



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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U.S. MAYORS TO CONVENE NATIONAL MEETING ON EXPORTS AND PORTS:

Will Highlight Exports and Ports as Potential Economic Drivers, Job Creators

Jacksonville, FL | February 23-25th

Washington, D.C. – Led by U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) President Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, the nation's mayors will hold a national leadership meeting in Jacksonville, FL from Thursday, February 23 to Saturday, February 25 to develop a national agenda to expand exports and modernize the nation's ports. Hosted by Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown, Chair of the Conference's newly formed Task Force on Metro Exports and Ports, the meeting will attract mayors from across the country, as well as U.S. seaport experts, federal trade officials, and export strategists to discuss national policies to ensure that exports from American cities can be cost-effectively transported to global markets.

U.S. metro areas account for 88 percent of the nation's exports, according to a Metro Economies report released last week at the Conference's 80th Winter meeting in Washington, D.C. (usmayors.org). The report, prepared by IHS Global Insight, projects that export values will increase 4.2 percent in 2012, while import values rise 3.2 percent. Currently, only one percent of U.S. businesses export and 58 percent of those businesses export to only one market.

"This meeting is about job creation and keeping our metro economies globally competitive," said Mayor Brown. "Exports are job generators and account for 8.8 percent of our gross domestic product – up from just 6.9 percent a decade ago. To maintain our competitive position, we must modernize our ports, adopt a national freight policy and develop metro-based export strategies."

JAX Chamber officials will also participate in the meeting to serve as a resource and discuss Jacksonville's export strategies and the role JAXPORT plays in the Jacksonville metro economy. "We are excited to work with Mayor Brown to welcome the nation's mayors to Jacksonville, and to participate in a discussion of these extremely timely and critical national priorities," said Tom Van Berkel, 2012 Chair of the JAX Chamber.

USCM CEO & Executive Director Tom Cochran said that as Congress, the White House and the Presidential hopefuls "echo the public's cry for jobs, jobs, jobs, they would do well to better understand that there is still a robust and ever-increasing need for goods and services that are made in – and exported from the U.S.A."

Also joining the mayors will be officials from Siemens, who will provide technical expertise and serve as the national sponsor of the meeting.

WHO: Los Angeles, CA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, USCM President
Jacksonville, FL Mayor Alvin Brown, USCM Chair of Task Force on Metro Exports and Ports
Minneapolis, MN Mayor R.T. Rybak, USCM Vice-Chair of Task Force on Metro Exports and Ports
Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and Executive Director
+ Mayors from Around the Country

WHAT: National Leadership Meeting on Exports, Ports as Key to Job Creation

WHEN: Thursday, February 23 to Saturday, February 25

WHERE: Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel
225 East Coastline Drive | Jacksonville, FL 32202 | [800-233-1234](tel:800-233-1234)

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,210 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Find us on [facebook.com/usmayors](https://www.facebook.com/usmayors), or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.