

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS
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JOBS, EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE STANDING COMMITTEE

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THE PRESIDENT'S EARLY LEARNING AGENDA

WHEREAS, President Obama outlined a comprehensive early learning agenda in his State of the Union Address, calling upon Congress and the Administration to expand access to high-quality early childhood programs such as Head Start, public pre-K, childcare, and private preschools; and

WHEREAS, participation in early learning programs will help children from all socioeconomic backgrounds to better realize their full potential by preventing achievement gaps and providing a strong foundation to improve their likelihood to succeed later in school and in life; and

WHEREAS, children three years and younger represent a critically important window for a child's academic, social, and cognitive development; and

WHEREAS, numerous economic studies have demonstrated that these programs are a smart public investment that can generate a significant return on investment for society with a rate of return of \$7 or more for each dollar invested through a reduced need for spending on other services, such as remedial education, grade repetition, and special education; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has invested in comprehensive improvements to state early learning systems through Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has taken steps to reform and improve Head Start services by implementing new accountability standards and focusing on school readiness results; and

WHEREAS, nearly one million children under the age of five benefit from Head Start services while the Administration seeks to expand those programs to additional children in vulnerable communities throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has announced a proposed Federal investment in Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships through new competitive grants to support states and communities in expanding high quality, full-day early learning and development opportunities for infants and toddlers that meet the needs of working families and prepare children for the transition into preschool; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has proposed the Preschool for All Initiative, in which the U.S. Department of Education would allocate dollars to states to distribute to local school districts and partners to implement preschool services for low- and moderate-income families,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports President Obama's early childhood education agenda and the Administration's investments in Head Start, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, and the Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to act upon President Obama's calls to expand access to early childhood education programs through the proposed Preschool for All Initiative.

Projected Cost: Unknown

UNIVERSAL CHILDCARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS AS A MEANS OF ELIMINATING INCOME-BASED ACHEIVEMENT GAPS

WHEREAS, 40 percent of children ages 3 to 5 are not enrolled in child care, preschool, or kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, 35-45 percent of American schoolchildren are poorly prepared to succeed in school at kindergarten entry; and

WHEREAS, unequal access and quality of childcare and early childhood education programs produces a disparity in student learning and development which further contributes to achievement gaps; and

WHEREAS, childcare and early childhood education programs that are universally accessible create an opportunity to raise children's developmental proficiencies and their capacity to have lifelong success in the education system; and

WHEREAS, exposure to high-quality childcare and early childhood education programs can boost social, moral, physical and cognitive development, among children from low-income families; and

WHEREAS, investment in early childhood education programs for low income children from birth to age five reduces special education enrollment, grade retention, and behavioral problems; and

WHEREAS, investment in early childhood education programs for low income children from birth to age five increases high school graduate rates, earnings in adulthood and mental health; and

WHEREAS, every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood education produces a seven to ten percent annual return on investment; and

WHEREAS, effective preschool programs produce strong academic and social gains for all children, even though gains for low-income children are larger,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S Conference of Mayors supports increasing funding for high-quality early childhood education and childcare programs that are universally accessible and supports and advocates for the inclusion of Pre-K funding as part of K-12 funding formulas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors strongly urges Cities and Independent School Districts/Schools to create universally accessible childcare and early childhood education programs within their municipality that:

- Are designed to be accessible to all children, particularly children from low-income families, children of working parents, English Language Learners, children of color and at-risk youth; and
- Use rigorous program standards that have been set in conjunction with the local childcare planning council or State Department of Education in order to monitor and assess program quality, ongoing program effectiveness and improvements in student achievement; and
- Integrates multiple preschool providers in order to support a comprehensive early childhood education network including: Head Start programs, private child care centers, and state preschool providers; and
- Offers subsidies to participating early childhood education and childcare providers for facility improvements in order to better their physical learning environments; and
- Facilitate professional development opportunities for staff members in order to provide them with the means to gain further credentials and additional skills; and
- Foster collaborative partnerships between the private early childhood education providers, school districts, counties / parishes, and state government; and
- Have the Mayor play a significant leadership role in the programs creation, expansion and continuation; and
- Leverage matching funds and draws upon a variety of public and private funding sources in order to ensure fiscal sustainability, such as: Development impact fees, Head Start, state preschool, county / parish funding, and foundation grants.

Projected Cost: Unknown

IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO BUILDING AN EARLY LEARNING NATION BY THE YEAR 2025

WHEREAS, over the past 238 years major eras in the history of the United States have been frequently marked and recognized by the transference of scientific research, scientific breakthrough and scientific invention into the mainstream of daily life, leading in turn to new growth, enhanced opportunities and innovative change; and

WHEREAS, social researchers and sociologists are identifying babies born between 2010 and 2025 as ‘Generation Alpha,’ and are claiming this generation will be the most formally educated generation in history, beginning school earlier and studying for longer than those from previous generations; and

WHEREAS, Generation Alpha members will be second only to the Baby Boomer generation in population numbers, consisting of more than 70 million children aged between birth to 15 in the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, the latest neuroscience research into child development clearly shows the profound and lasting benefits of every day and in-the-moment interactions between parent or caregiver and child, and that these parent or caregiver/child interactions require no expensive purchases of toys or equipment to achieve these benefits; and

WHEREAS, scientific research clearly shows positive parenting and caregiving in early childhood, starting at birth, is a key contributor to lifelong health and productivity; and

WHEREAS, advances in neuroscience, developmental psychology and prevention science provide compelling evidence that the foundation for health or disease is established in early childhood; and

WHEREAS, these scientific advances show it is possible for children to achieve their potential as a result of parent and child interactions in the critical brain development years of birth to three; and

WHEREAS, high quality early learning in the critical years from birth to three has been proven to reduce placements in special education, reduce grade retention, boost graduation rates, decrease teen pregnancy rates, reduce violent crime, juvenile delinquency and incarceration, and increases the odds of long-term employment; and

WHEREAS, we are committed to providing unparalleled opportunities for the children of Generation Alpha so they do not become part of a ‘lost generation,’ making this an imperative of moral and national urgency to provide early learning for all children, particularly in the critical brain-building years from birth to three,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports a movement committed to engaging every community and particularly parents and caregivers in daily brain-building moments with their children, while highlighting the ease and developmental

importance supported by the latest scientific research of these conversational moments between adult and child; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports designating the decade of 2015 – 2025 as an era of community focus in building an Early Learning Nation so, in turn, the children of Generation Alpha emerge equipped and prepared to resolve issues, assume leadership positions, while generating innovative and long-term solutions for previously intractable and seemingly unsolvable challenges.

