.

Miami-Dade County is also home to sixty nine foreign consulates and trade offices making our community the third largest metropolitan area with foreign representation after Washington, D.C., and New York City. Practically all the consulates are Consulate Generals headed by senior foreign diplomats, many of whom have ambassadorial status in their own countries. The local Consular Corps is very active not only in promoting trade, commerce, and in undertaking typical consular functions serving foreign nationals, but the Corps is also active in promoting cultural and artistic programs. In addition, the County government has instituted Sister Cities affiliations with over twenty four cities in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The International Trade Consortium—Program and Activities

With these impressive trade figures and active international relations activities, it is no wonder that Miami-Dade has created an office to promote international trade and commerce. *The Jay Malina International Trade Consortium's* (ITC) mission is to promote Miami-Dade as a Global Gateway by enhancing international relations, cultural understanding, and trade. ITC's annual budget is in excess of \$1.2 million principally from general revenues as well as revenues from the Port of Miami and the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau. Miami-Dade County Ordinance 02-225 & 02-1505 defines ITC's powers, responsibilities, and functions. Currently, the agency has a staff of ten highly trained professionals with expertise in trade, commerce, and international relations. An advisory board composed of individuals appointed by the County Mayor, the members of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Manager, and the principal economic development agencies in the community provides oversight, sets policy, approves the annual Strategic Plan, and recommends the annual

(continued on page 4)

(“Miami-Dade County” from page 3)
budget to the Mayor. The Chair of the ITC Board of Directors is a member of the Board of County Commissioners appointed by the Chair of the Commission. While the agency reports to the County Commission, it works closely with the Mayor and the County administration on a daily basis for programmatic and budgetary matters.

Every fiscal year, the ITC Board of Directors adopts a Strategic Plan that defines the agency’s mission statement, as well as its goals and measurable objectives. This plan serves as the basis for developing the agency’s annual budget and its programmatic priorities. In the last few fiscal years, as local revenues diminished with the onslaught of the economic recession, ITC has had to revise its Plan continually to reflect budget realities, but the plan serves as the guiding light for the agency’s annual service delivery. The current Strategic Plan defines the mission of the ITC as follows: “To promote Miami-Dade as a Global Gateway by enhancing international relations, cultural understanding and trade.” Four specific goals support this mission, and a number of measurable objectives define the agency’s work program (ITC Strategic Plan for FY 2009–2010).

Among the principal promotional activities of the agency are the Inbound and Outbound Trade Missions. Since 2002, the Board of Directors, working through its committee system, has selected two cities per year to target for its Outbound Missions, labeled as Business Development Missions. The objectives of these missions are to select market areas where there is a proven potential to either expand or develop trade opportunities in pre-selected sectors (manufacturing, IT, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and others) and to promote Miami-Dade County’s advanced infrastructure for trade development. The missions have a governmental and a private sector component. High level representatives of Miami

International Airport and the Port of Miami as well as members of the key economic development agencies usually participate in the mission and meet with their counterparts in the visiting city. Selected representatives of the private sector, recruited from among the sectors mentioned above and who pay for their own expenses, meet in pre-screened business to business matchmaking meetings with entrepreneurs in the host city as well. These missions are led by a County Commissioner who represents the County’s official interests and lends an official air to the mission. ITC plays a key role in selecting the country, planning and organizing the mission, recruiting private sector participants, and in coordinating and staffing all the meetings. The agency prepares a comprehensive agenda for all participants. The government of Taiwan and the government of the City of Dakar, Senegal have indicated they would use ITC’s outbound mission agenda as a model for their own foreign missions. During the out bound missions, mission participants have a unique opportunity to meet with high level U.S. embassy officials, representatives of the host country including ministers of trade, economic development agencies, and chambers of commerce in an official setting guaranteeing the effectiveness and seriousness of the meetings. In a matter of a couple of days participants meet with individuals who, if participants were to go on their own, would take weeks to accomplish.

ITC also organizes inbound missions from other partner countries. These missions are the result of an invitation extended during an ITC mission abroad—reciprocal missions; or missions organized by consulates, foreign trade offices, or foreign economic development agencies. For these missions the agency serves as a one-stop center providing coordination meetings with local government officials and county departments, local economic development agencies, and pre-screened business-to-business match-

making meetings. Using its extensive database of local entrepreneurs engaged in export and import activities, ITC works with the organizers of the incoming mission to identify the economic sectors that have potential for trade and recruits local entrepreneurs to participate in the matchmaking meetings. In doing so, the agency facilitates trade development at the local level. In addition to business development missions, ITC also coordinates inbound missions from foreign countries seeking technical assistance, and/or cultural exchanges.

