



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



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85TH ANNUAL MEETING

June 23-26, 2017 in Miami Beach, FL

2017 Adopted Resolutions

Energy

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Supporting a Cities-Driven Plan to Reverse Climate Change

WHEREAS, the Paris Agreement adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change specifically identifies the importance of local governments in the role of environmental protection; and

WHEREAS, research from the United States Conference of Mayors states that cities comprise 91% of the United States' Gross Domestic Product, placing Mayors at the center of marrying environmental protection with economic growth; and

WHEREAS, cities are already having to invest billions of dollars annually in infrastructure and support services to deal with climate change's impacts of heat waves, droughts, and torrential rain events; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency showed that aggressively combatting climate change would result in 12,000 fewer deaths in major U.S. cities due to extreme heat; up to \$2.8 billion in avoided flooding costs; and \$6.4 billion in avoided urban drainage costs by 2100; and

WHEREAS, the Clean Power Plan as proposed by the Obama Administration was not only designed to significantly move the United States towards its proposed Nationally Determined Contribution but also encourage cities to move forward with clean energy initiatives through the Clean Energy Incentive Program; and

WHEREAS, recent actions by the Trump Administration, including the rollback of Clean Power Plan regulations, the rollback of updated fuel efficiency standards, and steep cuts to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, although cities cannot formally “join” the Paris Agreement it is increasingly important for Mayors to commit to doing their part on climate action via aggressive policies and programs that reduce our environmental footprint while promoting a 21st century economy,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls upon the Trump Administration and Congress to support the fight against climate change by fully committing themselves to Paris Climate Accord, the Clean Power Plan, the Clean Energy Incentive Program, and other efforts that will provide cities the tools they need to combat climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayors of the United States Conference of Mayors commit to partnerships and convening that strengthen ties between cities around climate change.

Supporting Reauthorization/Full and Dedicated Funding of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants

WHEREAS, the nation faces unprecedented energy challenges, including rapidly escalating energy costs, over dependence on foreign sources of energy, and critical choices about energy resources that will affect the nation's future economic well-being and security; and

WHEREAS, ongoing federal investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy is critical to positioning America to be competitive in the global economy, increase American energy independence, build livable and sustainable communities, drive investment in new, clean energy solutions and create new, local jobs, aiding in our national economic recovery; and

WHEREAS, commercial, residential and public buildings are responsible for more than 40 percent of the nation’s energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and cities are best suited to improve and enforce building codes, foster community-scale renewable energy, and create other programs and incentives to increase efficiency and reduce energy use in commercial and residential buildings; and

WHEREAS, the transportation sector produces one third of the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions and cities can substantially reduce emissions and vehicle-miles traveled by promoting public transit and more effective land use and transportation planning; and

WHEREAS, cities have been laboratories of innovation, successfully pioneering and demonstrating cost-effective clean energy solutions, including increasing energy efficiency for public and private buildings, encouraging energy independence through the use of alternative energy sources, switching their fleets to alternative fuels and more fuel efficient vehicles; and building alternative infrastructure to encourage their citizens to utilize other forms of greener transportation; and

WHEREAS, local governments have also implemented programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions through re-utilization of resources, reduction of energy consumption, and improving the environment through waste reduction and recycling programs, encouraging waste-to-energy technology, and capturing methane in landfills; and

WHEREAS, over 1,060 mayors have signed The United States Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, pledging their commitment to reducing their communities' greenhouse gas emissions by 7 percent from their 1990 levels; and

WHEREAS, The United States Conference of Mayors has endorsed a national goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, successful local government programs could be expanded or replicated throughout the country, thereby resulting in nationwide reductions in energy use which will increase our nation's energy independence and competitiveness while improving our national and global environment; and

WHEREAS, many cities are not able to expand or implement the full range of these types of programs due to budgetary constraints; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, by supporting these types of local activities, would demonstrate its commitment to help solve some of the most important issues facing the nation - energy independence, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving the environment; and

