**Media Contacts:**
Tiffany Swinehart
614-677-4297
swinehj@nationwide.com

Bethany McLeish
614-677-8516
mcleisb@nationwide.com

Nationwide® Financial

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# Nationwide Retirement Solutions' National Association of Counties retirement plan earns top rating from independent consultant

## NACo plan beats competitors fourteenth time in a row

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** — The National Association of Counties (NACo) deferred compensation plan, administered by Nationwide Retirement Solutions, placed first among its competitors for its return on the group fixed annuity option offered to county employees.[1] This is according to a study conducted by the independent consulting firm Buck Consultants, and released on October 31. The NACo plan has topped the study overall every year since 1989.

The NACo plan is the largest deferred compensation program in the country for county employees. This study reviewed the fixed group annuity option offered by Nationwide Life Insurance Company, Columbus, Ohio, and its eight largest competitors.

"We are committed to providing county employees the best retirement program in the country and we're pleased that our 20 year partnership with Nationwide allows us to deliver such a quality program," said Larry Naake, NACo executive director.

In addition to evaluating the competitiveness of the fixed option offered to county employees, Buck Consultants also reviewed the creditworthiness of Nationwide Life Insurance Company and concluded that Nationwide strengthened its standing in 2001 in the analysis of risk based capital ratios and had a below average number of problem assets.

"Nationwide Retirement Solutions is proud to be affiliated with NACo," said President Duane Meek. "As we continue our focus on providing quality retirement programs with industry-leading education, NACo remains a key partner."

Nationwide has held NACo's exclusive endorsement for deferred compensation plans since 1980.

The consultant study is only one feature of NACo's deferred compensation program that distinguishes it from others. As a result of NACo's Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee, the NACo program is the only one in the country that receives oversight and is advised by county participants.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions is the Nationwide Financial (NYSE: NFS) subsidiary that provides education and administrative service solutions for the public sector serving more than 1.5 million state, county and municipal employees across the country.[2] Formerly PEBSCO, the company has been a leader in deferred compensation products and services to the public sector for 25 years.

Nationwide Financial, with assets under management of more than $113 billion in 2001, is the retirement savings and income operation of Nationwide, a leading provider of diversified insurance and financial services. The parent company is ranked No. 136 on the *Fortune 500* based on revenue. For more information about Nationwide Financial visit www.nationwidefinancial.com.

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[1] For 2001 performance

[2] As of November 30, 2002