

The United States Conference of Mayors

THE MAYORS' 2020 VISION

An American Breakthrough

August 2020



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



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The United States Conference of Mayors is the official non-partisan organization of cities with each city represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor.

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The United States Conference of Mayors: Supporting, Protecting, and Advocating for America's Cities and Their Residents

As the leading voice of America's cities, The United States Conference of Mayors is uniquely qualified to recommend a strategic vision for America. Since its founding in 1932, the Conference remains the place where America's mayors – Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike – come together in a collegial, cooperative, bipartisan manner to **get things done**.

Our Nation's cities are platforms for human potential to flourish:

- **Cities are the Nation's Population Centers.** They represent 86 percent of the Nation's population and 91 percent of real gross domestic product (GDP).
- **Cities are Home to Most Jobs and Job Creation.** The U.S. Metro/City share of total employment increased to 88 percent in 2018, as metros added 2.1 million jobs, accounting for 94 percent of all U.S. job gains.
- **Cities are Home to the Highest Share of Personal Income.** The metro share of U.S. total personal income stands at 89 percent and wage income at 92 percent, **although deep inequities in income and wealth present significant challenges and opportunities.**
- **Cities are the Nation's Incubators of Talent.** Talent flocks to cities because of the accessibility, diversity, infrastructure, vibrancy, and innovation that cities provide. Regenerating neighborhoods while keeping its current residents makes our cities even more interesting.

On issues such as civil rights and voting rights, environmental protection, marriage equity, economic recovery from depressions and recessions, and so much more, The United States Conference of Mayors has always leaned forward, helping our great Nation address the most pressing issues of the day – and those of the future.

An American Breakthrough

It is in that spirit that we offer **The Mayors' 2020 Vision: An American Breakthrough** – a platform of **10 priorities** inspired by the Conference's bipartisan focus on creating a safe, sustainable, and equitable future through investing in America's communities. Each of these priorities – ranging across economic empowerment, police reform and racial justice, environmental stewardship, green infrastructure investments, housing affordability and homelessness, and all the others – are essential to the American Breakthrough needed to create a better, fairer, and more equitable America in which every person is helped to realize their full potential. During these unprecedented times, America's mayors are called upon to be guardians of public health, energized allies, and empathetic community members. Our cities are catalysts for change and it is up to us, as mayors, to seize this moment with both passion and compassion, refuse to settle for incremental improvement, and pursue a true American Breakthrough – a radically constructive breakthrough that begins in our cities, cultivates economic growth, and operates as the heartbeat of the American economy.

The original framework for this bipartisan agenda – built around priorities that included infrastructure investment, innovation, and equity – was released in the Fall of 2019 when the Presidential election season was in its earlier stages. Since that time, a tidal wave of public health, economic and social forces have hit our Nation, striking at the fabric of the cities responsible for lifting our country out of the Great Recession of 2008.

In late June – in the face of the COVID-19 public health pandemic, the resulting economic shutdown, and the national movement calling for police reform and racial justice – the incoming Conference of Mayors President, Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, established five Working Groups of mayors, each charged with providing new perspectives on the potential of America at this critical point in her history. The groups cover: 1) Police Reform and Racial Justice; 2) COVID-19 Response and Health Equity; 3) Eliminating Poverty; 4) Dismantling Systemic Racism; and 5) Economic Recovery. (The Police Reform group had been meeting prior to the Fischer Presidency.) The work of each group is helping to contextualize recommendations for federal action to address some of the most pressing issues of our time. Each of these issues requires an array of curative policy initiatives and collective action. The energy in our Nation has never been better aligned to solve these deeply entrenched problems.

The most glaring and persistent of our entrenched problems is racism, a complex, self-defeating system of beliefs and behaviors grounded in the presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and practices are conscious and unconscious, personal and institutional, and result in the oppression of people of color. The United States Conference of Mayors finds that institutional and structural racism must be addressed at base levels. To do this, we must engage both the government and the private sector in efforts to dismantle the accumulation and incorporation of long-standing racialized practices.

- Not long after the at-times uncontrollable coronavirus began its deadly sweep across the Nation, it became apparent that not all people were equally victimized. Persons of color were experiencing significantly higher rates of hospitalization and death from the virus than whites – Blacks and Latinos three times as likely as whites to contract the virus and nearly twice as likely to die as a result. In low-income neighborhoods, underfunded and understaffed hospitals and other local public health infrastructure may not be equipped to provide the care required to survive an infection.
- Beyond the threat to lives posed by the virus was the threat to livelihoods. Throughout the months of the pandemic, the Black and Latino/Hispanic unemployment rates have been consistently and significantly higher than the white rate. Ironically, a significant number of those who have continued to work are disproportionately found in front-line jobs requiring close contact with coworkers and the public – jobs putting them at higher risk for the virus. Clearly, the inequities exposed by the coronavirus have their roots in institutional racism. And clearly, we're not "all in this together."
- With the deadly virus still spreading across the country, the deaths of several Black men and women at the hands of police officers triggered public protests in cities across the country that drew police into sometimes violent confrontations with protesters. These protests called attention to evidence of systemic racism in policing and criminal justice, with Black Americans more likely than white Americans to be arrested, convicted, and sentenced to lengthy prison sentences.
- Continuing into the summer, the protests evolved into a nationwide, multi-racial movement focused on broader, underlying race-based and systemic inequities long crippling our society and economy – inequities in health care, educational opportunities, housing, and income and wealth, among others.

Each of these reflections of the systemic racism we are now confronting is described in greater detail in the section on dismantling systemic racism and advancing civil and human rights that follows in this document, as well as in many of the other priorities of the American Breakthrough also described.

Today, many city residents – regardless of their race, creed, color, sexual orientation, or differing political affiliations – are uncertain about the future of the virus, their economic security, and our promise of fairness and justice for all. We are at a point today where key questions must be answered if all Americans are to move forward and build a better country for themselves and future generations:

- “How can we make our economic, educational, health care and other systems work for everyone?”
- “How do we transition to a society that protects our most marginalized community members?”
- “How do we leverage our resources to dismantle systemic racism and create a more equitable society?”
- “How do we help workers transition to a new job market in the face of the pandemic, globalization and digitization?”
- “How do we improve the quality of life of our most disadvantaged communities?”
- “And how do we do all of this while safeguarding our planet?”

Without genuine change and compassionate leadership, all of these struggles will grow even more burdensome to our citizens, our communities, and our country. The challenges are serious, but through collective action emanating from our neighborhoods and city halls, through bold leadership, and through a true local-federal partnership, they are solvable. America has shown its ability to produce greatness time and time again. It is time to draw upon this spirit once again, and to act.

The 2020 Election: The Need for Partnership and Action

The 2020 Election must be about solidifying the partnership between the federal government and America's communities to change policy and systems to better serve ALL of the American people. The federal government must be an engaged, active, and collaborative partner. From Maine to Alaska, OUR people need to hear from all candidates how they are going to address the future, embrace change, and work to address our common challenges.

The United States Conference of Mayors was founded on a strong partnership and common agenda with the federal government. Tragically, in this time of both great challenges and great opportunities, the partnership with the federal government that is so desperately needed is threatened by dysfunction in Washington. THIS MUST END. America needs a federal government that will work with its cities and metro areas on an agenda for ALL the people of America.

The Opportunity and Our Invitation

We're starting the conversation by offering our strategic platform, **The Mayors' 2020 Vision: An American Breakthrough**, and by welcoming all presidential and congressional candidates to outline their vision for strengthening our Nation's cities and metro areas through a platform that allows all residents to thrive. We look forward to a positive and productive partnership with those elected in 2020 as we work together to guide our great Nation through a challenging period in pursuit of an American Breakthrough that strengthens our cities and our Nation for generations to come.

Sources for Economic and Demographic Data: U.S. Metro Economies, GMP and Employment 2019-2020; HIS 88 Markit; USCM

THE MAYORS' 2020 VISION: **An American Breakthrough**

Foster Economic Recovery for a Stronger America

Dismantle Systemic Racism and Advance Human and Civil Rights

Achieve Public Safety and Justice for All

Provide Equitable Quality Healthcare and Human Services

**Rewrite the Tax Code to Help Hardworking Taxpayers and
Reduce Economic Inequality**

Make Housing More Affordable and Address Homelessness

**Build Modern, Resilient Infrastructure to Address Climate Change,
Promote Environmental Justice, and Enhance Opportunity and
Productivity: Transportation, Water, Green Energy, and
Technology Systems**

**Strengthen Education, Improve Career Pathways, and Develop
the Workforce of the Future**

Fix Our Broken Immigration System

**Promote American Business, Goods, and Tourism to the
Global Economy**

Foster Economic Recovery for A Stronger America

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the U.S. economy and continues to threaten the lives of millions of Americans. Meanwhile, long-standing systemic health and social inequities have shown members of racial and ethnic minority groups are at increased risk, exacerbated by the fact that they make up a disproportionate share of essential workers who can't work safely at home during the pandemic. The crisis has also exposed how infrastructure financing and investment practices governing our most basic services and networks – including transportation, water, and energy systems – too often impose additional burdens on underserved and underrepresented people and their families.

The societal inequities exacerbating this crisis for many Americans are deep and multifaceted. Our response must be as well. If economic recovery is to be complete, no group of Americans can be left behind. Accordingly, the Nation's mayors recommend the following strategies to curb the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitate a rapid economic and employment recovery, and cultivate a more equitable distribution of income and wealth.

Direct Fiscal Relief for Cities

Cities of all sizes across the country are experiencing significant revenue shortfalls as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are in dire need of immediate and near-term infusions of direct, flexible federal aid.