WHEREAS, The United States Conference of Mayors has previously conceived and called for the creation of an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program that would provide money directly to city, county and state governments to implement innovative energy saving and environmental strategies; and

WHEREAS, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (P. L.110-140) established a new EECBG program at the U. S. Department of Energy, authorizing \$2 billion annually over five fiscal years in formula grants to cities, counties, and states to develop energy efficiency strategies to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), a law established to stimulate the economy and create over three million jobs, provided \$3.2 billion for the EECBG program to develop and implement energy efficiency programs in their communities; and

WHEREAS, local governments are successfully utilizing their ARRA EECBG funds to implement local strategies that create jobs, save energy, promote renewable sources, and cut greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 "Clean Energy Solutions for America's Cities" report commissioned by The United States Conference of Mayors found that 85% of cities felt that ARRA EECBG funding was important to their city's energy efforts and 87% supported the appropriation of additional EECBG funding in future years; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 “Successful City Initiatives with Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Funding” report commissioned by The U.S. Conference of Mayors found that 62% of cities invested energy block grant funds in developing new programs that were not previously included in city energy and climate plans and 87% expended a majority of their grant dollars on municipal projects and operations, such as improving city-owned buildings, upgrading streetlights, or deploying renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, cities would benefit from knowing that a dedicated funding mechanism has been established for the EECBG to help them create better short and long-term energy efficiency and conservation strategies in their communities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors encourages Congress to reauthorize and appropriate full funding for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, while supporting higher authorization levels in future years.

Accelerating the Electrification of the US transportation Sector

WHEREAS, electricity is an underutilized, domestically-produced transportation fuel that can transform our nation’s transportation sector through the increased use of electric passenger and public transit vehicles, city and private sector fleets and other transportation facilities; and

WHEREAS, electric transportation can reduce harmful emissions associated with transportation, through improved energy efficiency and air quality, among other benefits; and

WHEREAS, increased electric transportation is an important part of a larger array of smart mobility solutions, including shared mobility models and automated vehicles that have the potential to reduce congestion and improve access to available transportation options within communities; and

WHEREAS, the successful expansion of electric transportation relies upon the buildout of new electric and other infrastructure whereby cities work more closely with electric utilities and technology providers to link intelligent transportation planning decisions more closely with energy and other infrastructure providers; and

WHEREAS, cities must continue to collaborate with their electric utilities and others to accelerate the deployment of electric transportation and its associated infrastructure in a manner that serves more residents and powers these systems with local energy resources including renewable energy sources where available,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on Congress and the Administration to work with cities on measures and actions that will further these needed collaborations as well as resources to support the expedited development of needed infrastructure to support the increased use electricity in the transportation sector; and

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors expressly encourages actions by electric utilities to expand investments in electric transportation to help ensure all citizens have access to and may take part in the benefits of electric transportation as well as spur innovation and technology deployment.

100% Renewable Energy in American Cities

WHEREAS, renewable energy represents an enormous economic opportunity for our nation and our nation's cities to create jobs in an emerging industry, increase economic security, expand prosperity for local residents, reduce air pollution and associated public health risks, reduce the strain on water resources, save consumers money, and address environmental justice challenges in communities; and

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" includes energy derived from wind, solar, geothermal, and wave technology; and

WHEREAS, some forms of biomass may be considered "renewable energy" after being evaluated for sustainability and environmental justice implications; and

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" specifically excludes energy derived from fossil fuels, nuclear, incineration of municipal and medical waste, and any large-scale future hydroelectric development; and

WHEREAS, the transition to renewable energy will improve air and water quality and protect the health of our families, particularly the most vulnerable across our communities; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Energy, the cost of wind power is down 41 percent since 2008 and solar costs are down between 54 percent and 64 percent in that same period; and

