



NEWS IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT:

[Jim Philipps](mailto:Jim.Phillips@cookcountycourt.com), 202.942.4220

Enza Raineri 312-603-5690

ezraineri@cookcountycourt.com

Clerk Dorothy Brown explores justice issues during NACO's annual Justice and Public Safety Symposium

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, explored federal, state and local intergovernmental justice and public safety priorities at the 2012 National Association of Counties' (NACO) Annual Justice and Public Safety Symposium held Jan. 25-28 in Fulton County, Ga.

Hosted by Fulton County and the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, Brown discussed these critical priorities with some of the nation's foremost justice and public safety experts and considered how county officials can best shape federal policies and funding to ensure that services for residents in their communities are enhanced.

The theme of the symposium was "A National County Policy Symposium to Safely Lower Jail and Juvenile Detention Populations by Doing It Smarter." The keynote speaker was former United States Ambassador to the United Nations and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, who shared insights about his lifelong work as a politician, human rights activist and businessman and how they relate to justice issues facing counties.

Another special guest speaker was Dr. James Austin, director, JFA Institute, and former director of the Institute on Crime, Justice and Corrections at George Washington University. Dr. Austin discussed innovative ways local governments are addressing these challenging issues.

"Decreasing the jail population safely must include measures to prevent recidivism. To do that, we must expand job opportunities and widen the net for what can be expunged for certain ex-offenders. We have seen the positive benefits of expunging criminal records in Illinois, and of the granting of clemency petitions by the Governor. The more ways we can give people a second chance the better off we are as a society, as it will lower the cost to government, to incarcerate generations of men and women." said Clerk Brown.

Each year members of NACO's JPS Steering Committee meet with local, state and national experts to discuss important justice and public safety priorities on behalf of the nation's 3,068 counties. The committee is responsible for developing NACO's Justice and Public Safety policies, and advocates for local government priorities before the U.S. Congress.

-more-

Other issues discussed during this year's four-day symposium included: cost-effective pretrial justice programs, reentry programs, creating criminal justice coordinating councils, cyber security, and diverting the mentally ill from the criminal justice system.

Brown said the NACo justice and public safety symposium was a great opportunity to hear directly from experts on many of the critical justice and public safety issues affecting counties across the country and said the critical matters explored at the meeting will improve and enhance public safety in states and local communities.

For more information on the symposium or NACo justice and public safety policies, visit the Legislative and Policy section of the NACo website at www.naco.org or contact Jim Philipps at 202.942.4220 or jphilipps@naco.org.

###

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation's 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.