Projected Cost: Unknown

SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS WITH RIGOROUS AND COMPARABLE ASSESSMENTS

WHEREAS, the development of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers demonstrates a locally-led national movement of governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia towards improved academic standards for our students; and

WHEREAS, the Common Core State Standards represent a policy innovation that allows for an unprecedented level of continuity among states, grades, and subjects, and incorporates feedback from teachers and content experts, as well as the general public; and

WHEREAS, researchers find that American students have mediocre annual growth in math, reading, and science; the U.S. performs in the middle of the pack of 49 countries; and

WHEREAS, Common Core State Standards are internationally benchmarked with top-performing countries; and

WHEREAS, Common Core State Standards represent a substantial upgrade in terms of rigor and expectations for student learning, and the standards have been widely accepted among states: 45 states and the District of Columbia have voluntarily adopted the full standards and have committed to implementing them by 2014; and

WHEREAS, improved standards and accountability have already increased student achievement, particularly for the most disadvantaged students; and

WHEREAS, some states face the threat of state officials repealing the Common Core State Standards and its ongoing implementation; and

WHEREAS, although most states know they need new standards and assessments for their students, some are still willing to disrupt the progress made over the past three years; and

WHEREAS, at the behest of political opposition, some states have withdrawn from Common Core State Standards assessment consortia, such as the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers; and

WHEREAS, all states that have adopted the CCSS have already invested millions of dollars in CCSS implementation; and

WHEREAS, states and school districts that earned waivers from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements put those at risk should they follow through with a withdrawal or repeal of the Common Core State Standards; and

WHEREAS, students across the country will continue to benefit from more rigorous and comparable standards that are internationally benchmarked with the world's top performing nations; and

WHEREAS, rigorous and comparable data from stronger assessments will equip state and local leaders with more accurate information to inform them how to provide professional development that is tailored to individual teachers' needs; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has played a longstanding national leadership role in improving the quality of education, improving student academic excellence, and closing the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, members of The U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a resolution committing to the advancement of implementation of Common Core State Standards without delay,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors reaffirms its support for the ongoing implementation of Common Core State Standards in all available states, including the development of appropriately rigorous companion assessments and continued funding for professional development, technology and broadband access, and other supports to assure universal access and equity for all students; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the following policy priorities for Common Core State Standards implementation in each state:

- Providing administrators and school leaders with comparable data that can be used across states, allowing for a more sophisticated level of continuity in how we educate our students; and
- Administering assessments that are rigorous and responsive to both student learning needs and teacher lesson planning; and
- Informing meaningful curricula for professional development that accurately addresses the unique strengths and weaknesses of our teachers; and
- Providing robust student-level indicators of college and career readiness to provide early, consistent, and actionable signals to students and schools for purposes of admission, college planning, remediation, and placement.

Projected Cost: Unknown

INCREASING DIVERSITY IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

WHEREAS, research proves that teachers are the most important in-school influence in a student's education; and

WHEREAS, a portion of a teacher's overall effectiveness is couched in some measure of cultural competency; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 study revealed that while students of color made up over 40% of the U.S. student population, teachers of color only represented 17% of the teaching force, and the most recent data reveals that the gap between teachers and students of color has continued to grow—the gap is now at 26 percentage points; and

WHEREAS, a significant diversity gap between teachers and students exists in almost every state in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, diversity gaps get even larger when looking at U.S. cities, with some examples showing stark realities:

- Chelsea Public Schools in Massachusetts: 76-percentage point gap between Hispanic teachers and students; and
- Randolph Public Schools in Massachusetts: 47-percentage point gap between African American teachers and students; and
- Santa Ana Unified School District in California: fewer than 3 percent of students are white, while 65 percent of teachers are white; and

WHEREAS, there is an even larger, overall gap of low-income and minority students disproportionately placed with ineffective teachers, as Latino and African-American students are three times as likely to get a teacher who ranks in the bottom quartile of effectiveness than their White counterparts; and

WHEREAS, not only do students of color do better on a variety of academic outcomes if they are taught by highly effective teachers of color, but teacher diversity is also critical to the long-term success of white students; and

WHEREAS, alternative routes to teaching have been shown to bring in more male and minority teachers than traditional routes; and

WHEREAS, teacher quality policies, including incentivizing more male and minority teaching candidates to enter the profession, involve removing barriers to the classroom and offering career advancement and differentiated compensation for highly effective teachers; and

WHEREAS, the number of new teacher hires in public schools is projected to increase 12 percent to 350,000 in 2020, representing a window of opportunity to strengthen diversity and quality; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has played a longstanding national leadership role in improving the quality of education, improving student academic excellence, and closing the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the leadership of the Obama Administration in encouraging the development of new strategies to address teacher talent needs in the U.S.,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the following policy priorities for increasing the number of highly effective and diverse teachers in U.S. classrooms:

- Improving teacher preparation programs through targeted teacher recruitment of minority candidates; and
- Supporting equity policies that incentivize highly effective teachers to staff the most disadvantaged schools and classrooms; and
- Directing more resources to students of color in the K-12 system to spur more attention towards the teaching profession as a career; and
- Creating career ladders and leadership opportunities within the teaching ranks to encourage minority candidates to remain within the profession; and
- Focusing initial efforts in the highest-need districts and schools.