The tables on page 9 demonstrate the number of pre-screened business to business matchmaking meetings organized by ITC in conjunction with local economic development agencies during outbound missions to Brazil, Japan, and Taiwan and during inbound trade missions from Italy and Poland in 2008–2009 (ITC FY 2008–2009 Annual Report):

Since its creation in 2002, ITC has led outbound business development missions to twenty four countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (ITC Strategic Plan for FY 2010–2011). While South Florida trades with countries all over the world, its principal trade partners, as mentioned elsewhere in this article, are the countries in the Western Hemisphere which is one of the principal reasons Miami-Dade County is known as the Gateway to the Americas. Yet, ITC’s trade development efforts, in the past few years, have concentrated in developing new markets in Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe including Turkey. These are important growing markets with enormous trade potential. For example, China was our fourth trading partner in 2008 (World City) and has climbed to number three in 2009 (World City). Geographically, Africa is closer to South Florida than to any other state in the union, and with the passage a number of years ago of the Africa Growth and Opportunities Act, the

(continued on page 9)



International e-trade

A few days ago I was invited to keynote a conference in Cyprus in celebration of the International Telecommunications Union's "Information Society Day". As part of that celebration, my hosts asked me to join them in a trek to a distant village atop Mount Proodos in the Southwest part of the island called Kyperounda. Its population is barely over 1,000 souls, and the idea was to speak to high school students about the promise of new jobs in the technology future of tomorrow.

My expectations were very low. What discussion would I have with children that probably have no context regarding the technology marvels of today, let alone tomorrow? I was sure that I would have to spend most of my time explaining an imaginary world of computers, web sites and mobile phones that can do everything including cooking my breakfast! And yet, ever cautious, I decided to ask a simple question as I faced my smiling, eager audience in a small school club in the main village square: "how many of you know about the Internet?" Just about all hands shot up! So I continued: "and how many have access to the Internet at home?" Again, most hands went up like birds exploding in the sunshine! Unbelievable, I thought! So I tried my last question: "And what do you do with the Internet?" A young girl shyly said "we prepare for our homework using Google, and use Facebook to check up on our friends!"

Well, dear readers, pause, reflect and think! If a group of youngsters high atop a mountain range in a small village in Cyprus are Facebooking their way through school, all of us had better prepare for a different future for our counties. A future where we

expect the marvels of broadband communications and the ever-present Internet to allow us to develop new kinds of trade, new kinds of jobs and new ways for our communities to grow, develop jobs and prosper . . .

And yet when I look around at budgets of Economic Development departments and authorities around the country, I see a lot of brick-and-mortar investments. I see a lot of shoring up of traditional businesses that our governments consider to be the "anchors" of their economy, and almost no strategy to take advantage of the new, boundary-less space of e-commerce and e-trade. And the reason is easy to discern: some of us are not comfortable with the tools of the future, and are not ready to experiment with procedures and processes that are digital in nature. Big problem!

So how do we break the cycle? How do we begin to encourage the creation of new jobs based on cyber-commerce? How do we escalate our thinking of computer commerce beyond that of simplicity exchanges on eBay and convince our elected officials that digital transactions can be made inside a closet, not a factory floor? The answer again is simple. We need to take risks, and to allow new thinkers, youthful thinkers to permeate our ranks and take over the reins of our development agencies. Words like cyber security, server farms and bandwidth must replace the supremacy of the old guard list of words such as square footage of office space, access to roads and airport proximity. Businesses like portal design and maintenance, telemedicine application support and location-enabled applications for smart phones will need to be welcomed and nurtured, and proper, new incentives deployed.

There is no time to lose. Each trade delegation we send abroad has to target business partners that can be as close as our key boards every morning. Every economic development grant we make must have a digital component, and a cyber strategy for new jobs and revenue growth. The capacity is there, but has been stifled and not allowed to blossom all too long. There is no choice if new revenues are to be found—the digital future musts become ours.

