



# THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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Dear Colleagues:

It was a great pleasure seeing so many of you in Providence last week. As expected, the interactions amongst Mayors, the presentations, and the policy discussions were at the highest caliber, and I'm proud to be able to represent all of you as President of the US Conference of Mayors for this coming year. I wanted to follow up with you on two issues that need our immediate attention.

## **Next Steps on Meeting with the White House**

As past Presidents kept warning me, I quickly found there is no honeymoon period for a new USCM President. Given the situation surrounding the Providence meeting, my first responsibility was to reach out to the White House and begin charting the path forward towards renewing a productive relationship. On June 17th at the invitation of the White House, I sat down with Valerie Jarrett, Cecilia Munoz and David Agnew and conveyed the following:

1. The situation around Providence was disappointing for reasons we as Mayors discussed and I was able to articulate verbally;
2. The Conference has accepted the White House offer to meet, and we are optimistic about moving forward with our relationship. While we recognize that the offered June 29th date is too short of a time-line for us to ensure the meeting is productive and meets the needs of all of our members, we will work with the White House to determine the best next steps for what this meeting looks like and when; and
3. Mayors are committed to moving forward on aggressive policy goals that impact our communities.

Ms. Jarrett strongly stated her commitment to working with Mayors and is awaiting our guidance on how to best proceed. In the coming days, I will be talking with my leadership team about next steps and will let all of you know what our opportunities will be to better engage with the White House, whether through a large meeting or otherwise. For the smaller and medium sized cities who were particularly interested in information on the Stimulus, there may be ways we can set up something more immediate – such as a series of conference calls. Know that your interests are paramount to me, Mayor Kautz and Mayor Villaraigosa.

## **Meetings on Capitol Hill**

In addition to meeting with the White House, I also had the opportunity to represent the Conference with Speaker Pelosi and with Chairman Oberstar. Chairman Oberstar shared with me his vision for transportation reauthorization and asked me very detailed and thorough questions about the priorities of Mayors. As you all know, he announced his Blueprint for the Surface Transportation Authorization of 2009 and in it, he included a Metropolitan Mobility Program – a top priority for the Conference. I look forward to working with Mayor Hickenlooper on ensuring our transportation priorities continue to gain momentum in both bodies of Congress and with the White House as transportation reauthorization is debated.

I also had the opportunity to meet with Speaker Pelosi, who expressed appreciation for the support of the Conference and asked to even further strengthen our ties given the aggressive domestic agenda this Congress is considering. I shared with her some of the top legislative priorities we all discussed when in

Providence, and vowed to support her in moving some of this critical legislation. We specifically talked about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant as a stand-alone appropriations priority and as a missing component of the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) legislation. Her priority is passing this legislation, but if we can help her in that shared goal – it will help our ability to further engage on EECBG in FY10 appropriations and in the Conference negotiations on ACES.

### **Support Passage of American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES)**

As noted above, critical federal policy continues to move forward at a rapid pace and today, I want to bring to your attention the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES), critical legislation on energy and climate change currently before Congress.

Last week in Providence, we adopted an important resolution calling on Congress to pass ACES. We now have the opportunity to put that policy into action. Speaker Pelosi has indicated that a House vote can be expected on Friday (June 26) of this week.

Cities house more than half of the world's population and are responsible for more than 80% of greenhouse gas emissions. Many of the solutions that will result in real, tangible reductions must be implemented at the local level. Therefore the resolution we passed in Providence also urged Congress to consider key amendments to the bill that would better support the efforts of local governments to make significant greenhouse gas reductions, including direct allocation of cap and trade revenues to local governments to support this critical work.

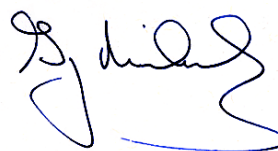
Right now, funds are currently allocated to state energy programs, NOT to local governments. As we are seeing through the ARRA disbursement process, states are not only unprepared to implement climate protection programs, but they are also inefficient and inconsistent conduits for the distribution of federal dollars.

As one of my first acts as President of USCM, I am calling on you to please email and/or call your House members ASAP and urge the following:

- Support this critical climate protection and energy bill (HR2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act); and
- If the opportunity arises on the floor, encourage them to articulate their support for the Conferees to work with the Senate and White House on redistributing at least a portion of the funding currently allocated to state energy programs for local implementation.

If you would like more information on the ACES bill or where your member of Congress stands on this issue, please contact Debra Dehaney at USCM 202-861-6702 or Amanda Eichel with my staff at 206-684-3214.

Best regards,



Greg Nickels  
President, US Conference of Mayors