Projected Cost: Unknown

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

WHEREAS, mayors throughout the U.S. have helped deploy public charter schools in their cities as options for parents, as proof points for providing high-quality education to children of all backgrounds, as hubs of entrepreneurial innovation, as centers of personalized learning, and as pathways to college and career; and

WHEREAS, nearly 6,500 charter schools are teaching 2.5 million children in almost every state in the nation—representing growth of 100% in the number of public charter schools since the 2007-2008 school year—most in America’s cities and urban metropolitan centers; and

WHEREAS, there are over 1 million student names on a waiting list for a public charter school this 2013-2014 school year, up from 920,007 last year; and

WHEREAS, studies have confirmed that public charter schools in some cities are better educating low-income African-American and Latino students than traditional district public schools; and

WHEREAS, for students who are low-income and students who are English Language Learners, charter schools have a larger and more positive effect than for similar students at traditional public schools; and

WHEREAS, over the past several years, state lawmakers have been devoting increased attention to enacting legislation to better support the growth of high-quality public charter schools; and

WHEREAS, as part of these accountability efforts, a growing number of states have enacted laws that require public charter schools to close if they do not meet certain performance benchmarks; and

WHEREAS, out of approximately 6,000 operational charters in the 2012-2013 school year, roughly 200 charters schools closed before the start of the 2013-2014 school year; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has played a longstanding national leadership role in improving the quality of education, improving student academic excellence, and closing the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports meeting the demand for high-quality school options and enforcing high performance standards for renewal and replication; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, The U.S. Conference of Mayors encouraged mayors to support district-charter partnerships, including committing to a discussion with state legislators to advance legislation in areas of mutual interest,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the following policy priorities for improving charter quality, equity, and accountability:

- Supporting state policies that ensure the charter sectors in their respective states provide the best options to families across the country; and
- When appropriate, promoting strong public charter school leadership by encouraging responsive action to the failure of any school that does not meet academic performance standards; and
- Holding charter authorizers to the same level of accountability as state and district entities; and
- Continuing to pursue accountability frameworks that operate under transparent reporting processes for all schools; and
- Encouraging the use of longitudinal data to accurately measure the distinct needs of poor-performing schools that need to be addressed and using that data as the basis for renewal and closure decisions.

Projected Cost: Unknown

RESOLUTION FOR THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS “SUMMER JOBS FOR YOUTH”

WHEREAS, The United States Conference of Mayors is committed to promoting the well-being and positive development of the nation’s youth; and

WHEREAS, the nation’s mayors have long advocated for strong summer jobs programs; and

WHEREAS, across the nation young people face an employment crisis; and the unemployment rate for young adults between the ages of 16 -24 is more than twice the national unemployment rate; and

WHEREAS, last June, the month when youth employment usually peaks, the unemployment rate among youth between the ages of 16-24 was 16.2 percent; and

WHEREAS, unemployment rates for African American youth is 31.9 percent and Latino youth is 17.6 percent; and unemployment rates for young adults in some major cities and rural areas is more than 40 percent; and

WHEREAS, the value of work experience for youth has been well documented, and national studies have demonstrated that youth employment has positive impacts on high school graduation rates, college-going rates, and future earnings; and

WHEREAS, summer jobs programs have the added benefit of reducing violence in cities and communities; and

WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, youth who miss out on an early work experience are more likely to endure future unemployment; and

WHEREAS, summer jobs programs provide teachable moments for youth receiving a paycheck to learn how to manage their finances; and

WHEREAS, many cities have invested local funds to match limited federal funding and conduct summer jobs programs; and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Year 2014 Congressional budget did not contain funding for summer jobs programs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to restore its long term commitment for a strong summer jobs program, by providing funding for year round youth activities and by ensuring that youth summer jobs are part of any Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorization, or by establishing separate ongoing funding for youth summer jobs programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on business leaders to:

- Invest in workforce education and career exploration counseling for high school students; and
- Encourage employees to participate in workforce development programs available in high schools; and
- Work with education and local leaders to develop appropriate curriculum that is responsive to workforce trends; and
- Collaborate with state education and workforce leaders to identify high-growth job trends.

Projected Cost: \$1 billion

INVESTING IN SUMMER YOUTH JOBS AND FINANCIAL EDUCATION

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors is committed to promoting the well-being and positive development of the nation's youth; and

WHEREAS, a key component of this commitment is to foster the creation of summer job opportunities for youth in cities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, through involvement in summer jobs programs, youth are able to gain the necessary skills and work experience needed to prepare them for future careers; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2012 U.S. Conference of Mayors/Zogby Poll, only 30% of businesses hired a youth under the age of 23 for the summer, and 86.3% of businesses were never asked; and

WHEREAS, according to the same study, an overwhelming 73.7% of businesses that hired youth deemed their skills as either excellent or good, and 70.4% thought that the experience was fulfilling and productive; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors recognizes the critical role that businesses play in overall job creation, and encourages cities to reach out to members of the business community and ask them to create summer job opportunities for youth; and

WHEREAS, The United States Conference of Mayors applauds the members of the private, public, and nonprofit sectors who have made it their responsibility to help create summer jobs and place youth in their own organizations; and

WHEREAS, in order to identify cities with outstanding summer youth employment programs, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has launched its second annual 2014 National Summer Jobs Challenge, inviting cities to describe their youth employment initiatives in an application process, and recognizing three winners at the 2015 U.S. Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting in Washington, DC; and

WHEREAS, through the DollarWise Campaign, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has emphasized the importance of financial literacy training to be offered within summer jobs programs so that youth have the opportunity to learn how to responsibly use the money that they earn; and

WHEREAS, during summer of 2014, the DollarWise Campaign will invite youth involved in summer jobs to participate in the DollarWise Summer Youth Jobs Contest where youth across the United States will have the opportunity to win an assortment of prizes for completing a set of online financial education modules related to checking accounts, savings accounts, budgeting, credit cards, and financial planning; and

WHEREAS, The DollarWise Campaign has maintained the goal of integrating a financial education component into every summer youth jobs program by 2015,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on all mayors to establish partnerships with members of the private and nonprofit sectors and ask them to create summer job opportunities for youth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on cities with summer jobs programs to participate in the 2014 National Summer Jobs Challenge as well as the 2014 DollarWise Summer Youth Jobs Contest, and to also integrate a financial education component into their programs.