It is an uncertain new world. And yes, a brave new world! One that the children of Kyperounda are ready to inhabit and work in. And perhaps those same children will be our future work force. The spoils of the new economic development wars will go to these communities that can develop quick new alliances with smart, mobile laborers who balance work, leisure and family life using huge amounts of technology to make it all work. And as revenue streams from traditional tax sources continue to dry up, we must begin to plan for a different future. One that is based on telecommunications and Information Technology, and one which allows our community to develop and profit from each competitive advantage we have. Whether it is a tasty cupcake which could develop an army of global hungry devotees or a new computer game developer who decides to come back to her birth place to develop the next smash game, we must be ready to provide entrepreneurs with what they need: broadband connectivity, a good healthy livable environment and new tax incentives that are sensitive to the digital age. If you are not sure what these might be—take advantage of the gnawing question and learn, my friend! ■

Imputed Value of Income from Insurance Benefits for Dependents as a Result of IRS Code Application

by Gene Smith, Administrative Coordinator, Dunn County Wisconsin

The perception of many people is that public employees have fringe benefits beyond those available to the average citizen. In particular, the value of health and dental insurance benefits is frequently cited as a reason for the high cost of government. Recent changes in law in both Wisconsin and Minnesota have potentially increased the cost of such coverage by extending eligibility to a greater population by increasing the threshold of participation for adult children in Wisconsin from age 25 to 27. For this county the cost goes beyond the simple change in population served.

At least in Dunn County the change in law caused us to evaluate the application of the IRS Code with regard to the imputed value of the health and dental insurance benefit for dependents who are not qualified as tax dependents pursuant to the IRS Code beyond the scope of the newly served adult child population. In a nutshell, we believe that employees with dependents on an insurance plan who are not IRS qualified dependents shall have the value of that insurance added to their income.

In our case, after an independent actuarial analysis, we have determined that value to be in excess of \$4,000 per year for health insurance and \$500 per year for dental insurance. Many Wisconsin Governments have chosen to use the single or COBRA premium cost rather than conducting their own analysis resulting, usually, in an even greater liability.

While we have monitored insurance eligibility of dependents with some regularity we have spent little time considering the tax consequences. Further, we have found that not only are there potential tax con-

sequences for the employee but costs for the employer as well. At a minimum, FICA deductions are applied to the additional imputed value, income. I would suspect that in some states, pension contribution liability is attached as well.

“While we have monitored insurance eligibility of dependents with some regularity we have spent little time considering the tax consequences. Further, we have found that not only are there potential tax consequences for the employee but costs for the employer as well.”

Our conclusion has been to implement new procedures aimed at ensuring that we identify all employees who should have an imputed value added to their earnings. We are requiring all employees with child dependents, regardless of age to certify whether their dependents are IRS tax qualified. Why regardless of age? We have found that in divorce situations the parent with a tax eligible dependent is not always the parent providing insurance coverage. We determined that our payroll program was capable of accommodating imputed value income. We are modifying our Summary Plan Documents (SPD's) for health and dental insurance to require employees to inform us in changes in the taxable status of their dependents in addition to the previously identified qualifying events. We are including data collection forms in our employee orientation material to determine tax status of insurance dependents at the time of enrollment.

As a guide to our employees we have given them information from IRS publications in order to help them identify the tax status of their dependents. In general, the IRS requires that a qualifying child meet the following five tests:

- The child must be your son, daughter, or stepchild
- The child must be:
 - (a) under age 19 at the end of the year;
 - (b) under age 24 at the end of the year and a full-time student; or
 - (c) any age if permanently and totally disabled
- The child must have lived with you for more than half of the year
- The child must not have provided more than half of their own support for the year
- If the child meets the rules to be a qualifying child of more than one person, you must be the person entitled to claim the child as a qualifying child

If an insurance plan dependent does not meet these criteria we believe that the value of the benefit is imputed, taxable income.

At best, given dependent enrollment and drop limitations, this situation has been difficult and confusing for our employees. At worst, it is still not over. It will be interesting to see what the impact upon our insurance census will be as a result of our renewed diligence.

Our purpose is to suggest that other units of government may consider this information and benefit to the extent that they examine their situation and make any appropriate changes before they are forced to do so. The following article by Bill Milne may also be of assistance. ■

Health Care Reform

Interaction of Federal and State Laws Requiring Coverage for Adult Children

by **Bill Milne, Weld, Riley, Prenn & Ricci, S.C.**

Recent Federal health care legislation includes changes requiring health insurance coverage for adult children. Since Wisconsin implemented similar changes at the beginning of this year, Federal coverage mandates will not be a complete shock to Wisconsin employers. However, there are some differences between the Federal and State laws we thought employers should be aware of. Late last week, the IRS also issued some guidance regarding imputed income taxes, which Wisconsin employers have been trying to address in connection with Wisconsin's coverage mandates.

