

Press Release

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New Survey Shows Significant Local Government Jobs Losses

Washington, DC – New survey research announced today shows that local governments are now facing a fiscal crisis that will force job losses approaching 500,000 and significant cuts in much needed public services. Representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC), United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and the National Association of Counties (NACo) jointly released the survey results at a press conference on Capitol Hill earlier today and were joined by several members of Congress offering their support to cities and counties during these difficult economic times.

Local governments are a lifeline for their communities providing essential services to their residents. Unfortunately, according to the survey of local governments, these services are being cut and will continue to be cut over the course of the next 18 months as local governments attempt to balance their budgets in response to the on-going economic crisis. Most of the cuts are coming from public safety, public works, public health, and social services.

“For local governments, unemployment and foreclosures resulting from the Great Recession translate into too few revenues making it increasingly difficult to fund or satisfactorily maintain many basic services-- not only parks, libraries, and public works projects but also public safety, police and fire services,” said Ron Loveridge, NLC President, Mayor of Riverside, California.

Loveridge continued, “Cities are not only the engines of their local communities, they are also the backbone of their regional economies, where investments in infrastructure and services provide a platform for private sector investment and growth. And cities are the wealth of nations. We are where economic recovery must take place... we are where jobs are increased, or more commonly lately, are lost. We must change that equation.”

Local governments continue to make the difficult choices in balancing budgets and finding ways to operate. “As families all across our country have tightened their budgets, so have our nation’s counties. Services to the public have been cut, county employees have been laid off or furloughed and capital expenditures have been reduced,” said Judge B. Glen Whitley, NACo President, Tarrant County, TX.

But the report demonstrates that all of the cost cutting will come at a price to our nation’s recovery and families. The report makes clear that federal action is critical to helping city leaders stabilize local economies and serve families. Continued Whitley, “The Local Jobs for America Act will help ensure that our county employees who fight crime, protect our communities from fire and natural and man-made disasters, and teach our children, are able to continue performing these vital functions. For this reason as a Republican and President of the National Association of Counties I support passage of H.R. 4812/S.3500.”

The three organizations also emphasized there can be no national economic recovery as long as unemployment remains high and the ability of local governments to respond to the needs of their residents is hindered.

U.S. Conference of Mayors Second Vice President, Michael Nutter, mayor of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, concluded, "As a nation, we made a good start with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. But make no mistake about it: the bleeding at the local level is hurting our nation's march toward recovery. And people in America's cities don't understand news reports that refer to a rebounding economy when companies still are not hiring.

"The nation's mayors support the Local Jobs for America Act because it will help people access jobs. These are the same people who own homes, pay taxes and send children to school in our communities. What message does it send to hard-working people if we helped Wall Street, but we can't help create jobs for Main Street?"

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