



# NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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## Mayors Praise Senate Leaders on Energy Block Grant Program

### *Measure Will Be Key to Expanding Energy, Climate Protection Efforts in Cities*

Washington, DC – The United States Conference of Mayors, led by President and Trenton, NJ Mayor Douglas H. Palmer, today commends leaders of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for approving legislation that will help cities accelerate their energy efficiency efforts, leading to more aggressive programs to reduce greenhouse gases nationwide.

“On behalf of the nation’s mayors, I thank Chairman Jeff Bingaman (NM) and Ranking Minority Member Pete Domenici (NM) for their leadership on this important legislation that will support city efforts to curb America’s thirst for energy and address climate protection,” said Conference President Palmer. “These Committee leaders, including my own Senator Bob Menendez (NJ), have acted proactively to chart a new direction for our nation’s energy policy, one that embraces a new partnership with mayors and other local leaders.”

Senators Menendez and Bernie Sanders (VT) played key roles within the Committee to ensure that the legislation included an Energy and Environmental Block Grant program, supporting city and county efforts to build upon expanding grassroots initiatives and other efforts to reduce energy use and curb carbon dioxide emissions.

“Week after week, we’re learning about local initiatives, many aimed at increasing energy efficiency, that mayors have established to curb global warming with limited local resources,” added Conference Executive Director Tom Cochran. “But there is no doubt that it’s time for the federal government to embrace city-based solutions as a pathway to greater energy independence.”

To date, more than 490 mayors have signed The U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, initiated by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels. These mayors have already targeted energy efficiency as a way to achieve the Agreement’s goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels. This spring, the Conference launched a full-time Mayors Climate Protection Center to provide resources and tools for mayors.

During the Conference of Mayors 75<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting in January, Mayor Palmer unveiled a 10-Point Plan, *Strong Cities, Strong Families, for a Strong America*, that called upon Congress to enact an Energy and Environmental Block Grant, modeled after the highly successful Community Development Block Grant. This new energy legislation, which is expected to go before the full Senate later this month, specifically provides through the block grant program new funding directly to Mayors, County Executives and Governors to support programs that improve community energy efficiency.

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