



The United States Conference of Mayors

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REACTION BY THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS PRESIDENT MIAMI MAYOR MANNY DIAZ ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES REMARKS ON THE ECONOMY

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Conference of Mayors President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz made the following comments in reaction to statements on the economy from Senators John McCain in Denver and Barack Obama in St. Louis:

“The nation is facing a “perfect storm” of adverse economic conditions – rising poverty, job losses, higher energy costs, rising foreclosures and escalating food costs – that requires a broader national investment, one grounded in local solutions, in cities and metropolitan economies.

“In their remarks about the economy, Senators McCain and Obama addressed issues that impact Americans living in our nation’s cities and metropolitan areas, which account for 83 percent of the country’s population increasingly living in urban areas.

“While we applaud both presidential candidates for their focus on the economy, we think neither candidate goes far enough to help the suffering working families of America. The nation’s mayors would like to see more job creation in both of the candidates’ economic packages, as well as policies that raise the minimum wage to a real living wage so that families can do more than just survive. We have called for expanding, simplifying and increasing The Earned Income Tax Credit to better reward hard working, lower income families and expand eligibility for single adults by increasing the maximum benefit for childless, singles (http://usmayors.org/resolutions/76th_conference/).

“Our Ten Point Plan, “Strong Cities, Strong Families for a Strong America,” calls for massive job creation and a new sector of ‘green’ jobs. We would like both candidates to have a stronger position on green jobs and on local solutions to reduced oil dependency in America. At our annual session in Miami, mayors called on Congress to allocate additional funding for the development of new green businesses and workforce development programs for the new energy economy (http://usmayors.org/pressreleases/documents/10-PointPlan_1107.pdf).

“We appreciate Senator McCain’s support of free trade because we believe it will lead to domestic job growth. We also appreciate Senator Obama’s proposed a mortgage tax credit and additional rebate checks in a new stimulus package to help the 10 million homeowners struggling to keep their homes.

“We commend this proposal because we know from a recent Conference of Mayors survey of vacant and abandoned properties in cities that the problem is already severe and is only expected to worsen in the coming months.

“Senator Obama also expressed support for a new stimulus package in the form of energy rebate checks to help families deal with gas prices moving toward \$5 a gallon. We would urge Congress to include funding for new infrastructure jobs in any coming stimulus package.

“Cities and metro areas drive the national economy and represent more than 85% of the nation’s employment, income and gross domestic product -- often rivaling nations in terms of their economic output. In short, metro-area economic growth is key to the nation's future prosperity. Our struggling economy is a national problem that demands national investment.”

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