Under the new Federal law, plans offering dependent health insurance coverage must generally include coverage for adult children under the age of 26. Unlike Wisconsin's mandate, Federal law does not have any other conditions related to a child's marital status or availability of other employer-provided coverage. In other words, all children up to age 26 must be covered. For these purposes, a child includes an employee's child, stepchild, legally adopted child, child lawfully placed with the employee for legal adoption, and an eligible foster child.

The Federal mandate is effective for plans as they renew after September 23, 2010. Therefore, as a practical effect, the broader federal mandate will not apply to employers until their plans renew next year. Employers should follow Wisconsin's coverage requirements in the meantime.

We also want to point out the age differences between Federal and State law. Under Federal law, coverage must be provided to adult children until they reach age 26. Under

Wisconsin law, coverage lasts until age 27 (assuming other requirements are met). Therefore, the broader Federal test will apply until a child turns 26. Then Wisconsin law will apply until the child turns 27. Thus, the forms employers may be using to obtain information regarding employees' dependent children will need to be modified to reflect the collection of information until an employee's adult child turns 27.

Perhaps the bigger issue for Wisconsin employers is whether imputed income rules still apply to health insurance coverage provided to adult children, who are not considered dependents for income tax purposes. Fortunately, the new Federal health care laws provide some relief in this regard. Effective as of March 30, 2010, for Federal income tax purposes, imputed income tax rules do *not* apply to insurance coverage provided to adult children who are 26 for the full tax year.

In other words, employers do not impute income or withhold taxes on the value of coverage for an adult child, for Federal income tax purposes, until the year in which the adult child turns 27. This change, however, is not retroactive. Imputed income rules still apply for Federal income tax purposes if an adult child did not meet dependency tests for Federal income tax purposes between January 1 and March 30 of this year.

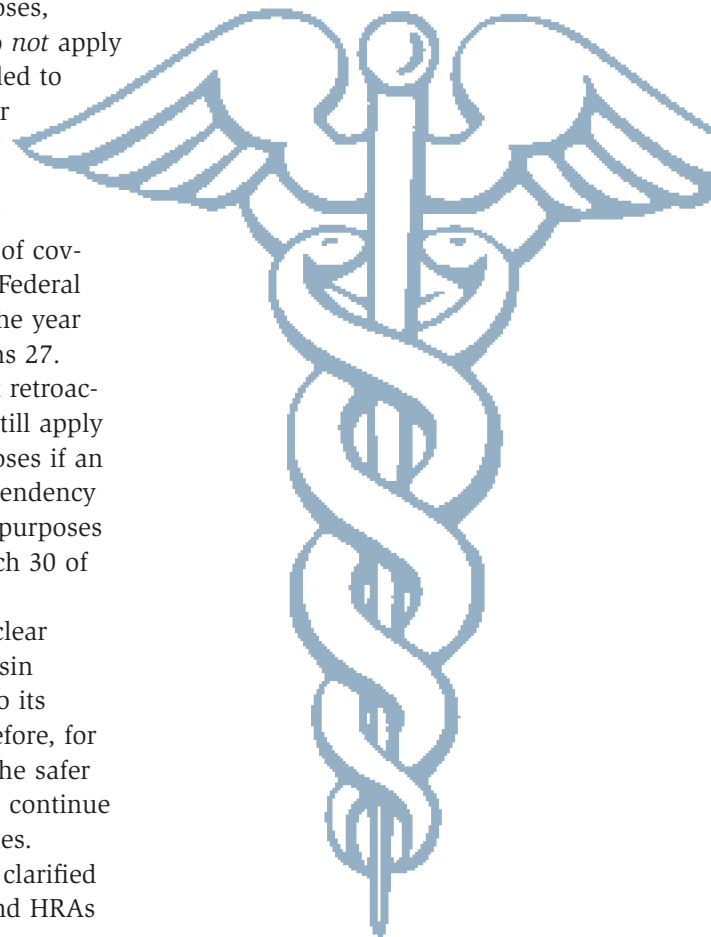
At this time, it is still unclear whether the State of Wisconsin will make a similar update to its imputed income rules. Therefore, for State income tax purposes, the safer approach for employers is to continue to apply imputed income rules.