Projected Cost: Unknown

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PRESIDENT OBAMA'S COLLEGE SCORECARD

WHEREAS, the average earnings of a college graduate are almost twice as high as that of workers with only a high school diploma, but only just over half of all high school graduates in the poorest quarter of families attend college; and

WHEREAS, higher education is the surest means of entering into the middle class; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference Mayors has endorsed President Obama's higher education plan and worked with the Secretary of Education on its development and implementation; and

WHEREAS, an accessible college ratings system will help first generation college students, and the children of college graduates find information about post-secondary education that fits their career aspirations while delivering the best quality, cost, and value; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has called on his administration to publish better information on how colleges are performing through innovative technologies; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Education has responded by creating a College Scorecard rating system through the College Affordability and Transparency Center to make it easier for students to learn about a college's affordability and value, in order to make informed decisions about which college to attend; and

WHEREAS, the White House, U.S. Departments of Education, Treasury, and the General Services Administration have hosted an Education 'Datapalooza' to highlight the role that private-sector apps, tools, and services can play in helping students evaluate, select, and get into college; and

WHEREAS, before the 2015 school year, the Department of Education will develop, and then publish to the College Scorecard, a new ratings system to help students compare the value offered by colleges and encourage colleges to improve,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors endorses the innovative College Scorecard System created by the Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors encourages the White House, U.S. Departments of Education, Treasury, and the General Services Administration to further explore the role that private-sector apps, tools, and services can play in helping students evaluate, select and get into college, in local and regional partnerships with mayors.

Project Cost: Unknown

IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL CITIES OF LEARNING

WHEREAS, the inaugural City of Learning kicked off in 2013 to great fanfare with a highly successful summer program in Chicago, led by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and adopted by the City. During the program, thousands earned digital badges to help connect in-and out-of-school learning; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, more than 200,000 young people participated in Chicago Summer of Learning activities – from creating apps to designing jewelry and fashion, from exploring epidemiology to becoming a filmmaker. An estimated 30,000 of those youth and young adults developed valuable skills and received more than 100,000 digital badges to help further their academic and professional ambitions, making the Windy City a thriving campus of opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago City of Learning now continues year-round, allowing youth and young adults to gain digital badges for mastering skills ranging from coding and robotics to poetry and the arts; and

WHEREAS, the Cities of Learning incorporate Connected Learning, a new approach designed to make learning more powerful and more relevant to the demands and opportunities of the digital age; and

WHEREAS, digital badges capture all of the learning skills and help to connect in-and out-of-school learning to help improve and strengthen the pipeline between school and work for youth while also helping local employers hire from the community. Concurrently, digital badges can help make visible the skills, competencies, and knowledge that are important to employers that youth are acquiring through out-of-school learning, driving a deeper level of learning; and

WHEREAS, following the great success of the inaugural City of Learning, youth and young adults in Los Angeles, Dallas, Pittsburgh, Columbus, and Washington, D.C., as well as in Chicago, will have the opportunity to connect with community-based organizations, cultural institutions, businesses, philanthropic institutions, and city agencies to help them pursue their passion, interests, and jobs. As a result, the Cities of Learning will keep thousands connected and plugged in to their community year-round; and

WHEREAS, the Cities of Learning continues to grow, including in Los Angeles, where Mayor Eric Garcetti partnered with the Los Angeles Unified School District and others to kick off an unprecedented partnership between the City and school district to reach more than 50,000 students for what will be the largest Connected Learning movement in the country; and

WHEREAS, as the Connected Learning movement continues to gain in prominence in cities and school districts across the country, Cities of Learning will become an inimitable part of the educational process,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors does hereby support the National Cities of Learning.

Projected Cost: Unknown

IN SUPPORT OF RAISING THE FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE

WHEREAS, the nation's mayors are committed to providing economic growth and opportunity within their cities; and

WHEREAS, the growing inequality gap has left middle and working class families with less income to consume, leading to a decrease in demand and the shackling of the nation's economic growth; and

WHEREAS, the federal minimum wage, currently at \$7.25 an hour, would be over \$10.50 if it had kept up with inflation since 1968; and

WHEREAS, the federal minimum wage would be over \$18 if it had kept up with worker productivity; and

WHEREAS, a full-time worker making the federal minimum wage and raising two children earns just \$15,080 a year, \$4,000 below the poverty line for a family of three; and

WHEREAS, a proposal to raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would raise earnings for nearly 28 million workers by \$35 billion; and

WHEREAS, increasing the spending ability of minimum wage workers through raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would increase the demand for goods and services and generate \$22 billion in economic activity; and

WHEREAS, more than 600 economists, including seven Nobel laureates, signed a letter supporting an increase in the minimum wage, saying, "the weight of evidence now show[s] that increases in the minimum wage have had little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market"; and

WHEREAS, business owners realize the value of raising the minimum wage, with 82 percent of small business owners already paying their employees more than the minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, the federal government would save \$46 billion over ten years in spending on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as food stamps, if the federal minimum wage were raised to \$10.10; and

WHEREAS, women, who are nearly two-thirds of all workers paid the minimum wage or less, would benefit tremendously from an increase in the minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has long promoted an agenda that would build an economy that works for everyone,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors hereby respectfully urges Congress to:

- Raise the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour to \$10.10 per hour; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors is prepared to work with the Administration and Congress to further address the economic challenges facing our nation's cities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports state and local government efforts to set their own minimum wages above the federal minimum wage to help its lowest paid workers keep pace with the rising cost of living.

