



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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U.S. Mayors Not Waiting on Washington to Tackle Climate Change

Survey Shows Cities Are Curbing Carbon Emissions in City Operations and Citywide

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Conference of Mayors today released findings of a climate survey, showing that cities with a mayoral pledge or formal city council action to curb carbon emissions are making progress on their goals, with two-thirds reporting quantifiable reductions in emissions from city operations and one-third for citywide emissions.

Bridgeport (CT) Mayor Bill Finch and Carmel (IN) Mayor Jim Brainard presented the survey findings during a national press conference call to highlight U.S. mayors' climate efforts, which were based on responses from 282 mayors representing cities of all population sizes and from all regions.

Entitled **Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Actions in America's Cities**, the survey is the latest of three reports on successful city-led efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climatic events, adding to previously-released findings on city energy efficiency and technology initiatives and how cities invested federal stimulus funds to reduce energy use, deploy new energy technologies and curb harmful energy emissions.

"This survey shows how mayors are again leading on an issue that is solidly before us as a nation and before us in our communities. Mayors are doing many things, and mayors are doing great things, but mayors can't do everything," said Mayor Finch, who Co-Chairs the Conference's Energy Independence and Climate Protection Task Force.

Mayor Brainard, Co-Chair of the Task Force said, "Mayors are united more than ever to tackle the problems associated with climate change. When we started this effort in 2005, we thought we had more time to act. Climatic events of late tell us we have to accelerate our efforts at every level."

Mayor Brainard was among the first signatories to the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement in 2005, which today has garnered more than 1,060 signatories.

While the survey report can be found at usmayors.org/2014climatesurvey, the main findings are summarized below:

- More than 2/3 of the cities with a mayoral pledge/formal city council action reported quantifiable greenhouse gas reductions in city operations;
- Nearly one-third of these cities reported quantifiable reductions in overall emissions by the city at large;
- Forty percent of all cities (282 respondents in the survey) are now working with their citizens to develop a climate adaptation plan;
- More than three-quarters of all cities in the survey now have plans in place to respond to power outages;

- For cities with such plans that experienced a power outage (in the last 5 years), one half modified their energy emergency response plans, with another 10 percent adopting an entirely new response plan;

“While Washington is talking about cutting carbon to protect our planet, mayors and their constituents are taking action across the board with millions of Americans actually doing something about it,” said Tom Cochran, Executive Director & CEO, U.S. Conference of Mayors. “Our USCM Climate Center with 1060 mayors is leading the way and mayors across the globe are not waiting for their national governments. Others talk about the future; mayors are walking toward our future. They are making a difference. This survey proves it.”

Earlier this year, the U.S. Conference of Mayors released two related surveys, *Energy Efficiency and Technologies in America’s Cities* and *Successful City Initiatives with Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Funding*. They can be found at usmayors.org/2014energysurvey and usmayors.org/2014eecbgsurvey.

Five years ago, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant formula grants were distributed directly to cities by the U.S. Department of Energy. Of the \$2.7 billion provided to the program in formula funding, about half of these dollars (\$1.3 billion) were distributed directly to cities to support their energy and climate efforts, a commitment that ranked among the largest provided to local governments in the ARRA legislation.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors conceived the EECBG Program to engage the federal government in supporting the nation’s mayors in accelerating local energy and climate initiatives, especially the more than 1000 mayors who have joined as signatories to the Conference’s Mayors’ Climate Protection Agreement, a landmark pledge for mayors all across the country to take action to reduce carbon emissions in cities consistent with the goals of the Kyoto Protocol.

About the United States Conference of Mayors:

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are nearly 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

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