Thus, mayors call for direct and significant federal aid to cities on the order of at least \$250 billion of fiscal assistance, over and above state aid, which must be provided immediately to get cities through budgeting for the next fiscal year (FY 2021). The funds must be distributed by formula to all municipalities – not just those with populations exceeding 500,000 people.

COVID-19 Testing and Vaccine Distribution

The current HHS and FEMA testing blueprint leaves most responsibility for funding, designing, and executing of COVID-19 testing plans to individual states. This strategy has unfortunately proven inadequate to meet the enormous public demand for testing, resulting in insufficient testing capacity nationwide.

Therefore, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) must work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) to coordinate and increase the nationwide availability of testing and testing supplies to mitigate supply gaps across the country and ensure proper acquisition, distribution, and adequacy. Federal assistance on testing and eventual vaccine distribution must come directly to local areas to support the local public health infrastructure. Local health partners are critical to address language and cultural barriers in testing, contact tracing, and vaccine distribution to adequately curb the pandemic.

Contact Tracing Service Corps

To suppress the COVID-19 epidemic to manageable levels and return the country to economic health, the U.S. must increase nationwide efforts around contact tracing.

This is why mayors urge swift passage of the National Pandemic Response Opportunity Through Service Act (S. 3624) to create 300,000 volunteer positions that could serve as the basis for a Contact Tracing Service Corps across the country. This effort should prioritize funding for activities directly related to the Nation's response and recovery, including: Public health services (with an emphasis on contact tracing), programs to support economic opportunity, education support (including for adult learners), and services to combat nutrition insecurity, with an emphasis on expanding programs and services in rural and high poverty communities. Further priority should be placed on local hiring in partnership with local

community-based organizations, with an emphasis on out-of-work residents and opportunity youth. Development of the Contact Tracing Service Corps must be structured to create career pathways for underserved populations and facilitate long-term employment all while addressing public health needs in our Black and Latinx communities.

Extend UI Benefits, Emergency Relief Payments for Workers, Workforce Development

Hundreds of thousands of frontline essential workers are at risk of being laid off and families are struggling to feed their children and pay their bills. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 relief measures delivered in previous stimulus bills are set to expire.

To address this, Congress must pass the Unemployment Insurance Extension to continue the current \$600 a week unemployment benefits boost until March 2021. Additionally, Congress must pass the Monthly Economic Crisis Support Act (S. 3784) to put money directly into the hands of those hardest hit by the pandemic.

Providing additional resources to the Nation's workforce system now is another critical step in relaunching America's workers and businesses as the Nation begins to recover from the COVID-19 national emergency. The Nation's mayors urge swift passage of the Relaunching America's Workforce Act as a desperately needed investment in workers, employers, and our economy.

Childcare

As businesses begin to re-open and working families need childcare, many providers across the country remain shut down due to COVID-19 or are struggling financially and operating with significantly reduced staff.

The Nation's mayors call on Congress to pass the Childcare is Essential Act which would create a \$50 billion Child Care Stabilization Fund within the existing Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program to address this critical need.

Housing Assistance

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and many homeowners and renters are struggling to pay their housing bills as a result of deep economic uncertainty from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To prevent exacerbating the pandemic crisis with the further devastation of a housing crisis, mayors urge Congress to pass the Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act.

Small Business Assistance Through Local Governments

Small businesses across the country are facing grave economic hardship and many have already been forced to shut their doors for the last time, resulting in lost jobs and shockwaves to local communities.

Thus, Congress should provide new guidelines to spend the remaining \$130 billion left in the Paycheck Protection Program and provide \$120 billion to restaurants through the bipartisan Real Economic Support That Acknowledges Unique Restaurant Assistance Needed To Survive Act, or Restaurant Act. Further, the federal government must provide targeted assistance to provide direct compensation and debt forgiveness to businesses in the Nation's farming and rural communities, as well as Minority and Woman-Owned Businesses Enterprises (MBWEs) that are struggling to stay afloat in the pandemic.

Dismantle Systemic Racism and Advance Human and Civil Rights

The historic disruption of life and work in America in 2020 has cast a spotlight on the depth and breadth of systemic racism in the Nation and awakened a conviction among the American people that, for the good of both our society and our economy, it must be dismantled. The late Congressman and civil rights icon John Lewis said that, “When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something. You have to do something.” We owe it to his memory to seize the moment.

Dismantle Systemic Racism

Racism is a complex system of beliefs and behaviors grounded in the presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and practices are conscious and unconscious, personal and institutional, and result in the oppression of people of color. The United States Conference of Mayors finds that institutional and structural racism must be addressed at base levels. To do this, we must engage both the government and the private sector in efforts to dismantle the accumulation and incorporation of long-standing racialized practices. This system of bias across institutions and society, the foundation of systemic racism, gives privileges to white people that result in long-term disadvantages or disparities among other groups, and in disproportionate levels of poverty, unemployment, incarceration, and policing and criminal justice abuses in communities of color.

Passing the midpoint of 2020, our Nation is confronted with the most graphic evidence imaginable of the destructive impact of systemic racism on a modern society. Not long after the at-times uncontrollable novel coronavirus began its deadly sweep through cities and states across the Nation, it became apparent that not all people were equally victimized: Persons of color were experiencing significantly higher rates of hospitalization or death from the virus than whites. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Blacks and Latinos are three times as likely as whites to contract the virus and nearly twice as likely to die as a result. In low-income neighborhoods where Blacks, Latinos, immigrants, and essential workers are concentrated, underfunded and understaffed hospitals and other local public health infrastructure may not be equipped to provide the care required to survive an infection.

Beyond the threat to lives posed by the virus was the threat to livelihoods. Advised by trusted public health experts, governors and mayors issued sweeping orders for residents to isolate themselves in their homes and for all nonessential businesses to close. And while the economic shock of measures taken to minimize the spread of the virus was experienced by families and individuals immediately, it was not experienced evenly. Throughout the months of the pandemic, the Black and Latino/Hispanic unemployment rates have been consistently and significantly higher than the white rate. Ironically, a significant number of Blacks who have continued to work are disproportionately found in front-line industrial jobs, retail sales, public transit, trucking and warehouse jobs, postal service, health care, child care, and social services – all requiring close contact with coworkers and the public, and all putting them at higher risk for the virus.

Clearly, the inequities exposed by the coronavirus have their roots in racism. And clearly, we’re not “all in this together.”

In late May, with the deadly virus still spreading across the country, the deaths of several Black men and women at the hands of police officers triggered public protests in cities across the country that drew police into sometimes violent confrontations with protesters. Initially a response to a series of deaths of Black men and women at the hands of police officers, these protests called attention to evidence of systemic racism in policing and criminal justice – Black Americans more likely than white Americans to be arrested; once arrested, more likely to be convicted; once convicted, more likely to experience lengthy prison sentences. Black adults are about six times as likely to be incarcerated than whites; Hispanics are three times as likely.

Continuing into the summer, the protests evolved into a nationwide, multi-racial movement calling public attention to the broader underlying race-based and systemic inequities long crippling our society and economy – inequities in health care beginning with birth and continuing through life; educational opportunities: from pre-school through higher education; employment: in hiring, advancement and income opportunities; housing: where it is available after generations of exclusionary zoning and segregation, where “redlining” makes it unreachable, how it is financed, how it is taxed, whether it is subject to environmental health hazards. Dramatic reflections of the cumulative effect of race-based inequities are found in the Nation’s wealth gap: The Federal Reserve reports that in 2016, mean Black household worth was \$138,200, or about 15 percent of white household worth; mean Hispanic household worth, at \$191,200, was about 20 percent of white household worth. In terms of life expectancy, white men are living well over four years longer than Black men and white women are outliving Black women by three years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Technology, in particular, has played an outsized role in this Nation’s adaptation to the continuing presence of the coronavirus. It has helped people stay connected to each other and greatly assisted in the transition to working from home. It has supported continued schooling through remote learning and helped health professionals keep hospitals safe by transitioning many in-person doctor visits to virtual visits. For all of these benefits, however, racial disparities remain. The “digital divide,” which has long existed along income and racial lines, continues to limit many children’s ability to learn remotely and many adults’ ability to work from home. Just five years ago, more than one-third of lower-income households with school-age children did not have a broadband internet connection. The continued lack of quality broadband or internet access, in addition to discrepancies between wealthier school districts providing tablets and laptops to students and lower-income schools that cannot do this, has exacerbated what is referred to as the “homework gap” in minority communities.

In recent years, cities have contended with the “digital redlining” of lower-income neighborhoods by telecommunications companies delivering high-speed fixed and wireless broadband services. Since 2017, the Federal Communications Commission also has downgraded the definition of “broadband,” disproportionately impacting lower-income and rural communities by allowing access providers to sell a fixed broadband product that is slower and that does not adequately match today’s work-from-home, remote learning, and telehealth needs. Beyond access issues, the technology that public safety and government institutions procure can have dramatic impacts on minority communities. Bias is prevalent in artificial intelligence, with technologies such as facial recognition being unreliable when used in communities of color. Surveillance technology is more likely to be implemented in neighborhoods of color, both commercial and residential, than in wealthier, whiter neighborhoods. The technology employed in civic engagement is more likely to yield opinions and feedback from white residents than others.

To tackle systemic racism successfully we must account for its causes and its linkages. Redlining and exclusionary zoning funneled Americans into separate communities and different neighborhoods based largely on race, and structurally directed far fewer resources and opportunities to them. Neighborhoods born of those segregationist policies have seen much lower property tax revenue and, it follows, inadequately funded schools, parks, active transportation, healthcare, and other services and infrastructure. The direct result has been society-level disparities across areas including income and accumulation of wealth, educational attainment, entrepreneurship, safe policing, and broadband access.