Additionally, the IRS has clarified that cafeteria plans, FSAs, and HRAs

can make distributions for adult children under age 27 without triggering income taxes as adult children can be treated the same as other dependents under these types of accounts. Therefore, note that cafeteria plans may need to be amended to include employees' adult children.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the issues highlighted in this article, please do not hesitate to contact us. ■

This article should not be construed as legal advice and is intended for general informational purposes only. If you have any questions regarding this article, you should consult your legal counsel.



by Joan McCallen, President and CEO, ICMA-RC and John Saeli, Vice President, Marketing Services & Industry Analytics, ICMA-RC

HRA Tax Parity Provision Not Included in Health Care Reform Law



While health care reform legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President in March did not significantly impact 401 and 457 plans, the bill did establish 2018 as the effective date of an excise tax on annual health insurance coverage over \$10,200 for individuals and \$27,500 for families, with adjustments for health care inflation.

At this time, there is uncertainty about the effect of this legislation on health reimbursement arrangements (HRAs), flexible spending arrangements (FSAs), or health savings accounts (HSAs), which will likely not be clarified until regulations are written.

The bill also does not include provisions to extend tax-free employer-paid coverage to nonspouse or nondependent beneficiaries. Inclusion of the provisions would have provided

tax parity to non-spouse/non-dependent individuals who qualify for and receive employer-provided health plan benefits.

However, the bill does include provisions that amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow exclusion of taxable income coverage for qualifying adult children through age 26. The exclusion applies whether the coverage is subsidized directly by the employer or paid by an employee through salary reduction. Although the bill does not specifically address HRAs, FSAs or HSAs, the proposed change to the Code may allow for tax-free reimbursements for qualifying adult children under an HRA or FSA.

In March, the Senate Finance Committee passed legislation (the Tax Extenders Act of 2009) including a provision that would establish a Roth feature for state and local 457 plans. The House passed its version of the tax extender bill in December 2009. The provision would have leveled

the playing field for state and local government workers by permitting 457(b) plans to offer designated Roth accounts which are already permitted in 401(k) and 403(b) plans.

As of early June 2010, however, the provisions had been removed from the bill. Although debate continues on the legislation, it is unlikely that the Roth 457 provision will be included in the final version.

Target-date funds top the regulatory agenda. In June 2009, the DOL and Securities and Exchange Commission held joint hearings to gather public input on the need for additional regulation on target-date funds. Since that time, the two departments have worked jointly to produce a comprehensive checklist of best practices that will help plan sponsors and participants with the selection and monitoring of target-date funds.

In early May 2010, the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) released their long-awaited Investor Bulletin on Target Date Retirement Funds. The four-page document is designed to provide investors with a better understanding of how target date funds work and the risks associated with them. The DOL has plans to release additional guidance—for plan fiduciaries to use in selecting and monitoring target date funds—at a date to be determined.

Also on the horizon is the completion of a multi-agency effort to create a consistent Federal definition of governmental entities/plans for purposes of Code section 414(d). The Internal Revenue Service, Treasury Department, DOL, and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation have been working on the project for over two years. Proposed regulations have been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget, and guidance is expected once agency heads give their approval. ■

Don't miss this upcoming ICMA Webinar... Build Great Council Member Relationships

Thursday, July 22, 2010 from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM EDT

Get specific strategies on building and maintaining one of the most important aspects of your responsibility as a city/county manager.

Register today. The most important—and most challenging—part of any city/county manager's job is developing and maintaining a positive, effective, and productive relationship with your elected official. This relationship does not occur by accident. Rather, it is nurtured and sustained through deliberate efforts.

