

# Navigating in the New Federal Environment

Wednesday morning 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

The new Trump administration and the Republican control of Congress has created a different political environment for cities and likely changes in federal and state policies that affect low-income households and neighborhoods. This most likely will mean reduced resources, but could also spark constructive reviews of current programs or new collaborations among agencies. While there is currently a great deal of uncertainty, NNIP Partners can assist their local governments and nonprofits by providing sound analysis for advocacy and policy deliberations as proposals unfold.

NNIP Partners will decide the appropriate strategies for their organization and local context, but there's a wide range of possible contributions. For example, NNIP partners could portray and share the local effects of changes in state and federal policies, either before-the-fact to influence how states cope or after-the-fact to document ultimate effects of changes. They could also provide analytic support to local governments in making informed decisions in the face of likely cuts to federal funding. NNIP Partners also have a role in highlighting the disparate impacts on low-income families and communities of color.

***The purpose of this session is to help NNIP Partners think proactively about the role they can play in helping their local stakeholders as they determine responses to changes in federal and state resources and programs.***

The session will be moderated by Gary Painter (Director of Social Policy, USC Sol Price Center for Social Innovation) who will begin by sharing thoughts on the environment in Los Angeles. We will then have about 25 minutes of moderated discussion.

- *Benjamin Orr*, Executive Director at the Maryland Center on Economic Policy will discuss the state government's potential role in mitigating the harm of federal cutbacks and the need for information to support prioritization of state spending.
- *Michael Wallace*, Program Director for Federal Advocacy at the National League of Cities will talk about NLC's efforts to arm cities with creative approaches to respond to reduced federal funding and Partners' potential role in demonstrating the value of public programs.

**Discussion:** (30 minutes)

- What changes, if any, have NNIP Partners noticed in their environment locally in response to the new federal administration and Republican control of Congress?
- What new roles do NNIP Partners see themselves playing over the next year in helping their local governments and community organizations?

- Are there lessons on strategies from NNIP Partners who have worked in state environments with constrained fiscal resources or majority conservative leaders?

## Guest Speakers Biographies

**Benjamin Orr** is the Executive Director of the Maryland Center on Economic Policy. From 2011 to 2013 he was Interim Director, Transition Coordinator, and Policy Analyst for the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute. Mr. Orr also spent three years with the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, where he worked on policy issues affecting the greater Washington DC region. Prior to his time at Brookings, Ben worked for the CUNY Institute for Demographic Research, the New York Census Research Data Center, and the John Jay College Center on Terrorism. Mr. Orr holds a Master's in Public Administration from Baruch College, City University of New York.

The Maryland Center is a member of the **State Priorities Partnership**, a network of more than 40 independent, nonprofit research and policy organizations. Launched over two decades ago, the Partnership works to expand economic opportunity, reduce inequality, and fight poverty by making sure that states have the resources they need to invest in good schools, quality health care, and other priorities. It strives to improve state policy in a variety of other areas, including immigration, criminal justice, economic development, and accountable budgeting. State Priorities partners use analysis, strategic communications, and coalition-building to advance policies that give more people the opportunity to prosper. They equip lawmakers, journalists, advocacy groups, nonprofit service providers, and the public with unassailable information that helps children get a quality education, families get medical care, and working people get the assistance they need to build a better life. (<http://statepriorities.org/>)

**Michael Wallace** is Program Director for Federal Advocacy at the National League of Cities, an organization dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. Working in partnership with 49 state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a resource to and an advocate for over 19,000 cities, villages and towns. As a member of the Federal Advocacy team, Michael works closely with mayors, council members, and municipal staff to advance local priorities in the areas of housing, community development, and economic growth. Prior to joining NLC, Michael worked for U.S. Congresswoman Julia Carson (IN), managing her House Financial Services Committee portfolio. Michael graduated from Marian University in Indianapolis, Indiana, with degrees in philosophy and theology. He originally moved to Washington to run the Llewellyn Scott Catholic Worker House.