The policies producing these disparities were never thrust upon our cities; from their beginnings a century ago, they were pursued by cities, complicit with our federal and state governments and the banking industry. While this makes for a hard mirror to look in today, it is what dismantling systemic racism demands that we do. It also demands our acknowledgement that systemic racism in our cities is as serious a public health crisis as the violence or the pandemic that daily claim so many thousands of our people’s lives

Advance Human and Civil Rights

Our Nation’s strength and vitality lie in the fact that our cities are home to diverse residents from all over the country and all over the globe: it’s why our regional economies are the engines that power the largest economy in the world. Throughout our country’s history, that diversity and dynamism have at times also been attacked, and as mayors we take seriously the need for government (federal, state, and local) to protect our residents and promote inclusion. To this end, The United States Conference of Mayors for decades has taken a strong position in support of civil and human rights, and in opposition to racism and discrimination of all kinds whenever and wherever it occurs.

Tragically, extremism and violent bigotry continue to rear their ugly heads in America and, in recent years, at an alarming rate and scale. We are now witnessing efforts in our states and at the highest levels of our government to gut existing civil rights laws and reduce their enforcement. We have seen an increase in hate violence, xenophobic rhetoric, and discriminatory actions that target Muslims, Jews, African Americans, Latinos, and others. Intolerance, lack of respect for those with differing opinions, and incivility have risen to crisis levels. Damaging rhetoric and a dramatic shift away from collaboration have often left us unable to solve the challenges confronting our communities and our country.

To protect constitutional civil rights and encourage inclusionary practices that support our efforts to grow our cities and local economies in ways that benefit everyone, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Promote inclusive, compassionate, and equitable communities and an inclusive, compassionate, and equitable Nation that recognizes, respects, and values all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
- Oppose any policies, actions, or comments that in any way discriminate against people because of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
- Acknowledge the profound impact of structural and systemic racism on communities of color, and look toward policies that remedy long-standing inequities, including promoting Black male achievement.
- Establish a federal commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery as well as subsequent de jure and de facto discrimination against Black Americans through the present day.
- Work to foster tolerance and prevent hate crimes, with a particular focus on the increasing trend of violence toward individuals and institutions based on faith; and condemn such incidents whenever they do occur.
- Support and work to achieve passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and the implementation of policies that ensure genuine economic equality for women.
- Support LGBTQ rights and work toward guaranteeing them in every city and in the Nation as a whole.
- Oppose violence and discrimination against transgender individuals.
- Revive civility and respect by listening respectfully to people who have different views, supporting efforts to work together across ideological and political lines, and working to rebuild civic trust through civil discourse – particularly during election seasons.
- Consistently and unreservedly enforce the federal Fair Housing Act, which helps local governments address discrimination and segregated housing patterns and take action to remedy past housing discrimination.

Achieve Public Safety and Justice for All

In May, the public response in the aftermath of the deaths of several Black men and women at the hands of police officers rekindled and intensified the national call for police reform and racial justice. The Conference's Police Reform and Racial Justice Working Group has produced and is advancing meaningful reforms that mayors and police chiefs across the country can adopt to address police violence and patterns of racial discrimination. Their recommendations, along with the set of principles rooted in the goal of better public safety they developed to shape the police reform framework, were adopted as policy by The United States Conference of Mayors. They take into account the urgent need to address racially-biased practices, as well as concerns that there are public functions that have, for far too long, fallen to police departments by default but that can be better addressed by others.

Mayors and police leaders must meet the moment. Now is the time to renew the compact between people and the police, to restore trust and accountability, to rebuild legitimacy, and to reimagine policing in our country.

While there has been progress in making America's cities safe, much remains to be done. Although homicides and other violent crimes continue to decrease in some jurisdictions, some cities still grapple with high crime levels, and some have seen an uptick. Firearms account for nearly 40,000 deaths a year and guns are readily available on our streets. Until the pandemic hit, mass shootings had become almost a common occurrence.

While improvements have been made in the criminal justice system, and these are a good first step, much remains to be done to make the system equitable, fair, and accountable.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recently reported that the Nation "faces an increasingly complex, and evolving, threat of terrorism and targeted violence," and that while "foreign terrorist organizations remain intent on striking the Homeland...the Nation also faces a growing threat from domestic actors inspired by violent extremist ideologies, as well as from those whose attacks are not ideologically driven."

Achieving public safety and justice for all requires decisive actions by mayors and police chiefs in their cities and by the next President and Congress:

Police Reform

- A set of principles for policing, attributed to Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel in England, is often cited as the foundational framework for modern policing in a democracy. They stand for the ideas that the police exist to prevent crime and that the legitimacy of the police derives from public consent and trust. Peel's Principles state that policing must be based upon a reciprocal relationship of trust between the police and the public. This moment calls for both reaffirming and updating these principles of policing:
 - » **Redefining the Role of Local Police and Public Safety.** The current moment calls into question, but also provides a unique opportunity to discuss, the first principles of policing and requires a community conversation on the proper role of police in addressing the needs of residents. Building healthy, safe and vibrant communities requires many other tools than law enforcement alone.
 - » **Trust and Legitimacy.** Public approval and acceptance are the basis of effective policing. The public and police must find common ground on which to trust each other. Police must earn their community's trust and cooperation, and, in turn, the public must respect officers as faithful guardians of the community who both follow and enforce the law.

- » **Sanctity of Life.** At the core of a police officer's responsibilities is the duty to protect all human life and physical safety. To ingrain this fundamental principle, use of force policies must clearly state this requirement, with specificity, and require officers to intervene when a fellow officer is using disproportionate or unnecessary force.
- » **Equality and Due Process.** Police conduct must not vary on account of race, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or other status. Every person is entitled to equal treatment, respect for his or her constitutional rights, and due process of law. To ensure equal and just treatment of all persons, departments must provide consistent training on impartial policing, anti-discrimination principles, and cultural literacy.
- » **Community.** Departments must strive for a sincere belief among officers that respectful, constitutional engagement with the community is the most powerful tool they possess, over and above a gun and a badge.
- » **Transparency and Accountability to Reinforce Constitutional Policing.** True police reform will not come about through improved policies and training alone. We must ensure that police fulfill their commitments to protect the residents they serve and that police build trust and legitimacy through transparency, engagement and accountability.

First Responders

- Maintain and increase funding for key first responder programs, including COPS hiring grants and other COPS Office programs, Byrne JAG grants, and SAFER and Firefighter Assistance Grant programs.

Community Policing

- Increase financial assistance to local police departments that can be used for promoting neighborhood-based policing; providing officers needed training, body cameras and other equipment; and improving department reporting and accountability practices.
- Aid local efforts to build and maintain trust between the police and the community. This could include providing sensitivity, cultural, and ethnicity training, as well as training in how to defuse incidents.
- Establish community review boards to enable the community to provide oversight through transparency and inclusion.

Gun Violence

- Make background checks universal and strengthen the background check system.
- Strengthen the regulation of gun sales and dealers so that guns don't end up in the hands of people who may misuse them.
- Reinstatement of a strengthened, effective ban on military-style assault weapons, their component parts, large-capacity magazines, and bump stocks and related devices.
- Support local efforts to reduce and combat gun crimes.
- Encourage cities to purchase guns from responsible gun manufacturers and dealers by using city procurement processes to influence and increase responsible behavior of gun manufacturers and dealers who sell guns to cities.

- Endorse the use and adoption of Extreme Risk Protection Orders and urge Congress and state legislatures to introduce and adopt Extreme Risk Protection Order (Red Flag) laws to bring this potentially life-saving tool to as many communities as possible.
- Treat violence as a public health problem.

Criminal Justice Reform and Reentry

- Continue efforts to make the criminal justice system fairer and more equitable, including in the areas of fines and fees and bail, sentencing, and prison reform.
- Provide criminal justice diversion programs that provide preventive and social service assistance for nonviolent offenses, rather than punishment and alternatives to arrests, such as civil citations, diversions, and warnings.
- Increase support for reentry programs, including the provision of substance abuse and mental health services and of housing, education, and employment assistance to better serve the various needs of those leaving prison, and revise employment, health care, and other policies that impede the ability of people released from prison to reintegrate successfully into their communities.
- Establish a national criminal justice commission to examine and make recommendations regarding all aspects of the criminal justice system.

Domestic and International Terrorism

- Maintain and strengthen homeland security grant programs, with funding increased and provided directly to local governments so that local officials are equipped to prevent and respond to terrorist acts and reduce violent extremism.
- Support police officers through both Homeland Security and Justice Department programs, including COPS hiring grants.
- Share intelligence with local authorities in a continuous, timely, and reciprocal manner. Public safety agencies at every level have a role to play in preventing domestic and international terrorism.

Provide Equitable Quality Healthcare and Human Services

Mayors recognize that a strong federal, state, and local partnership is vital to ensuring that everyone has the services they deserve to live healthy and productive lives. Equitable access for all to affordable quality health care and comprehensive human services; robust and coordinated systems of care; easy access to public transit and open space; safe and affordable housing; access to healthy and nutritious foods; and walkable/bikeable neighborhoods shall be top priorities at this most critical moment for change in our Nation.

As cities continue to address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and prioritize equity, mayors reaffirm support for the fundamental principle that all persons must have an equitable opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential. Yet, racial and ethnic health inequities, including discrimination, poverty, lack of quality education, access to good jobs with fair pay, health care, human services, nutritious foods, safe housing, clean environments, and many other longstanding socio-economic factors have continued to place too great a burden on significant portions of our Nation's population.