Projected Cost: Unknown

RESOLUTION ON STRENGTHENING CAREER PATHWAYS SYSTEMS

WHEREAS, ensuring robust economic growth, a thriving middle class, and broadly shared prosperity will require a significant expansion of the skills and knowledge of American workers over the next few decades; and

WHEREAS, even as millions more Americans seek the postsecondary education and training necessary to secure good jobs that pay family-sustaining wages, employers continue to report difficulty finding the skilled workers they need; and

WHEREAS, in a time of intense global economic competition, and increasing income inequality at home, the United States must find innovative and cost-effective ways to help youths and adults gain the educational and industry-recognized credentials they need to participate fully in our economy and our society; and

WHEREAS, education, workforce, and human service agencies are critical partners in the development, implementation, and funding of systems that build the knowledge and skills our economy needs to thrive; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has supported linked learning and the implementation of effective career pathways systems as promising strategies for meeting the skills challenge by offering distinct but complementary workforce, education, and support services that are aligned with the needs of business and industry; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Departments of Labor and Education jointly deployed \$100 million in Youth CareerConnect grants to cities and rural areas throughout the county this year, and are now partnering together with the Department of Health & Human Services on comprehensive policy and grant coordination between the three agencies to systematically support effective career pathways systems,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors endorse the following essential components of an effective city career pathways system:

- Alignment of systems: secondary, postsecondary and workforce development;
And
- Rigorous, sequential, connected, and efficient coursework that connects basic education and skills training and integrates education and training; and
- Multiple entry and exit points; and
- An emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) pathways; and
- Recruitment and retention of girls, minority groups in order to expand the talent pool for high demand STEM occupations; and

- Comprehensive support services, such as career counseling, childcare, and transportation; and
- Financial supports or flexibility to accommodate the demands of the labor market in order to allow individuals to meet their ongoing financial needs and obligations; and
- Active engagement of business in targeted industry sectors that aligns with the skill needs of industries important to the local, regional, and/or State economies; and
- Appropriate curriculum and instructional strategies that make work a central context for learning and work readiness skills; and
- Credit for prior learning and the adoption of other strategies that accelerate the educational and career advancement of the participant; and
- Organized services to meet the particular needs of adults, including accommodating work schedules with flexible and non-semester-based scheduling, alternative class times and locations, and the innovative use of technology; and
- A focus on secondary and postsecondary industry-recognized credentials, sector-specific employment, and advancement over time in education and employment within that sector; and
- A collaborative partnership among workforce, education, human service agencies, business and other community stakeholders to manage the system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors applauds the innovative Youth CareerConnect initiative of the Departments of Labor and Education, and pledges to collaborate with the federal agencies to create and strengthen effective career pathways systems in America's cities.

Project Cost: Unknown

RESOLUTION TO EXPAND APPRENTICESHIPS FOR GOOD MIDDLE CLASS JOBS

WHEREAS, ensuring robust economic growth, a thriving middle class, and broadly shared prosperity will require a significant expansion of the skills and knowledge of American workers over the next few decades; and

WHEREAS, even as millions more Americans seek the postsecondary education and training necessary to secure good jobs that pay family-sustaining wages, while employers continue to report difficulty finding the skilled workers they need; and

WHEREAS, in a time of intense global economic competition, and increasing income inequality at home, the United States must find innovative and cost-effective ways to help youths and adults gain the educational and industry-recognized credentials they need to participate fully in our economy and our society; and

WHEREAS, education, workforce, and human service agencies are critical partners in the development, implementation, and funding of programs that build the knowledge and skills our economy needs to thrive; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Labor is making \$100 million in existing H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant Award funds available for the American Apprenticeship Grants competition to reward partnerships that help more workers participate in apprenticeships; and

WHEREAS, 87 percent of apprentices are employed after completing their programs and the average starting wage for apprenticeship graduates is over \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, this competition will help more Americans access this proven path to employment and the middle class,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports fostering partnerships between employers, labor organizations, training providers, community colleges, local and state governments, the workforce system, non-profits and faith-based organizations in order to:

- Launch apprenticeship models in new, high-growth fields; and
- Align apprenticeships to pathways for further learning and career advancement; and
- Scale apprenticeship models that work; and be it further; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors applauds the efforts by the Departments of Labor, Education and Veterans Affairs to reform their programs to enable the use of education benefits for apprenticeships in order to;

- Streamline GI Bill benefits for apprentices; and

- Make college credit available to apprentices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors pledges to collaborate with the Departments of Labor, Education and Veterans Affairs in order to expand opportunities in existing apprenticeship programs and create new apprenticeship programs in American cities.

Project Cost: Unknown

CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP

WHEREAS, over the past year, the private sector has added 2.2 million jobs, and the unemployment rate has fallen 1.2 percentage points – with the short-term unemployment rate falling to its pre-recession average; and

WHEREAS, according to the White House Council of Economic Advisors, as of December 2013, there were still 3.9 million long-term unemployed Americans, those without jobs for 27 or more weeks, about 2.6 million of whom had been looking for work for 52 weeks or more; and

WHEREAS, despite these unemployed workers, employers across the nation are having difficulty obtaining employees with the skills necessary to work in high-demand fields such as Information Technology, Health, and Advanced Manufacturing; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has asked Vice President Biden to lead an initiative to help individuals get trained with skills that businesses need now to place them in good, middle class jobs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports the efforts of the White House and the Labor Department to focus on closing the skills gap in the American labor market, particularly for the long-term unemployed and economically disadvantaged; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to support the Administration's proposals regarding smart job training initiatives such as partnerships between employers with local community colleges, American Apprenticeships, Advanced Manufacturing partnerships, and additional funding through the Workforce Investment Act.