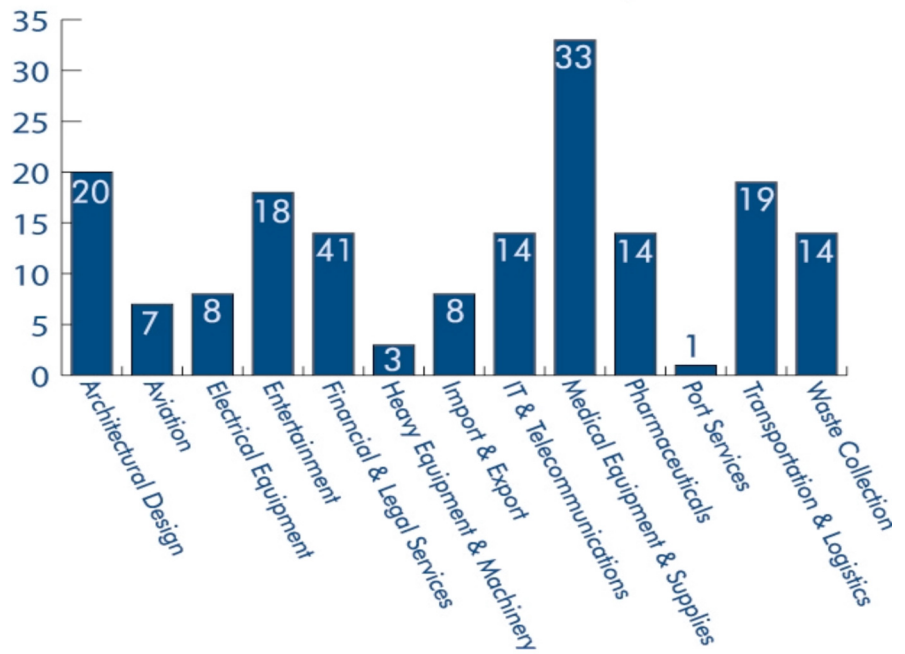
Martin Vanacour, Ph.D., CEO of Dynamic Relations and former city manager, and Kathie Novak, mayor of Northglenn, Colorado, team up to give you valuable insights into the changing dynamics of the delicate council member relationship.

(“Miami-Dade County” from page 4) potential for increased trade with that rapidly growing market grows daily. However, without adequate air or sea linkage, trade development will remain impaired. ITC in partnership with Miami International Airport, has pursued an aggressive policy to establish direct air links with South Africa, and is continuing to work with that government to open a consulate or trade office in Miami-Dade.

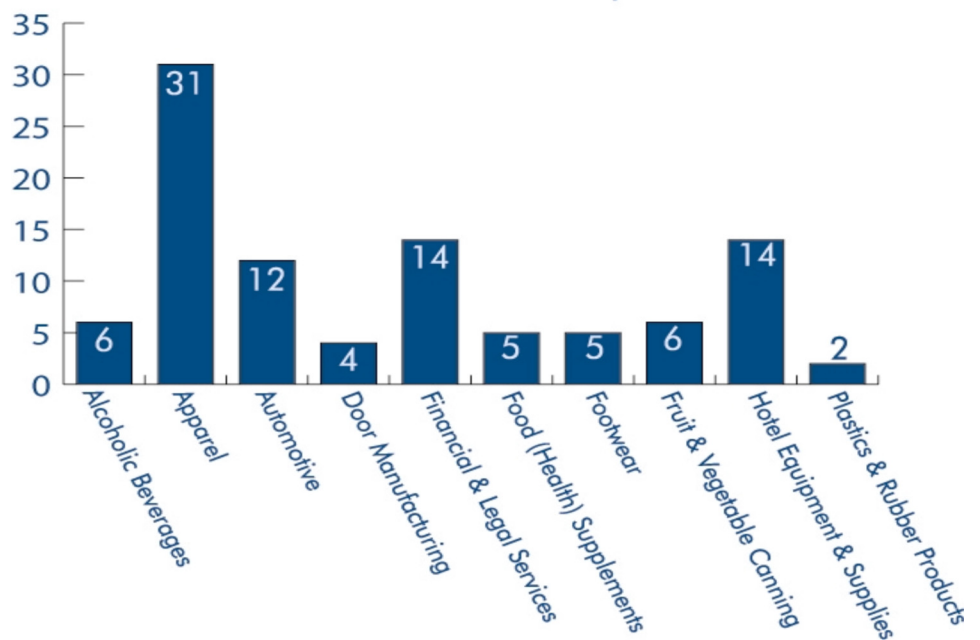
Nevertheless, as a result of changing economic conditions, ITC has again refocused its trade development efforts towards Latin America and the Caribbean. The growing economies of Brazil, Colombia, Panama, and the Dominican Republic once again present new opportunities for increased bilateral relations. With the passage of the Dominican Republic and Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), the possibility for increased trade with these key partners in the hemisphere will increase for local entrepreneurs. Also, it is very likely that the U.S. Congress will in the near future give its consent to the Free Trade Agreement with Panama. In addition, the government of Panama has announced it will be beginning a multibillion dollar expansion of the Panama Canal, which along with Miami-Dade’s dredging of the port channel to a depth of fifty feet will provide new opportunities for maritime trade.