WHEREAS, more than twenty-five U.S. cities, including Columbia, SC, San Diego, CA, Salt Lake City, UT, and San Jose, CA have already adopted ambitious 100 percent clean, renewable energy goals, and six U.S. Cities, including Aspen, CO, Burlington, VT, Greensburg, KS, Kodiak Island, AK, and Rock Port, MO have already hit their targets to generate 100 percent of the energy used community-wide from clean, non-polluting and renewable sources; and

WHEREAS, individuals, families, businesses, and institutions throughout the nation seek greater energy freedom through the expansion of local and distributed energy resources like photovoltaic solar and electric vehicles; and

WHEREAS, rooftop solar, low-income community solar, energy efficiency, and demand control technologies offer the opportunity to equitably distribute resources, address poverty, stimulate new economic activity in our nation's cities, and lift up those most impacted by high energy costs; and

WHEREAS, actions by local government and businesses are already a significant driver of renewable energy growth and can put the country on track to meet its commitment to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports cities establishing a community-wide target of powering their communities with 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2035; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors proclaims its commitment to equity, affordability, public participation, and access for all people in America as cities pursue this transition to 100% clean, renewable energy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that priority should be given to the lowest cost measures to meet energy needs including efficiency, weatherization, cogeneration, district heating and cooling, decentralized electricity generation and smart grids/micro grids, the use of industrial waste heat, building controls, automated lighting, solar-powered hot water heaters and programs that create an energy-saving culture in our nation's cities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that given the economic development, job creation, and job training potential of clean, renewable energy, the transition to 100% clean, renewable energy should include structured mechanisms to include low-income citizens in the benefits to be derived from the transition, including creating quality careers adhering to local source hiring, a just transition for workers displaced by fossil fuel reduction, equitable access through ownership and benefits to create new opportunity for historically marginalized communities, and affordable clean energy options.

Cities and Energy Technology Innovation

WHEREAS, technological innovation is providing America's cities and communities with new tools to improve quality of life for their citizens, and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of their communities; and,

WHEREAS, such innovation encompass a wide range of technological solutions to improve city services and enhance the quality of life for city residents; and

WHEREAS, such investments, driven by city-defined goals and objectives, especially in the energy sector which has the potential to improve public health, air quality, and economic growth; and

WHEREAS, partnerships with other governments and the private sector can support cities as they strive to overcome resource constraints and other impediments; and

WHEREAS, public-private partnerships especially can help accelerate the pace of new technology deployments and other solutions benefiting cities and their residents; and interests, are efficiently integrated, and maximize the benefit to the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, energy infrastructure is one of the foundational elements to the deployment of new technologies especially when such technologies are locally, appropriate and beneficial,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors will work with policymakers and community leaders and institutions, including electric and other utilities, technology companies and universities on the local, state, and federal levels to develop policies that facilitate and accelerate the development of smart cities and ensure all communities benefit from its technologies.

In Support of Increasing Federal Assistance for Local Government Energy Assurance and Energy Security Efforts

WHEREAS, the economic resiliency of cities and local economies across America is of paramount importance, and energy supply shortages often have dramatic negative financial impacts on American communities; and

WHEREAS, keeping local government energy services on-line during future energy emergencies can result in saved lives; and

WHEREAS, energy shortages at the local government level can be considered a major national security issue, depending on the severity of the shortage; and

WHEREAS, local government energy supplies are usually inextricably tied to the fate of their local energy providers, and maintaining basic government services to the general public is expected from the community and is also of increasing importance to public officials; and

WHEREAS, power to communities is sometimes not restored for more than a week due to major natural disasters, communities need the ability to provide important services during that time period, and they need to plan for extended power outages that last beyond the traditional one to three days used in the past; and

WHEREAS, the federal government is devoting major financial resources to developing new energy assurance-related technologies through national laboratories and other institutions, and these technologies are largely unknown to many local government officials; and

WHEREAS, recent natural disasters such as the \$50 billion Hurricane Sandy on our East Coast and horrific Oklahoma tornadoes are expected generally to increase in frequency, duration and severity in the near future, further straining our aging electrical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, local government resources available for purchasing back-up power and emergency management-related equipment are severely strained due to revenue shortfalls associated with our reeling national economy; and