The crucial choices we make now to address the social determinants of health and improve our health care infrastructure while helping us rebound from the devastating impact of COVID-19 will also help to unlock the full potential of our residents. As we continue to work on strategies to prevent, contain, and eventually eliminate the spread of the pandemic in our cities, we strongly urge the President and Congress to consider the following key priorities:

- Create a health in all policies approach, recognizing that all Departments have a role to play in ensuring everyone can live a long and healthy life, and ensuring a process whereby all federal legislation is evaluated with an equity lens to untap our Nation's full potential.
- Ensure that any restriction of care decisions expressly prohibit and do not deny equal access to care for the poor, people of color, persons with disabilities, and persons with chronic conditions; and ensure that any criteria does not replicate either past or ongoing discrimination.
- Invest in Testing, Contact Tracing, and Supported Isolation for all, with a focus on essential workers, uninsured and underinsured persons, communities of highest risk such as communities of color, homeless, the incarcerated, and the working poor – or others with limited healthcare access to suppress or mitigate highly infectious and dangerous diseases.
- Track and collect robust, disaggregated data by multiple demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, primary language, geographic location, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, occupation, and disability status to better respond and target resources for federal, state, and local governments to better address the coronavirus pandemic and implement programs that address health equity.
- Adopt “critical context” testing as an important element of testing policies; these critical contexts include health care settings, elder care facilities, correctional facilities, meatpacking plants and other assembly line-type conditions (e.g. retail warehouses), grocery stores, and military installations; and place high priority on minority communities experiencing the disparate impact of COVID-19, and higher infection fatality rates, when implementing testing regime.
- Support the Pandemic Response and Opportunity Through National Service Act (HR 6702/S. 3964) to expand partnerships between AmeriCorps and health and education agencies and provide prioritized funding for activities directly related to our response and recovery, such as public health services, emergency logistics, workforce and reemployment services, education support (including for adult learners), and services that combat nutrition insecurity.

- Require and incentivize the collection of patient and social and behavioral risk data through Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial insurance value-based payment programs, with appropriate privacy and anti-discrimination protections to improve data collection.
- Purchase and disburse personal protective equipment to those who contribute to patient care or other essential services (i.e., front-line workers), including by using the Defense Production Act.
- Build and invest in a diverse, culturally competent state and local health care workforce.
- Expand the availability of telehealth.
- Open a national special enrollment period for health coverage.
- Improve access to home and community-based services.
- Expand Medicaid in all States nationwide to fill the coverage gap for the uninsured, people of color, workers with low incomes or loss of jobs, and people living in places that were already struggling financially before the economic downturn to ensure access to care for the most vulnerable.
- Increase funding for community clinics and federally qualified health centers (FQHC).
- Provide direct cash assistance to US residents severely impacted by COVID-19.
- Increase food security programs as a cornerstone element of Congress' next COVID-19 relief package or future appropriation legislation now and beyond so that no one is left hungry. This includes: 1) Increasing flexibility in the SNAP program and increasing the benefits per household; 2) Providing an increase in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) benefits and loosening rules around eligible products; 3) Increasing funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Senior Nutrition Programs in the Older Americans Act; and 4) Additional funding to provide emergency financial relief to school meal providers and USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- Invest in additional school nurses, who serve as a bridge between health care and education systems.
- Ensure minority communities are included in clinical trials for coronavirus vaccines and therapies to ensure safe, effective, and equitable treatments.

These priorities are not only critical now to prevent, control, and contain the spread of COVID-19; but will also have lasting effects as we forge a stronger and healthier future. We must also remain vigilant about strengthening access to comprehensive, quality health care and social services as this is a critical pathway for promoting and maintaining health, preventing and managing diseases, reducing unnecessary disability and premature death, and achieving health equity for all Americans. We owe our shared residents the choice and control they want, the affordability they need, and the access to care they deserve.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) decreased the number of uninsured, expanded health care coverage, and ended barriers to treatment for millions of residents in our cities. Additionally, ACA reduced medical gaps in coverage to ensure that essential health services like emergency, rehabilitative, pediatric, maternal and newborn care, lab, prevention and wellness, and mental health and substance use disorder benefits are protected. These gains must never be lost; and we continue to support efforts to build and strengthen the ACA. Thus, we must:

- Invest in prevention and wellness; improve patient safety, quality, and affordability of care; assure affordable, quality health coverage for all Americans; require comprehensive mental health and substance use disorder treatment options in all insurance policies; maintain coverage when someone changes or loses a job; and continue to reduce barriers to coverage for people with pre-existing medical conditions.
- Strengthen public health, health care, and social infrastructure to foster resilience; and reverse steady cuts to the public health workforce, research, laboratory, and data systems.
- Explore options to get additional funding directly to local government through reduced federal bureaucracy, changes in eligibility requirements of existing programs, and/or create dedicated funding for local governments to address mental health and substance use disorders in our communities.
- Protect families from bankruptcy or debt driven by health care costs.
- Invest in public health interventions to curb violence.
- Support incentives or pilot programs in federal programs for states and local governments that advance health and racial equity by engaging community members in policy development and implementation.
- Expand coverage for maternal health care, address disparities, and provide a minimum of six weeks of paid parental leave.
- Expand support for child-care and early childhood development.
- Invest in affordable, accessible high-speed internet to help expand access and quality of health care for all.
- Increase trauma-informed approaches in healthcare systems and schools to promote improved mental health.
- Ensure access to interpretation and other support services, so that limited English proficiency speakers and people with disabilities are able to better understand treatment options and can effectively communicate these choices with loved ones.
- Encourage partnerships with hospitals, health systems, and service providers, educators and school administrators, nonprofit organizations, and others to reduce stigma and foster inclusive cultures online and in our communities.
- Engage youth in the development of mental health resources and encourage the implementation of youth-led, community-wide solutions to improve mental health outcomes for youth.
- Support Universal Basic Income policies and funding to alleviate poverty, income inequality, and improve health.

- Combat the growing youth vaping epidemic by supporting federal, state, and local anti-tobacco initiatives.
- Evaluate pricing for prescription drugs based on their effectiveness and treatment outcomes; enact measures to prevent companies from using price gouging to increase profits; require drug advertisers to inform viewers of the cost of their medications and include clear enforcement mechanisms to protect the American consumer.

Lastly, obesity and diet-related chronic disease remain a growing epidemic. Yet, we know they are largely preventable. Healthy food and food insecurity have been established as important considerations for local governments as they are fundamentally linked to issues such as chronic health problems, economic inequity, environmental sustainability and economic development. Federal nutrition and emergency assistance programs offer a vital safety net, while other important public-private programs are increasing access to healthy foods, stimulating new economic activity, creating links between cities and rural communities, and ensuring environmental stewardship. Thus, mayors continue to call on the President and Congress to:

- Craft a comprehensive national food policy that provides nutritious food for the hungry, supports small farmers in urban and rural areas, promotes policies that allow for urban farming, and promotes access to healthy and affordable food for all residents in urban, suburban, and rural communities. This includes strengthening incentives and infrastructure for local food production and distribution as well as environmentally sustainable farming practices. It also includes providing better access to fresh foods, investment in programs providing healthy food, expansion of programs that help communities invest in retail markets or food-based businesses, increased access to farmers' markets, and expansion of farm-to-cafeteria programs that bring the freshest locally-grown food into school lunch programs, hospitals, and other institutions.
- Reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act, WIC and Older Americans Act, so that every American knows he or she will always be protected.
- Support and strengthen local and regional food system infrastructure to ensure access to healthy and affordable food.
- Support innovations in food production, processing, and distribution to ensure healthier, nutritious, and sustainable options to feed a growing global population.

Rewrite the Tax Code to Help Hardworking Taxpayers and Reduce Economic Inequality

Since the adoption of the federal income tax in the early 20th century, it has been recognized that independent state and local government tax structures should be respected. The deduction of state and local taxes has contributed to the stability of state and local revenues that are essential for providing public services. Because state and local governments must balance their budgets every year, any change that disrupts the stability of their tax structure will harm their ability to fund essential services that their citizens have come to depend upon.

The principle of fiscal federalism underpins the necessity of ensuring that any federal tax reform allows state and local governments to retain authority over their own tax policies. It is essential that state and local governments retain the full deductibility of personal state and local property, sales, and income taxes on federal tax returns. Also, it is critical that the deductibility of municipal bonds be maintained, and that state and local governments are allowed to refinance those bonds, which will help ensure cities have financial support for critical infrastructure when they need it. Further, it is essential to increase tax incentives that promote investment in cities and support working families, so that our communities will continue to enjoy the economic progress they have made over the past decade.

Restore Full Federal Deductibility of State and Local Taxes (SALT)

Mayors call for the President and Congress to:

- Restore the full deductibility of state and local property, sales, and income taxes. States like California and New York should not be punished for providing critical services for their constituents. Recognizing the partnership that exists among federal, state, and local governments ensures that taxpayers are not double-taxed and helps maintain essential public services on which Americans rely.

Tax-Exempt Municipal Bonds

For more than 100 years, tax-exempt municipal bonds have been the principal means used by state and local governments to finance critical infrastructure: schools, hospitals, water and sewer facilities, roads, mass transit systems, and public power projects. Together, state and local governments are responsible for building and maintaining 75 percent of the Nation's infrastructure, which is mostly financed by tax-exempt municipal bonds. This federal, state, and local partnership represents a fair allocation of the cost between the different levels of government for infrastructure used by the general public.