ITC also provides training to local entrepreneurs on the best practices to export and import through three training workshops that provide the latest information available on federal regulations required to import merchandise into the United States as well as the requirements for exporting to other countries. In partnership with a prominent law firm in the area that provides the training pro-bono, ITC has already trained approximately 100 local businesses. It is anticipated that at the conclusion of the third training workshop in June of this year, a total of 150 area businesses will have

**Matchmaking Meetings by Sector
Outbound Trade Missions - Brazil, Japan, & Taiwan**



**Matchmaking Meetings by Sector
Inbound Trade Missions - Italy & Poland**



participated in the program. In addition, ITC has organized a series of workshops for the members of the Consular Corps and foreign trade offices in our area. ITC brings together in a morning session key representatives of the Transportation Security Administration, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency, Miami International Airport, the Port of

Miami, and the Performing Arts Center to brief consular officials of not only what Miami-Dade County is doing to facilitate trade and commerce but also to give these officials an opportunity to learn firsthand of the latest federal regulations affecting the importation of goods into the United States. In addition, ITC provides an introduc-

(continued on page 10)

(“Miami-Dade County” from page 9) tion to the County’s state-of-the-art Performing Arts center to encourage the participation of cultural arts groups from throughout the world in our community.

Through the Sister Cities program, also administered by ITC, the County maintains affiliations with twenty four cities around the world in our continuing effort to increase multinational cultural understanding and citizen diplomacy. ITC has undertaken Sister Cities Missions to cities in Brazil, Chile, Spain, Jamaica, Italy, the Bahamas, Taiwan, and Senegal. Many of these missions were also part of ITC’s Outbound Business Development Missions undertaken in an effort to reduce expenditures, and increase bilateral and trade relations with communities affiliated with Miami-Dade. In addition to the missions program, ITC has in conjunction with Miami-Dade College, a youth project that recruits students from local high schools for a morning long session in which the students discuss international current events and report out recommendations regarding such issues as the elimination of poverty, sustainability, and climate change. The objective of the project is to develop leadership skills for future community leaders in international affairs. Last but not least is the international art exhibit event which in the last three years has afforded an opportunity to local artists representing the various sister cities affiliations from around the world to have a chance, on a competitive basis, to exhibit their art in one of the galleries of Miami-Dade College. This event usually has the participation of members of the consular corps as well as community leaders and interested persons. The proceeds from the sale of the art are used to award a scholarship to a student enrolled in Miami-Dade College. These programs serve to further promote a better understanding of the

many contributions that other cultures and nations make to our multiethnic community.

To support its programs and activities, ITC has also developed an aggressive marketing and outreach campaign consisting of bimonthly newsletters, an interactive web page, an international calendar of events, a promotional DVD, and several collateral publications.

ITC’s web page has had over 21,000 hits in 2008–2009 and serves as the agency’s principal communication tool. Over the years, foreign governments, economic development agencies planning missions to Miami-Dade, and interested parties seeking information about the County’s international trade agency have used the web page to familiarize themselves with the services the agency has to offer. The web page also contains the international calendar of events which is a compilation of all the relevant trade related activities going on in the community on a monthly basis. This calendar also serves as an important coordinative tool for planning events, trade shows, and foreign missions for all interested parties in our community (www.miamidade.gov/itc).

One of ITC’s most useful publications is the magazine journal Miami Trade Numbers which is a publication of World City and ITC. Miami Trade Numbers is published annually and is a compilation in a user friendly form of trade statistics of the top twenty five trading partners in South Florida’s U.S. Customs District Number 52. The publication not only has trade statistics but also relevant information about each of the countries’ political and economic conditions as well as the principal products exported and imported through our community. The magazine has had worldwide recognition and continues to be a useful reference guide for both scholars and practitioners.

Conclusions

While international trade and commerce activities are not typically local government functions, Miami-Dade County which has become an international metropolitan center for trade, commerce, and tourism has for the past eight years developed an aggressive international trade promotion program geared to securing its position as the Gateway of the Americas. In an increasing competitive world environment and in the face of a significant reduction in world trade resulting from the current financial crisis, it is now more important than ever to redouble all efforts to secure for our community its continued presence in the world market. As we have seen, trade and commerce are important contributors to the economy of South Florida. Our principal economic partners are in Latin America and the Caribbean, but China continues to be a rising player in our international trade activities. Miami-Dade County’s unique geographic position and its multiethnic and multicultural population have positioned this community as an international platform for trade not only with Latin America but with Europe, Asia, and Africa. And to maintain this position, the County government has charged ITC with the key role of advocating and supporting this role and of providing opportunities for local entrepreneurs to benefit from this growing international market.