Projected Cost: Unknown.

THE JOINING FORCES INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense has ordered a mandatory, accelerated drawdown of active duty forces, using a full menu of involuntary separation programs to reduce personnel and meet budgetary goals by the end of Fiscal Year 2015, as the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan come to an end; and

WHEREAS, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden have launched the Joining Forces Initiative to engage all sectors of society to give service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned; and

WHEREAS, the Joining Forces Initiative seeks to expand employment and career development opportunities for veterans and military spouses, to promote expanded education opportunities, and to call attention to critical wellness issues facing veterans and their families while expanding access to wellness programs and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Obama Administration and the U.S. Conference of Mayors share a joint belief that no veteran should have to fight for a job at after they fight for our nation overseas; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has solicited on-going commitments from a number of American companies that jointly resolve to hire or train veterans or military spouses; and

WHEREAS, mayors are uniquely positioned to highlight the workforce potential of veterans and military spouses, and to encourage local employers to reduce barriers to jobs such as licensing or credentialing; and

WHEREAS, mayors have the ability to convene community organizations and resources in order to provide support services that address the needs of veterans and military families,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the efforts of First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden to draw attention to the needs of veterans and military families under the Joining Forces Initiative, especially as the Department of Defense has implemented an accelerated drawdown strategy to attain drastic reductions in manpower in the coming months; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors encourages all mayors to ensure that their communities are well-equipped to help returning veterans successfully transition into the civilian workforce through the provision of workforce development and training programs and to also ensure that military spouses and families have access to educational opportunities and critical support services.

Projected Cost: Unknown

IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL EFFORTS TO PROMOTE MANUFACTURING COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, the manufacturing sector has a major, positive impact on the American economy, with contributions in 2012 that included 12 million direct manufacturing jobs, 17.4 million indirect jobs, \$2.03 trillion in economic output (12.5% of GDP), significantly higher earning rates for workers than other sectors, two-thirds of all private sector R&D, and the highest multiplier of any sector of the economy at \$1.32 added for every dollar spent on manufacturing; and

WHEREAS, the manufacturing sector is gaining strength in many cities across the nation; and

WHEREAS, the successful expansion of manufacturing requires strong local communities that are prepared to support and grow this sector, through infrastructure improvements, site development, job training and workforce development, economic development efforts, and other approaches; and

WHEREAS, local government efforts to support manufacturing growth can be enhanced by federal government programs and resources for infrastructure, site improvement, economic development, education, workforce training and development, capital access, and export promotion; and

WHEREAS, the Obama Administration is seeking to enhance federal support for manufacturing communities through programs including the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership, the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, and resources for manufacturing from agencies including the Economic Development Administration, the Department of Labor, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, the National Science Foundation, the National Institute for Standards & Testing, and other agencies; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress is considering bipartisan legislation to support manufacturing communities, including the “Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act” (S.1468 / H.R. 2996); and

WHEREAS, local government leaders support the codification of the current “Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership” (IMCP) program at the Economic Development Administration in order to ensure that IMCP can continue to benefit cities; and

WHEREAS, the growth of local manufacturing is also supported by the “Maker Movement”, which seeks to bring technology inventors and entrepreneurs together with advanced technology tools and the support of public and private sector partners; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors continues to support the leadership of mayors in promoting strong manufacturing communities, including through USCM’s Advanced Manufacturing Task Force,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors pledges its support for federal programs that provide resources and other assistance to manufacturing communities, and calls for annual congressional appropriations to sustain these programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the passage of the “Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act” (S.1468 / H.R. 2996); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports an amendment to the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act that codifies the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership program at the Economic Development Administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports the Maker Movement, and encourages its member mayors to lead efforts in their cities to support Maker-related activities that drive innovation, encourage entrepreneurship and create a strong foundation for the next wave of advanced manufacturing.

Projected Cost: Unknown

A STRONG MANUFACTURING SECTOR

WHEREAS, manufacturing remains a vital and growing sector of the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS, over the last three years, metropolitan area manufacturing employment has expanded by an average annual rate of 1.7%; and

WHEREAS, many communities across the country continue to slowly recover from the economic impact of the great recession, particularly in areas where manufacturing was once dominant; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Obama Administration has increasingly focused on revitalizing the role of manufacturing in the U.S. economy through grants and initiatives administered by the Commerce Department and the Economic Development Administration; and

WHEREAS, former Youngstown, OH Mayor Jay Williams has been nominated by President Obama as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, overseeing the Economic Development Administration,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors applauds the Administration's renewed focus of manufacturing through initiatives such as the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership, and the Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to approve additional investments in job training initiatives to close the skills gap, encourage apprenticeships and partnerships with community colleges, authorize tax credits to promote manufacturing in communities, and encourage more foreign direct investment in the U.S. through the SelectUSA initiative.

Projected Cost: Unknown

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, there are many boys and young men of color who do not realize their full potential as they contend with persistent gaps in employment, educational outcomes, and career skills throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS, data demonstrates that boys and young men of color are less prepared to succeed in school and the labor-force and are more likely than their peers to become victims of murder or violent crime; and

WHEREAS, statistics show disproportionately negative effects for our boys and men of color across the board compared to peer groups throughout their elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education:

- Four out of five African American students 4th graders are not reading at proficient levels; and
- One in three African American students do not graduate and one in four Hispanic students do not graduate nationwide; and
- African-American students drop out at 3 times the rate of their white counterparts and Hispanic students drop out at 2.5 times the rate of their white counterparts; and
- Only one in six African-American students and only one in four Hispanic students were ready for college in 2013; and
- In 2011, higher income African American and Hispanic students were as likely to be at the below basic achievement level in 4th grade math as low-income white students; and
- By the time they hit fourth grade, 86 percent of African American boys and 82 percent of Hispanic and Native American boys are reading below proficiency levels — compared to 58 percent of white fourth graders reading below proficiency levels; and