In 2017, Congress and the President approved tax reform legislation that eliminated tax-exempt advance refunding. As a result, local and state governments can no longer save significant amounts through refinancing and thereby lower their borrowing costs when there is a drop in interest rates. That makes these necessary infrastructure improvements more expensive, which makes taxes go up.

Mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Reinstating tax-exempt advance refunding, which has enabled state and local governments to save significant amounts in taxpayer dollars and invest more in critical infrastructure projects to better serve the public.
- Making permanent the Build America Bonds Program, not as a replacement, but as a supplement, to tax-exempt municipal bonds. State and local governments that issued these taxable bonds were paid a direct federal subsidy under the 2009 stimulus bill equal to 35 percent of the interest cost, which enabled them to save significant amounts in borrowing costs.

Community Revitalization Incentives

As the COVID-19 Pandemic continues, our cities need more support to stimulate investment in underserved, distressed communities. Low-income urban neighborhoods and rural communities do not have access to capital needed to support and grow businesses, create jobs, and sustain a healthy local economy, and local residents are deprived of the quality of life components available to most others. Mayors call for the President and Congress to:

- Enact a permanent extension of the New Market Tax Credit, which has a proven track record of stimulating economic growth. Between 2003 and 2012, the program generated \$31 billion in direct investments to businesses, leveraged another \$60 billion in total capital investment in distressed neighborhoods, and created 750,000 jobs.
- Increase access to credit and expand funding for Community Development Financial Institutions.
- Pass legislation to reform and improve Opportunity Zones, a new tool to incentivize private capital into low-income, high poverty, and investment deprived neighborhoods. Reforms should be made to strengthen reporting requirements, extend the timeframe for investments, and provide mayors the technical assistance and capacity needed to help enable more communities to attract high impact investments and economic activities.
- Enact policy that will enable the Federal Home Loan Bank system to help community lenders better support the economic and credit needs of cities by providing additional liquidity for small business, agricultural, and economic development lending; and assist cities by making critical forms of credit support available for municipal borrowing to lower the cost of infrastructure projects.
- Fully fund (defined as inflation adjusted dollars over the last decade) urban domestic programs such as Community Development Block Grants, HOME Block Grants, Community Service Block Grants, and workforce development programs that assist low and moderate-income communities.
- Change the tax code to provide a more fair and progressive federal tax system that generates sufficient resources for urban programs, that have suffered decade-long disinvestment, as opposed to providing tax expenditures that favor the wealthy. Increase support for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and minority-owned businesses.

Promoting Economic Mobility and Reducing the Wage and Income Gap

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had an enormous impact on low-income Americans. According to a recent report from the Federal Reserve Board, thirty-nine percent of people working in February 2020 with a household income below \$40,000, reported a job loss in March due to COVID-19. Further, racism and gender-based discrimination, dating back to the founding of our Nation, continue to make it difficult for minorities and women to secure well-paying jobs. Many feel trapped in poverty, receiving governmental assistance, and/or working multiple minimum wage or low-paying jobs that barely enable them to support their families.

The Nation's mayors believe the economic security of their residents is essential to the future prosperity and stability of their cities. Unfortunately, the gap between high-income and low-income households continues to grow. Between 2008 and 2018, average inflation-adjusted income increased by 21 percent for the top 5 percent of households by income, while it grew only 1.1 percent for the bottom 20 percent. Mayors call for the President and Congress to:

- Increase the minimum wage and allow adjustments for inflation to enable workers to earn sufficient income to take care of themselves and their families without having to work multiple low-paying jobs.
- Support Universal Basic Income policies and funding to eliminate poverty and income inequality to help ensure sufficient earnings for low-income workers.
- Pass legislation increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit for existing recipients, so that the tax code promotes economic fairness.
- Enact legislation to make permanent the Child Tax Credit to support working families.
- Establish a national child savings account matching program or a "Baby Bonds" program to build financial wealth for low- and moderate-income families.
- Increase funding for financial education programs.
- Cities are urged to review their fines and fees to assess the impact on low and moderate income individuals and families; eliminate punitive fines and fees; and work with appropriate state and local authorities to restore drivers licenses (if they are suspended for failure to pay certain fines and fees), where appropriate, to individuals in order to encourage entry into the job market.
- Reduce student debt through a mixture of scholarship, repayment, and debt forgiveness programs, so that more young adults can start their professional lives without an impossible financial burden.
- Provide incentives to increase homeownership by increasing assistance for down payment and closing costs through increased funding of the Community Development Block Grant program.

Make Housing More Affordable and Address Homelessness

Housing plays a critical role in determining life opportunities and has become even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your house not only impacts your living space and household budget, it determines the quality of your schools, the safety of your streets, the length of your commute, the availability of fresh food, hospitals, healthcare, and more. All communities struggle to ensure that low-income families can live in healthy homes in safe neighborhoods that connect them to opportunity – amid rising housing costs and stagnant wages. We must ensure that those families are not displaced from their neighborhoods once they start coming back, physically and economically.

We begin with a simple principle:

- Since the benefits of home ownership are so numerous, home ownership should be attainable for any family that wants to plant roots in their community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, foreclosures will increase without significant federal intervention. There should be a moratorium on home foreclosures, and assistance provided to homebuyers facing foreclosure when the moratorium ends.

Our housing policy must also provide rental housing for our citizens, especially those in tight rental markets where low- and moderate-income renters deserve housing they can afford. Just as important is inclusive housing policy that helps first-time home buyers and renters, upgrades and preserves subsidized and “naturally affordable” housing, increases mixed-use areas and diversity in our neighborhoods, and strengthens our economies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, renters face eviction. There should be a moratorium on evictions beyond the time that is presently available.

Across the country, mayors and other local leaders focus on community development and housing policy because small business development, education, public safety, and economic growth are all tied to the success of our neighborhoods. Through low-income housing tax credits, inclusionary zoning, and developer incentives for mixed-use and affordable housing, mayors and local leaders are working in their communities to build thriving neighborhoods and rebuild a stronger and more inclusive middle class.

Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs

Investment in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Program has not kept pace with need over the last several years. In fact, both partnerships have been severely cut since 2010.

CDBG responds to current and emerging community development needs. The program assists businesses in creating and retaining jobs in low- and moderate-income areas, improves the existing housing stock, funds public improvements such as senior centers and homeless facilities, and provides vital public services such as day care for low-income working families, health care for children, and meals to the elderly.

CDBG was cut by nearly \$1 billion from FY 2010 to FY 2015, down to a level of \$3.0 billion. A total of 594 grantees were eligible to receive CDBG formula grants in 1975; today that number has grown to nearly 1,200 grantees receiving direct allocations. The overall outlay to CDBG has not increased proportionally. The program has never been adjusted for inflation, but the associated costs, such as construction, labor, leasing, and maintenance of facilities, increase annually.

Serving as a resource to expand affordable housing through state and local public- private partnerships, HOME has completed nearly 493,000 units for new homebuyers, over 230,000 units for owner-occupied rehabilitation, and over 464,000 rental housing units. It has also provided direct rental assistance to over 228,000 households. Yet the HOME program has been cut over 50 percent, or \$925 million, since FY 2010 and is now funded at the lowest level in its history. Need continues to increase, with 300 more communities now participating in the program than when it started in 1993.

With respect to these two vital programs, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Restore CDBG funding to a level commensurate with clearly established needs taking into account the inflation over the course of the program's existence, and raise the public service cap.
- Reverse the deep cuts to the HOME program made over the past decade in an effort to align funding with the dramatic increase in need for the program over this same period.

Blighted Neighborhood Restoration

During the Great Recession, thousands of residential and commercial properties were foreclosed, leaving blighted neighborhoods and communities throughout the country. This problem has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2008 to 2010, the Neighborhood Stabilization Program distributed nearly \$7 billion, supported an estimated 88,000 jobs, completed rehabilitation of nearly 50,000 units of affordable housing, and demolished nearly 25,000 blighted properties. But the work is not yet done, so we call on the President and Congress to:

- Create a new program designed to purchase, rehabilitate, and redevelop foreclosed, abandoned, demolished, or vacant properties on both commercial and residential lots.

Rental Housing Supply

There is an increased need for rental housing. The Nation needs to create and pursue policies to develop more rental housing. Specifically, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Create a new rental housing production program to serve the needs of working families.
- Support the National Housing Trust Fund.
- Increase funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships program.
- Maintain one of the Nation's largest infrastructure investments – public housing – through significant funding increases geared toward capital improvements.
- Provide Section 8 vouchers for all eligible recipients.

A Comprehensive Approach to Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reports that roughly 553,000 people were experiencing homelessness during a point-in-time count in January 2018. About one-third (35 percent) of these individuals were in unsheltered locations, such as on the street, in abandoned buildings, or in places not suitable for human habitation. The United States Conference of Mayors' Annual Hunger and Homelessness Survey has consistently found the lack of affordable housing to be the leading cause of homelessness.

Therefore, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Support local governments in developing a systemic response that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible or, if it can't be prevented, it is a rare, brief and one-time experience.
- Recognize that people living in unsheltered locations is unacceptable, and that cities face a crisis of homelessness and lack of affordable housing that requires immediate comprehensive and bold federal action, which should include expanded eligibility for housing/homeless resources through the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Increase funding for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants

Support Holistic and Inclusive Community Development

Housing Affordability and economic mobility are perhaps the greatest challenges faced by cities. As the affordability crisis grows, both renters and homeowners become increasingly stressed and cost burdened. The challenge before us is to ensure that as cities continue to grow and prosper, our longtime residents can remain in their homes and neighborhoods and are not displaced. To promote the growth of strong, vibrant cities, there must be a connectivity network and a community development infrastructure plan which leads to stable, quality, affordable housing. Therefore, we call on the President and Congress to:

- Support the Capital Magnet Fund.
- Incentivize local governments to adopt and implement policies that foster inclusive growth.
- Increase funding for housing vouchers and prohibit discrimination based on source of income.
- Strengthen consumer protections for homebuyers to reduce predatory lending practices.
- Strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) which provides access to credit for low- and moderate-income communities from financial institution.