References

ITC Annual Report for FY 2009–2009
ITC Strategic Plan for FY 2009–2010
ITC Strategic Plan for FY 2010–2011
Miami-Dade Aviation Department Annual Report
Port of Miami Annual Report
Miami Trade Numbers
World City Magazine
www.Miami-Dade.gov/itc



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS

REGISTER BY JULY 12 TO ATTEND NACA EVENTS AT NACo's 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE – Washoe County, Nevada

The National Association of County Administrators (NACA) will convene a series of events at the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Conference on July 17, 18, and 19, 2010, in Washoe County (Reno), Nevada.

This year we are combining our **Idea Exchange** and **General Membership Meeting** on Sunday to accommodate busy schedules during the conference. Our traditional **Idea Exchange** will provide an opportunity for county administrators from across the country to discuss, in an informal setting, ideas and best practices that are relevant to county management. Please give us suggested topics in the space below so that we can build the agenda. The **General Membership Meeting** will offer an update of NACA activities and recent board actions.

A **special highlight** on Monday will be a **site visit to two Washoe County facilities** thanks to Washoe County manager and NACA board member Katy Simon, and Washoe County deputy manager Dave Childs.

- **Regional Public Safety Training Center / Combined Dispatch and Emergency Operations Center**
- **Regional Animal Services Center**

IDEA EXCHANGE & GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (Sunday, July 18 @ 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.) WASHOE COUNTY FACILITY TOUR (Monday, July 19 @ 11:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.)

Register by July 12, 2010: \$50.00 per person, includes Sunday refreshments; Monday transportation and lunch.

Suggest Your Idea Exchange Agenda Topics: _____

Name & Title:			
County or Organization:			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip:	E-mail:

Return to:

NACA Attn: **Felicia Littky, c/o ICMA**

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 500

Washington, DC 20002-4201

Method of Payment: (✓ one)

Check Enclosed

Check to Follow

Credit Card Information (AmEx; MC; VISA only)

Card type: _____

Account Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

- **PHONE: 202-962-3656 (phone)**
- **FAX: 202-962-3500 (fax)**
- **E-MAIL: flittky@icma.org (e-mail)**

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Executive Board Meeting	Saturday, July 17	9:00 am-11:00 am	Reno Sparks Convention Center Room: E1
Idea Exchange & General Membership Meeting	Sunday, July 18	1:00 pm-4:30pm	Reno Sparks Convention Center Room: A8
Site Visits: Washoe County Transportation and Lunch included	Monday, July 19	11:00am-2:15pm	Meet at NACo General Registration area

Check the NACA Web site at countyadministrators.org for more information



Rise Above Crisis

Can you successfully meet the challenges of budget fluctuation?

TechSolve can help.

TechSolve teamed with Pitkin County, Colorado, to eliminate operations waste and redundancies to create a more efficient and responsive organization.

For more information, contact former NACA president, David Krings, at krings@techsolve.org, or read the whole story at www.techsolve.org



Plan now to attend ICMA's annual conference in San José: October 17-20, 2010

Four outstanding keynote sessions confirmed:

- **Sunday: Jane McGonigal**, Director of Game Research and Development at the Institute for the Future in Palo Alto, California, will discuss games that are harnessing the power of collective intelligence to build communities and solve real-world problems.
- **Monday: Diane Swonk**, Chief Economist for Mesirow Financial and one of the top economic forecasters in the U.S., will use her expertise to forecast the latest economic outlook with a particular focus on implications for local governments.
- **Tuesday: Carl Guardino**, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, will lead a panel of Silicon Valley CEOs in a discussion of technological innovations on the horizon that will have an impact on local government.
- **Wednesday: Tim Brown**, CEO of design firm IDEO (*EYE-dee-oh*), considered to be one of the world's most innovative companies, will discuss how to use design techniques and strategies to match people's needs with what is technically feasible and strategically viable for an organization.



Keep up to date on conference announcements and deadlines at <http://icma.org/conference>.