WHEREAS, without policies and extra supports to aid our African-American and Hispanic students, they may never catch up with their peers; and

WHEREAS, a disproportionate population of African-American and Hispanic young men become involved in the criminal justice system and face difficulty transitioning back into society upon reentry, undermining family and community stability; and

WHEREAS, our cities bear vast social and economic costs from these troubling outcomes in communities across the country, and President Obama recognizes the urgent need to tackle this complex problem; and

WHEREAS, President Obama issued a directive in February 2014 to launch the My Brother's Keeper Initiative, a coordinated interagency effort that seeks to address those disparities and

opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color, to measurably improve their expected life and educational outcomes, and to unlock their full potential by making use of both public and private resources; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has partnered with philanthropic organizations, the private sector, and state and local officials including Mayors to build ladders of opportunity for these disadvantaged youth; and

WHEREAS, Mayors can use the Presidential Memorandum, signed by President Obama to establish the My Brother's Keeper Task Force, in order to better determine which public and private efforts are working and how the federal government can support those efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Administration is prioritizing the issue and providing federal support for local efforts to build community trust through grant programs administered by federal agencies including the Department of Justice and the Department of Education,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors commends the Administration and its work with Mayors, philanthropic organizations, and the private sector to advance achievement and life outcomes for boys and young men of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors looks forward to continued engagement with the My Brother's Keeper Task Force to better inform their recommendations and federal efforts to bolster opportunity for boys and young men of color in cities nationwide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Mayors will provide critical support for learning opportunities aligned to focused efforts for boys and men of color, including, as appropriate in individual cities, the coordination of afterschool and out-of-school municipal and civic programs to incorporate culturally relevant curricula and the support of intermediary organizations to assist schools and districts in providing extra supports for boys and men of color.

Projected Cost: Unknown

THE PROMISE ZONE INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, President Obama launched the Promise Zone Initiative to help communities with high concentrations of poverty to bolster local revitalization efforts in order to ensure that hard work leads to a decent living for every American in every community; and

WHEREAS, the Administration's intensive partnerships with local stakeholders will better enable communities to implement economic and community development strategies with federal support and coordination at the local level; and

WHEREAS, local leadership in Promise Zone communities will focus on creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, increasing access to quality, affordable housing and reducing violent crime; and

WHEREAS, Promise Zone communities will receive priority consideration and preferred access to federal programs and resources within the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Agriculture to supplement local efforts as they work toward their goals; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has proposed tax cuts on hiring and investment in areas designated as Promise Zones to attract businesses and create jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Administration selected five communities to receive the designation in the first round last year, including the City of San Antonio, TX; the City of Los Angeles, CA; the City of Philadelphia, PA; Southeastern Kentucky; and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the Administration plans to designate fifteen more communities over the next three years, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development has announced that the Administration will broaden its eligibility criteria for selecting those new communities in these next rounds of designation,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors commends the Administration for Promise Zone Initiative and supports its plan to designate an additional fifteen communities using broadened criteria in the next three rounds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to take action and enact President Obama's Promise Zone tax incentive proposal.

Projected Cost: Unknown

NATIONAL SERVICE

WHEREAS, service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and central to how we meet our challenges; and

WHEREAS, the nation's Mayors are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism as a cost-effective strategy to meet city needs; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation for National and Community Service, which administers AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, shares a priority with Mayors nationwide to engage citizens, improve lives, and strengthen communities; and

WHEREAS, national service participants address the most pressing challenges facing our cities, from educating students for the jobs of the 21st century and supporting veterans and military families to providing health services and helping communities recover from natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, national service expands economic opportunity by creating more sustainable, resilient communities and providing education, career skills, and leadership abilities for those who serve; and

WHEREAS, national service participants serve in nearly 60,000 locations across the country, bolstering the civic, neighborhood, and faith-based organizations that are so vital to our economic and social well-being; and

WHEREAS, national service participants increase the impact of the organizations they serve with, both through their direct service and by recruiting and managing millions of additional volunteers; and

WHEREAS, national service represents a unique public-private partnership that invests in community solutions and leverages non-federal resources to strengthen community impact and increase the return on taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, national service participants demonstrate commitment, dedication, and patriotism by making an intensive commitment to service-- a commitment that remains with them in their future endeavors; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation for National and Community Service leads President Obama's Task Force on Expanding National Service through which it is partnering with the public and private sectors to solve problems and create more national service opportunities; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,750 Mayors from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico, representing 110 million citizens or one-third of all Americans, participated in the second annual Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, more than 830,000 individuals have served a combined one billion hours in AmeriCorps; and

WHEREAS, annually more than 300,000 Senior Corps volunteers serve children, the elderly, and veterans,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports the following policy priorities:

- Endorse National Service as a critical and effective solution to community challenges facing Mayors across the country; and
- Commit to working with organizations at the local level that partner with the Corporation for National and Community Service to further their impact in cities across the nation; and
- Encourage Mayors to partner with the Corporation for National and Community Service to create additional sources of funding for national service through other local government agencies; and
- Encourage Mayors to participate in or host an event celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the AmeriCorps program on September 12, 2014; and
- Place a priority on hiring AmeriCorps Alumni who have gained valuable skills, including project management, team building, and budgeting; and
- ;Serve as an official sponsor for the annual Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service along with the Corporation for National and Community Service, the National League of Cities, and Cities of Service.