Small Business

Increase support to women and minorities in the development of small business. Provide for the development of entrepreneurial skills. Continue significant support for small businesses during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fair Housing

Support the 2015 regulations that strengthened the implementation of the 1968 Fair Housing Act that would affirmatively further fair housing.

Affordable Workforce Housing

Whether it is aiding first responders – police, fire, and hospital workers – or teachers and other workers in essential public and private sector positions, investing more in making housing more affordable must be part of the Nation's post-COVID-19 recovery. Going forward, affordable workforce housing must be seen as a key part of the Nation's infrastructure investment strategy, to be addressed alongside increased funding for our energy, transportation and water systems, among other commitments.

Mayors call for greater federal funding commitments to support the production of more affordable workforce housing. Existing program delivery systems – CDBG, HOME, Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit – can be readily adapted to deliver substantially more federal resources in support of these efforts.

Build Modern, Resilient Infrastructure to Address Climate Change, Promote Environmental Justice, and Enhance Opportunity and Productivity: Transportation, Water, Green Energy, and Technology Systems

Investing in the Nation's infrastructure can play a critical role in our Nation's economic recovery and putting people back to work. While investment is needed to maintain, replace and expand the Nation's infrastructure, mayors also see the need to "green" our infrastructure with an eye towards building more resilient and lower-carbon infrastructure options. The need to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions is a world-wide imperative not only to maintain our ecosystems but to also protect our most vulnerable citizens who will be the most severely impacted by a changing climate. Science tells us that we are at the tipping point and action is needed to combat permanent changes to our climate.

Mayors believe that greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced while also growing the economy and creating new, well-paying jobs. Mayors have taken a national and global leadership role in climate protection by investing in carbon-reducing and resilient infrastructure including lower-carbon transportation options and smart water systems, expanded the use of renewable and alternative energy sources, investing in energy conservation programs, and designing more resilient communities. Cities have begun many of these measures, but national action is needed.

Cities are the best sources for innovation, with so many mayors successfully pioneering and demonstrating cost-effective clean energy and efficiency solutions. Often, in cities, this means increasing the energy performance of public and private buildings, promoting greater energy independence through the use of alternative low and zero carbon energy sources, transitioning government and private vehicles to alternative fuels as well as better fuel economy standards, and building new infrastructure to support citizens and business in switching to greener energy and transportation options.

Transportation

Our cities are ground zero as the Nation struggles to adjust to the transportation impacts of COVID-19, inflicting consequential and what are likely to be enduring impacts on the transportation sector. This fallout can be measured by record revenue losses and steep declines in use and ridership across all modes, most notably for public transit, intercity passenger rail and air travel. First priority must be given to providing additional federal support to sustain these vital systems and services – especially public transit, airports and air travel, and intercity passenger rail – as local and state governments struggle to maintain and adjust existing capital investment plans to advance needed improvements and planned expansions.

Going forward, a post-COVID world means congestion, traffic safety, economic mobility, and transportation sustainability challenges, among other issues, will again challenge mayors and other local leaders to find solutions. Such efforts will rely on investments and actions that bring together all available tools - technology, infrastructure, operations, regulations, funding, financing, and energy - to help deliver a seamless mobility experience, today and long into the future.

Raising sufficient resources for public investment in our Nation's transportation infrastructure is foundational to our shared agenda to make the lives of all Americans better - not just those living in cities, but those who work in them and the communities that surround them as well. This public investment in our transportation infrastructure connects

people to jobs and homes, makes communities safer and more accessible, and helps businesses prosper - leading to growth in local, regional, and national economies. It must also connect today's economic opportunities with tomorrow's population realities. Mayors recognize and embrace the bipartisan nature of funding for transportation specifically and infrastructure broadly, including efforts to stabilize and grow funding and streamline project delivery.

For too many years, federal underinvestment in our airports, bridges, roads, ports, transit systems, and other facilities has resulted in additional deterioration or delayed maintenance that has cost local taxpayers money, hurt our economic growth, and made some of our infrastructure unsafe. Although many cities have taken bold steps to increase local and regional commitments to transportation, Washington now needs to step up and do more to invest in these networks and partner with, incentivize, and reward cities for taking action.

In addition to stabilizing the many vital transportation systems and services during this COVID-19 pandemic, additional steps must be taken to reverse the decline in transportation infrastructure investment and meet our new challenges and emerging opportunities. As such, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

Bridges, Roads, and Transit

- Secure the highway trust fund, first established in the 1950s, so that the federal government can continue to partner with city, county, and state leaders as they work to repair, maintain, and expand the Nation's vital transportation networks.
- Direct more highway dollars – through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and other programs – to support mayors and other officials in their regions who show how locally-initiated transportation solutions grow the economy faster and deliver more travel options to more people, among other benefits.
- Make public transit investment a higher priority to support local and regional efforts to increase connectivity, access, and frequency of services to better serve all residents, especially those who are transit dependent.
- Reward cities that embrace new initiatives and innovations that help local areas continue to grow and prosper, including local hiring and similar initiative to spur local economic development and growth, and support local efforts to complete streets and advance safety first outcomes, improve transit access and services, promote transit adjacent housing, reduce air pollutants that threaten public health, curb transportation emissions that fuel climate change, and harden existing transportation facilities and networks to make them more resilient to climatic events.
- Support continuing local efforts to address future transportation needs of cities and their surrounding communities; incentivize the local deployment of new transportation technologies and update local regulatory regimes to address autonomous vehicles, unmanned air taxis, and Hyperloop pilots, among other technologies; and embrace shared mobility services and resources that expand travel options in cities and their regions and increase the throughput of urban networks serving people and vehicles.

Airports and Ports

- Expand capital investments to modernize the Nation's airports – cognizant of pre-pandemic record-setting air travel and inadequate airport capacity to meet rising demand – by directing more FAA program dollars to local airport capital projects and by empowering individual airport operators to raise more capital funds from passengers using their airports (i.e., raising the cap on Passenger Facility Charges).
- Spend down the funds now being collected by users of our port facilities and stop diverting these funds to other governmental purposes, which is especially important now with our harbors and other ports facing so many unmet infrastructure needs.

Water and Wastewater Systems

Local governments have long been significant environmental and public health stewards by providing clean, safe, healthy drinking water and wastewater. To most Americans, this is a fundamental responsibility of government. In fact, American cities provide some of the safest and healthiest public drinking water in the world. To achieve this, local governments today currently spend \$125 billion annually, which is raised through constituent user fees and taxes. In comparison, the federal government contributes less than \$2 billion annually, largely in the form of loans, which must be paid back.

Unfortunately, due to numerous unfunded rules and regulations, this money is often diverted to fund other priorities separate from local government's core purpose of protecting the public health of its citizens by keeping waterways drinkable, swimmable, fishable, and livable for aquatic life per the Clean Water Act. As one example of mounting water infrastructure needs, the water crisis in Flint, Michigan called attention to the real threat of lead contamination in some of our aging drinking water systems. It is currently estimated that replacing existing lead service lines will cost between \$27 billion and \$48 billion nationally – and the health and safety of our population depends on it.

To mitigate this, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Raise existing federal funding commitments substantially, particularly in the form of grant funding, to support the modernization and expansion of our Nation's drinking water, wastewater treatment, stormwater, and flood protection systems. This includes addressing public health threats from lead contamination in older, legacy water systems as well as helping mitigate the impact of unfunded federal mandates on communities where user fee increases to comply with these mandates are making water rates unaffordable for more and more local residents. The federal government should assist localities in meeting Clean Water Act obligation including (but not limited to) TMDLs for stormwater as it did in the past by funding upgrades of treatment plants to secondary treatment.
- Implement the Integrated Planning Permit law to ensure cities and their customers are not overly financially burdened and to allow cities maximum flexibility to address specific challenges in a smart, prioritized manner.
- Change the current clean water act law to allow cities to have 10-year, rather than five-year, treatment works permit terms. We need a more long-term approach.
- Continue to advocate for better "Affordability" assessments involving compliance with unfunded federal mandates, including the elimination of costly penalties.
- Direct new resources funding to support local government efforts to study, evaluate, and undertake capital investments to combat cybersecurity threats and improve water system resiliency from natural disasters.
- Assist in providing funding or federal credits for premise plumbing upgrades on private property to prevent and reduce contamination from pipes.
- Fund the Corps of Engineers' authority to allow for water and wastewater infrastructure investment which would allow for additional grant funding for the Nation's water and wastewater infrastructure.
- Increase funding for newly established programs including the water workforce development grant, CSO and stormwater infrastructure needs, increasing system resiliency, and accelerating innovative technologies in the water sector.

Address Climate Change by Accelerating Clean Energy Use

Climate change poses a major threat to our ecosystem and our most vulnerable citizens. However, it also poses a path to economic recovery and job creation. Mayors have focused their greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies on major sources of emissions including electric utilities, buildings, transportation, and municipal solid waste management. Despite these local efforts, national leadership and resources are needed to amplify these efforts.