WHEREAS, the federal government and private utilities are modernizing the nation's electrical grid, but at a relatively slow pace given the need for upgrading equipment and protecting American lives; and

WHEREAS, recent actions by the Trump Administration and Congress continue to reduce federal financial support for local government energy assurance efforts through the U.S. Department of Energy and other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, lessons learned through local government energy assurance planning efforts funded in the past through the federal government need to be immediately shared with other communities; and

WHEREAS, helping local governments prepare for, and mitigate against, future energy shortages resulting from natural disasters is an important national priority; and

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration and Congress have an excellent opportunity to create jobs, improve safety and save lives by assisting local governments with the diversification of their energy supplies through distributed energy resources and other federally-funded technologies and programs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors encourages the federal government to devote significant financial resources to local government energy assurance efforts in the coming fiscal year, while working with Mayors to establish new energy assurance planning initiatives that result in improved safety, increased resiliency and economic competitiveness at the local government level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges the federal government to participate directly with local policymakers and leaders in the development of local energy assurance plans that help governments identify their key assets and services, while also developing ordinances, regulations, technical assistance teams and best practice compendiums that help communities become more resilient with the ability to better withstand future energy shortages.

Require That the U.S. Department of Energy Focus on the Safe Treatment and Storage of Radioactive Waste On-Site Where Appropriate to Mitigate Health and Environmental Risks of Transporting Low, High, and Mixed Level Waste to Offsite Treatment Facilities

WHEREAS, The United States Conference of Mayors recognizes that the treatment of nuclear waste is a regional and national issue that requires the collaboration of all levels of government to develop practical and safe solutions; and

WHEREAS, transporting low, high, and mixed level radioactive materials across the nation on major interstates, highways and railways will expose countless communities across the country to hazardous radiation; and

WHEREAS, a truck or railway accident or terrorist attack involving transported low, high and mixed level nuclear waste would render entire cities and surrounding areas uninhabitable; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, our nation's crumbling infrastructure and system of highways, roads, and bridges is rated a D+; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Energy is currently permitting shipments of low-level and mixed low-level radioactive waste to Las Vegas, Nevada for burial at the Nevada National Security Site from several states across the nation, including California, Idaho, Maryland, New Mexico, Ohio, Tennessee, Washington, Florida, and Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration recently requested \$120 million in its FY 2018 Budget Proposal to restart licensing activities for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository, which would ultimately increase the amount of waste being transported across the nation; and

WHEREAS, the House Committee on Energy and Science recently held a hearing on draft legislation titled the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017 which would streamline the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Department of Energy began a consent-based siting initiative to site nuclear waste storage and disposal facilities. This initiative was the result of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future, a bipartisan group tasked with studying waste disposal. This process would ensure that all Americans, including state and local governments, tribes, stakeholders and the community would have a say in the siting of waste disposal. The Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act has been introduced in the 115th Congress to codify the process; and

WHEREAS, in the event of a radiological emergency in or near a city, significant impacts could create a financial burden of millions of dollars to the emergency management agencies charged with protecting the health, safety and welfare of its citizens and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the recent collapse of a tunnel used to store radioactive waste at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington has raised fresh concerns about aging facilities and the potential for release of radiation (even though none was released at Hanford),

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. Department of Energy to focus on the treatment and storage of radioactive waste on-site or to move towards a consent-based approach to avoid further health and environmental impacts from the transportation of waste produced from other decommissioned nuclear facilities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls upon its membership to be knowledgeable about the U.S. Department of Energy's planned routes, quantities, and timing to ship radioactive waste to Nevada.