Projected Cost: Unknown

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INVESTING IN OUR NATION'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN ORDER TO CREATE JOBS, GROW LOCAL ECONOMIES, AND PROMOTE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

WHEREAS, water is the lifeline of American prosperity. It is the backbone of our economy and is essential to maintaining public health; and

WHEREAS, one-fifth of the U.S. economy—from agriculture, to mining, manufacturing, and electricity—would grind to halt without a reliable and clean supply of water; and

WHEREAS, the greatest public health achievement of the 20th century was the construction of reliable water and wastewater systems; and

WHEREAS, the water and wastewater systems that serve the United States are over 100 years old. The continued vitality and resiliency of American cities relies on this infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, after working around the clock for a century, water and wastewater systems are crumbling around us, threatening public health, the environment, and local economies; and

WHEREAS, the American Society of Civil Engineers assigned U.S. water and wastewater systems a grade of D in 2013 and estimated 45% of all pipes in 2010 were in poor shape; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors estimates that an investment of \$4.8 trillion in capital outlays is needed over the next 20 years in order to bring water and wastewater systems to a state of good repair; and

WHEREAS, emergency repairs to fix failed infrastructure are significantly more expensive than planned improvements that would prevent such failures, thereby increasing the urgency to find requisite funding; and

WHEREAS, changing weather patterns are impacting cities across the nation, further placing our water infrastructure in jeopardy and threatening the overall environmental and economic security in America. Unmitigated climate impacts could result in costs between 5 and 20 percent of global GDP; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Emergency Management Agency declared 62 major disasters in 2013, almost all of which had significant implications for water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, coastal cities are especially vulnerable to rising sea levels as a result of climate change. For example, sea levels in the San Francisco Bay are predicted to rise about 16 inches by 2050; and

WHEREAS, investing in America's water and wastewater systems is an important strategy to help communities be more resilient to a changing climate while safeguarding valuable water resources; and

WHEREAS, the declining state of water and wastewater infrastructure in the U.S. is a national issue that deserves attention from the federal government. Federal funding and support has declined, leaving local governments to fund 98% of all water and wastewater infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, investments in water infrastructure create jobs and stimulates economic activity. A \$1 billion investment in water infrastructure creates over 26,000 jobs nationwide. The Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the water and wastewater industry at the local level creates 3.68 jobs in the national economy and each public dollar spent in the water industry yields \$2.62 dollars in economic output in other industries; and

WHEREAS, mayors and public utilities are seizing the opportunity to address the investment gap, create jobs, and build resilient communities. Around the country, cities are investing billions of dollars in their local water and wastewater systems and as a result they are putting people to work and growing their local economies,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on the United States Congress and the White House to recognize water infrastructure as a critical national asset in need of immediate attention and prioritize investments needed to bring the nation's water systems up to a state of good repair; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges the United States Congress to significantly increase the amount of and access to grants and low-cost capital, including but not limited to increased investments in State Revolving Funds, pilot programs such as the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Authority, Infrastructure Banks, and eligibility for public-private partnerships, and others, to accelerate investment in water infrastructure projects across the country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to support workforce development programs in the water sector that will help cities prepare for a rapidly retiring workforce and help prepare the next generation of workers for quality employment opportunities in the water sector.

Projected Cost: Unknown

SUPPORT THE DONATION OF USED GOODS TO LEGITIMATE LOCAL NONPROFITS AS A MEANS OF CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL ECONOMIES, DIVERTING ITEMS FROM LANDFILLS, THEREBY HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROVIDING LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES THAT STRENGTHEN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, for many years, Goodwill® and other like industries have been entrepreneurial leaders, environmental pioneers and social innovators of the “reduce, reuse, repurpose” practice; and

WHEREAS, these industries divert more than three billion pounds annually from landfills by recovering the value in people’s unwanted goods and diverting usable goods, thereby having a positive economic impact on local communities; and

WHEREAS, these industries’ social enterprise models demonstrate social and environmental leadership, creating thousands of jobs and contributing to the economic health of communities while preserving resources and the environment, and reducing tax paying citizens’ reliance on public assistance; and

WHEREAS, through socially innovative partnerships such as environmentally responsible corporations, county and city governments, as well as other organizations, they divert unwanted or used computers and computer equipment from landfills, and provides community consumer education on environmentally responsible computer disposal; and

WHEREAS, these programs create job training and employment opportunities for people in need of work — from collecting and sorting jobs to more skilled positions—improving and strengthening neighborhoods and communities; and

WHEREAS, these industries’ donation-resale models extend the life of usable clothing and other goods, and channels more than 83 cents of every dollar to help people in local communities move toward family-sustaining careers by providing important social services, including child care, financial counseling, mentoring and other services, that benefit more than nine million people each year—strengthening families and local communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors commends the corporate social responsibility platform and public awareness movement that encourages consumers, in local municipalities, to support the donation of used goods as a means of contributing to local economies, local communities and diverting items from landfills, thereby helping the environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors commends nonprofit social enterprises, which provide community-based job training; offer locally focused career services, support programs for people who face challenges to finding employment and other local social services that strengthen families and communities.

Projected Cost: Unknown

REDUCING THE NATIONAL BURDEN OF STUDENT LOANS

WHEREAS, post-secondary education is the surest path to personal success, but the skyrocketing cost of financing a technical and college degree is reaching a point where it negates the gains higher academic achievement can provide; and

WHEREAS, over the past five years, the level of student debt has almost doubled from approximately \$600 billion in 2008 to over \$1.1 trillion, and student debt now exceeds all other forms of other consumer debt, except home mortgages; and

WHEREAS over 65% of college students now graduate with education debt, and the average debt of a graduating senior now tops \$26,600; and

WHEREAS, this rising burden of student debt is creating severe personal challenges for our young adults and their families, forcing them to forgo important purchases such as buying a home, delay investing for their retirement, and jeopardizing the future of their own children; and

WHEREAS, hobbling our young adults with education debt will slow our economy as this generation will have less ability to invest, purchase and drive demand,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports President Obama's order to allow federal direct student loan borrowers to cap their student loan payments at 10 percent of their income

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges the President and the Congress to take further immediate steps to significantly reduce the overall burden of the student loan debt through reduced interest programs, and reduction in principle for both paid and volunteered public and community service on the part of the student.

Project Cost: Unknown