Cities are at the forefront of improving the energy performance of the Nation's buildings, with actions that include stronger building codes, innovative building practices, efficient construction materials, and increased use of renewable energy. Not only will these actions rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality, but they will put Americans to work in our communities.

Cutting energy use in the transportation sector, the second largest emitter of carbon, can be accomplished by providing more and smarter transportation options. Beyond federal fuel economy standards, much of the work to reengineer existing transportation networks, services, and practices have been shouldered by local leaders.

Municipal solid waste, if not properly reduced, reused, recycled, or turned into energy, ends up in a landfill, where it converts into methane, a greenhouse gas that is twenty-one times more powerful than carbon dioxide emissions.

Therefore, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Recommit to providing federal resources directly to cities, counties, states, and tribal governments through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program to rapidly accelerate efforts to promote the use of renewable energy, implement energy conservation efforts, invest in cleaner alternative fuel options, installing Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations, and begin designing more resilient communities. These programs should ensure an emphasis on communities and residents in greatest need of support, such as low-income, multifamily, and small business focused programs.
- Authorize use of these grants for energy assurance strategies designed to limit or mitigate interruption of vital energy networks and services due to natural disasters and to protect micro grids, distributed energy systems, and local energy networks from cybersecurity threats.
- Establish policies, incentives, and standards for new and existing buildings to be carbon neutral.
- Congress should establish a comprehensive national program and a timeframe to decarbonize the electric utility industry in time to keep the global rise in temperatures to the 1.5-degree Celsius level.
- Congress should establish a worker re-training and benefits program for those workers dislocated from the transition away from the fossil fuel industry and provide adequate funding for job skill training in the renewable energy and green building field.
- Start now to establish and implement a national Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction strategy to cut nationwide emissions and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.
- Adopt a national renewable portfolio standard and provide incentives for clean and renewable energy.
- Recommit to research at the Department of Energy to improve and promote hydropower as renewable energy, promoting energy security via energy diversity.
- Expand tax credits to purchase electric vehicles (EV) so that a major source of carbon emissions is reduced quickly and significantly.
- Create investment/grant opportunities for net zero energy/zero energy demonstration projects and fleets at ports and airports that will promote efficient, effective innovation on a large scale.

- Support policies that allow for the responsible development of the Nation's offshore wind energy industry, including the extension of federal tax incentives and predictable, inclusive policy approaches to ocean planning, leasing, and permitting.
- Provide an Energy Decoupling Incentive program that requires states to adopt decoupling into their ratemaking regulatory regime, so that utilities are incentivized to implement energy conservation programs.
- Provide incentives to the energy sector to ramp up research and investments in renewable energy to expand electric generation, and research to capture and reduce carbon emissions from clean energy.
- Develop a comprehensive solid waste strategy to reduce the amount of solid waste sent to landfills that includes: 1) an extended producer responsibility program at the national level, with incentives to encourage shared responsibility; 2) policies to shift away from single-use materials; 3) development of post-consumer content markets, and the infrastructure needed to process recyclables within the U.S.; and 4) increased efforts to more effectively reduce, reuse, recycle, and generate energy from waste.
- Provide additional resources to redevelop the estimated 400,000 to 600,000 brownfield sites which are oftentimes located in areas that are most impacted by poverty and environmental injustice. These resources will help recycle property where infrastructure already exists while revitalizing and creating jobs in disenfranchised neighborhoods and providing affordable and energy efficient housing. Brownfields can also be used to install microgrids and renewable energy sites.

Embrace Efficient, Effective, Modern Technology While Protecting Consumers and Cities

According to a 2018 Gallup poll, 72 percent of U.S. adults say they have a “great deal” or a “fair amount” of trust in their local government, higher than any other level. The public's confidence in the actions of their local leaders is an important asset as many new technologies, increasingly disruptive ones, are being deployed throughout the U.S.

Among the examples of this leadership, cities have been pioneers in digital government and have embraced accountability, transparency and collaboration with open data. Cities are leading the public debate about the need to secure governmental systems from threats domestic and international. In the transportation and communications sectors, cities have been leading in the piloting and testing of autonomous vehicles and drones, and in building new partnerships with telecommunications companies to expand access to broadband and wireless services.

To support this local leadership, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Work with all levels of government in developing data standards to improve accountability, access, interoperability, transparency, and security, and provide resources to cities to respond to intentional and deliberate cyber crimes.
- Protect election systems and other vital technology assets in local government with financial and technical support.
- Support local efforts to provide for greater digital equality and literacy, including senior citizens, so that every citizen can enjoy the benefits of a digital world.
- Support local efforts to pilot and test new technologies, especially in the transportation sector, giving communities the opportunity to evaluate and deploy these systems free from unnecessary federal preemption and/or “one-size-fits-all” federal regulatory regimes.
- Reverse actions by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that subordinate local property rights and zoning powers to the agency's efforts to subsidize the Nation's communications companies with local government property, actions which exceed authorities granted by Congress in previous statute.

Technology and Innovation

Technology fosters innovation, creates jobs, and boosts long-term economic prosperity. To spur recovery, the American economy will need a productivity boost from innovation and new frontier technologies. Science-based technologies will be at the very core of our economic growth.

Close Gaps in Communications Infrastructure

The pandemic has shown that there are significant gaps in the availability and affordability of wireline and wireless broadband services to all city residents

Mayors urge increased federal funding to build-out higher-speed broadband infrastructure serving urban and rural areas, and to reduce the cost of broadband services for low-income individuals and families. In this Congress, there are several pending bills that: would protect or restore local governments' traditional authority and property rights; empower localities to pursue municipal broadband networks; and increase federal funding commitments, each of which would make broadband service more affordable and more available to all residents.

Research and Development

To stimulate innovation, the Nation's mayors recommend increased investments in national research and development and in intangibles like software, data science, intellectual property, and training, which represent major elements of innovation capacity. The research and development tax credit must be extended on a predictable schedule so that U.S. companies can plan investments and pursue consistent long-term strategies.

Strengthen Education, Improve Career Pathways, and Develop the Workforce of the Future

Economic Opportunity and Return to Work

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing economic disparities among racial and ethnic communities in the United States. Minorities are overrepresented in occupations likely to be most affected by automation and COVID-19. For a successful return to work in the 21st Century economy, Congress must commit to retraining and upskilling workers whose jobs will be gone when the crisis of the pandemic subsides.

Return to School with Safe Facilities and Infrastructure

According to a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report, approximately 36,000 schools across the country need to update or replace heating, ventilation, and air condition systems and could fail to meet the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines for safely reopening schools.

Improving school buildings for children (and other efforts to protect teachers, bus drivers and support staff) should be part of a larger strategy of "healthy buildings" where people want to see modifications and upgrades that protect them and their families. Accordingly, the Nation's mayors urge immediate passage of *The Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act* and the *Coronavirus Child Care and Education Relief Act* to invest construction funds in schools, targeted at high-poverty school facilities that put the health of students and staff most at risk.

We are at a crossroads in American history around the future of work. The pace of change is rapid, and mayors are examining the trends shaping the workforce of tomorrow, including artificial intelligence and automation, the changing models around freedom and flexibility in the workplace, the impact of the gig economy, and whether city residents will be able to work sustainably and earn a living wage or be left behind. The skill transitions are going to be quite substantial, and many will lack the skills necessary to thrive in a changing workplace. Mayors are facing up to the challenges and are examining ways to help workers and businesses manage their way and succeed throughout this transition.

Accordingly, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

Increase Funding for Workforce Innovation

Faced with unprecedented skills gaps, governments are pursuing alternative pathways to recruit and develop new talent - non-traditional apprenticeships, immersive internships, coding bootcamps, etc. These innovative efforts require mayoral leadership and a willingness to partner with a number of different stakeholders.

The Chicago Apprentice Network is one such best practice, with the tools needed to build successful, collaborative apprenticeship programs. Similarly, the Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI) is a partnership with the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Committee for Progress, Atlanta Technical College and sponsor companies, committed to supporting high demand career fields within the Skilled Trades (Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC, Welding), IT/Coding (IT Support, Networking, Cloud Technologies) and Aviation. Code Louisville is another success story - a strong public-private partnership that bolsters technological innovation in the region. To build on these and other local innovations, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) must be fully funded at authorized levels and reauthorization must further promote and support workforce innovation and employee freedom and flexibility in cities.

Improve Coordination and Access to Jobs and Job Training Opportunities

Mayors are leading the way with innovative solutions and initiatives to address the economic insecurity and community challenges associated with rapid changes to work and at work. Accordingly, the President and Congress are urged to:

- Expand apprenticeship opportunities and on-ramps to serve adults in transition, in addition to young people entering the workforce.
- Offer recognition and incentives for skills gains, including nationally recognized occupation credentials and transferable, stackable competencies, so that human talent is rewarded.
- Systematically authorize the delivery of skills, training, and learning with support of federal Pell Grants, Perkins funds, and other resources by providers beyond the limited scope of accreditation by traditional institutions, including credentials, badges, certificates, and other non-degree validated indicators of aptitude, knowledge, talent, and skills.
- Substantially broaden the governance of accreditation to include mayors and other public representatives in addition to existing representation of postsecondary institutions, in order to assure that the public interest in quality, equity, innovation, and workforce development is served.
- Build on prior reforms to provide better coordination and adopt frameworks that incentivize career pathways, dual enrollment approaches, and recognized postsecondary credentials and employment outcomes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization.
- Expand Pell grant eligibility to short-term training and credentials and strengthen connections to local and regional economies.
- Promote better coordination between WIOA and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in reauthorization. Incompatible performance measures between WIOA and TANF impede cooperation and collaboration and should be streamlined.
- Restore the long-term commitment to a strong summer jobs program by establishing separate ongoing funding for youth summer jobs programs enabling students to have work experience and on-the-job training.
- Adopt immigration policies which help American companies attract and retain the best and brightest workers, provide green cards for advanced degree graduates of American universities, create a new green card category for entrepreneurs, and reform current H-1B visa programs.
- Create new funding programs and grants for labor workforce upskilling and reskilling to deal with the effects of automation at the workplace.
- Strengthen the food safety-net by increasing current benefit levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) so that low-income workers can supplement their incomes and begin to build back some level of economic security.
- Expanding access to career exploration and preparation through career academies and other strategies.

Prepare the Future Workforce

Universal Pre-K Education

The track record is clear. High-quality preschool provides the foundation for success in school and helps mitigate educational gaps that exist between children from high- and low-income families before they enter kindergarten. America's mayors have been strong advocates for high-quality early learning, and many of our cities have demonstrated that universal early learning has a proven, powerful impact for our children and profound impacts on later learning and success. Accordingly, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Enact federal legislation that provides access for all three- and four-year olds from families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line to a high-quality, full-day early childhood education.
- Expand access to high-quality, early childhood education for all of our Nation's children.
- Expand access to subsidized child care for children ages 0-3 years old for low-income parents.
- Improve the quality of all child care.
- Expand enrollment in Early Head Start.

K-12 Education Excellence

The failure of many schools to properly prepare students for college, career and life leaves them unprepared to compete in the global economy. Together, we call on the President, Congress, state and local leaders to:

- Reform K-12 education to recruit, retain, recognize, and reward the most talented educators and ensure their efficacy.
- Expand individualized, personalized learning, matching instructional tasks to skill levels, interests, and abilities.
- Enhance parental choice and control among public schools to help overcome the lasting effects of decades of redlining and segregation.
- Fuse academics with wraparound supports to address issues of poverty and meet the needs of the whole child to improve student achievement.
- Reintroduce modern skills training and promote science, technology, art, engineering, and math (STEAM) along with a civics requirement.
- Enhance physical education, health awareness, and performing arts within the K-12 system.

Higher Education Access

Our college completion agenda must embrace every student in every community, and we must increase our efforts to open the door to higher education access to more Americans in undereducated, underserved communities. Therefore, we call on the President and Congress to:

- Make two years of community college free for responsible students.
- Increase college affordability by raising the maximum Pell Grant and assure its continued growth, restructure tuition, and financial aid policies to meet the needs of low-income students, and implement incentives to improve outcomes and lower costs using advanced technology.
- Expand and enhance community college infrastructure to reflect changes in technology, advanced manufacturing, and workplace needs.
- Erase the limitations on federal student aid for incarcerated individuals and for students with prior drug-related offenses. We need every student educated, including those who have made mistakes early in life.
- Establish an industry-led task force, co-chaired by top-level administration policymakers, to coordinate federal efforts, and ensure the private sector is ready to support and leverage federal training and education investments.

STEAM Workforce Training

The U.S. is experiencing a crisis in STEAM training and workforce development. Too few American students are graduating with degrees in science, technology, engineering, art, and math, which impedes the Nation's economic future. The Nation must revive its commitment to putting education at the forefront of the national agenda by investing in STEAM education programs, focusing on the need for quality teachers and restructuring federal education funding to address this need.

Future of Work

As new developments in technology and artificial intelligence reshape the workforce, mayors will need to prepare for a rapidly changing jobs landscape with widespread worker displacement due to automation, particularly for African Americans, minority families, and other disadvantaged communities.

Interventions in three areas related to skills and capabilities can help stem the challenges posed by automation:

1. *Higher Education:* Expanding access to a diverse range of higher education opportunities, particularly in minority communities, would create additional pathways to better occupations and lower the risk of disruption in vulnerable populations by automation.
2. *Hiring Policies:* Private- and public-sector organizations should examine the possibility of changing their hiring policies to prioritize hiring qualified, skilled workers from nontraditional educational backgrounds rather than only candidates with university degrees.
3. *Upskilling:* Providing workers in high-risk industries with upskilling opportunities to build new skill sets for emerging positions in companies will help position the United States for a successful transition to a 21st Century economy.

Fix Our Broken Immigration System

The United States has always been a country of laws. But we are also a Nation of immigrants; it was founded by immigrants and enriched by the diversity of its immigrants, many of whom have come here to escape religious persecution, war, genocide, and tyranny in hopes of sharing in freedom and prosperity through hard work. Mayors recognize that our cities are inclusive, multicultural centers reflecting core American values that foster economic prosperity and opportunity, and that our diversity and inclusion keeps us competitive and makes us strong.

Immigration is often the difference between population loss and population growth for U.S. cities. Mayors around the country are welcoming immigrants and refugees because they bolster local economies, fill vacant homes and storefronts, strengthen municipal finances, and rekindle economic dynamism. Highly skilled immigrants and international students, in particular, are great sources of innovation, entrepreneurship, and talent for the United States and help to keep the country connected and competitive in an era of increasing globalization.

Despite what cities are experiencing, some recent federal policies and the rhetoric accompanying them can be characterized as anti-immigrant, and it has hurt immigrants residing in this country, struck fear in our immigrant communities, reduced our standing in the world, and re-racialized the American immigration system. Efforts to fix our broken immigration system have stalled. To preserve the dignity of our immigrant communities, recognize the contributions that immigrants make to cities and the Nation, and counter the growth of anti-immigrant sentiment, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Halt punitive federal policies aimed at reducing the number of immigrants coming to our country. This includes, but is not limited to, repealing the public charge rule; ceasing to try to withhold public safety funds from cities with welcoming policies; reinstating legally mandated humane procedures for those requesting asylum and those entering the country without documentation, including keeping families together and out of detention; eliminating barriers to naturalization; and returning to previous levels of annual refugee admissions, as a minimum.
- Enact legislation to ensure that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) recipients continue to live in, contribute to, and ensure the prosperity of the cities and the Nation they call home.
- Provide funding directly to local communities and non-governmental organizations to address the humanitarian crisis at the southern border and return Customs and Border Protection and other federal officials deployed to the border to their original duty assignments as quickly as possible.
- Halt immigration policies that separate young children from their parents at the border and invest in resources that promote family unity as cases are being adjudicated.
- Embrace the idea of “Heartland Visas,” providing a new pathway for skilled immigrants with adequate labor protections to be matched with welcoming communities.
- Embrace immigration as a key driver for economic recovery and long-term economic growth.
- Reform our broken immigration system by enacting legislation that:
 - » Sustains genuine border security, supports federal immigration enforcement, and keeps our cities safe by ensuring state and local law enforcement remains focused on community policing and not on enforcing federal immigration laws.
 - » Establishes an efficient, less bureaucratic, expedient, and more time-sensitive system with adequate labor protections that allows workers of all types to lawfully come to the United States, either temporarily or permanently, and contribute to our economy.

- » Provides an employment verification system that is enforceable, uniform, accurate, and timely.
- » Enables people to come out of the shadows and pursue the American Dream for themselves and their families. This is essential to the economic vitality of our cities and our Nation as a whole.

Promote American Business, Goods, and Tourism in the Global Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the Nation's vulnerability to global supply-chain shocks. We live in an interdependent global economy and we must rebuild America's industrial capacity and bring back critical manufacturing capabilities needed for a balanced 21st Century economy. Investing in infrastructure and incentivizing companies to build resiliencies into their supply chains will prepare the United States to expand exports and confront the next global economic crisis.

Expanding exports will help cities grow their economies and create jobs. Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States, and American trade supports 41 million jobs. American workers are better trained and more innovative than any other workforce on the planet. Rebuilding manufacturing capabilities will create jobs and help the United States prepare for the next global supply-chain shock. Expanding industrial capacity will position the American economy to lead the world toward economic world recovery.

Modernizing trade agreements to create a level playing field by lowering tariffs on U.S.-made goods and promoting universal adoption, accountability, and genuine, ongoing enforcement of high labor and environmental standards will help American businesses sell products in expanding global markets.

U.S. metro areas play a critical role in American exports, accounting for nearly 90 percent of U.S. goods sold abroad and providing key infrastructure such as ports and intermodal facilities to efficiently move goods. Port and export-related jobs have 15 percent to 18 percent higher wage levels and therefore contribute to building a strong, vibrant middle class. Federal programs that assist small and medium-size businesses in exporting are crucial to a healthy economy.

International travelers stay longer and spend more than domestic travelers; they support artistic performances and cultural attractions. In 2019, almost 80 million international visitors came to the United States, spending more than \$196 billion. International visitors accounted for over 1.2 million jobs, providing opportunities to new immigrants, and generating \$33.6 billion in wages. The COVID-19 pandemic has paralyzed the travel industry, threatening jobs and tax revenues on an unprecedented scale.

Therefore, mayors call on the President and Congress to:

- Restore America's economy by fixing the Nation's ailing infrastructure, enacting an ambitious infrastructure program to jumpstart the economy, create good-paying jobs, and make the United States economy stronger and more resilient than before the pandemic.
- Successfully negotiate a comprehensive trade agreement with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- Enforce the Labor and Environmental provisions of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).
- Support high-standard trade deals with enforceable labor and environmental standards.
- Expand national programs to help small and medium-sized businesses export goods overseas.
- Support full funding for our Nation's arts, culture and tourism agencies, and support programs to encourage creative workers and creative businesses.
- Support expanding the Visa Waiver Program to facilitate travel, trade and education.



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