Supporting Onshore and Offshore Wind Energy Production

WHEREAS, wind energy can help the nation reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, diversify its energy supply, provide cost-competitive electricity, and stimulate revitalization of key sectors of the economy by investing in infrastructure and creating skilled jobs; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Energy wind accounted for 31% of all new generation capacity installed in the U.S. from 2008 through 2014; and

WHEREAS, this metric is proof that the renewable energy sector is capable of boosting economic growth while enhancing our energy supply; and

WHEREAS, when it comes to America's energy future, we should be doing everything we can to generate as much of our power from domestic sources as possible; and

WHEREAS, America needs a secure and diverse supply of home-grown energy resources to power the nation and to create high skilled jobs; and

WHEREAS, despite this booming expansion of onshore renewable energy facilities, the United States still lags industrialized countries when it comes to development of an offshore wind industry; and

WHEREAS, America's coastal cities, with their complex infrastructure, are major consumers of power; and

WHEREAS, America's cities need new sources of job growth to reduce high unemployment rates that persist in many of the nation's urban areas; and

WHEREAS, the Bush and Obama Administrations alike expressed their intention to close the gap in offshore wind capacity and took proactive steps in furtherance of this objective, including a robust permitting system to make land on the outer continental shelf available for offshore wind development; and

WHEREAS, the development of the wind energy industry including, the offshore wind energy industry, has great potential to become a new sector that can add billions of dollars to the U.S. economy and create tens of thousands of high-skilled jobs that cannot be outsourced overseas; and

WHEREAS, wind energy is developing an impressive record of job creation, and the majority of wind turbines installed in the U.S. last several years were built in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, in Northern Europe, there are more than eighty active offshore wind farms that supply electricity to millions and have created tens of thousands of jobs; and

WHEREAS, in May of this year, Senators Edward J. Markey and Sheldon Whitehouse, along with Congressman Jim Langevin, introduced the Offshore Wind Industries for New Development Act (the "Offshore WIND Act"), which would extend the Investment Tax Credit ("ITC") through 2025, a measure that would hasten the development of the offshore wind industry by helping to defray the significant upfront capital costs of wind farm development; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports greater federal, state and local investment in the development of wind energy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports a continuation of the ITC for as long as necessary to secure the long-term viability of the domestic wind energy industry, including the offshore wind energy industry, and more specifically, the passage of the Offshore Wind Act.

In Support of Research and Coordination for a Better Understanding of Ocean Acidification and its Potential Impacts on Coastal Communities

WHEREAS, research shows that the concentration of carbon dioxide in Earth's atmosphere has significantly increased as a consequence of greenhouse gas emissions and land use changes; and

WHEREAS, this increase is raising the average acidity of the ocean and altering seawater chemistry in a process known as ocean acidification, owing to the ocean's role in regulating the global carbon cycle by absorbing vast quantities of atmospheric carbon dioxide; and

WHEREAS, the chemistry of the ocean is therefore changing at an unprecedented rate in ways that will affect a substantial proportion of ocean plants and animals such as by decreasing the growth and survival of corals and shellfish, disrupting the life histories and behavior of numerous other species, and threatening the community dynamics of marine ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, our coasts support millions of American jobs, sustain emerging offshore industries, and provide a range of vital resources and services that substantially contribute to our nation's economy by producing natural resources, attracting recreation and tourism, naturally protecting coastlines, and generating tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that job losses and subsequent economic costs will follow as ocean acidification continues to damage marine habitats, alter the availability of natural resources, and change the flow of ocean benefits to humans, thus exacerbating challenges for many regions that already possess little economic resilience; and

WHEREAS, successful regional management and adaptation from an ecosystem-wide perspective can help preserve sustainable ecosystem function and economic yields, especially in those communities that are most sensitive to climate-related impacts; and

WHEREAS, a better understanding of ocean acidification and its implications could allow leaders to plan for rapidly changing environmental conditions, thereby helping minimize the potential harm to vulnerable communities, local businesses, and economies; and

WHEREAS, cities are at the forefront of preparing for, mitigating against, and responding to the consequences of environmental changes like ocean acidification; and

WHEREAS, mayors are well-positioned to contribute to local, regional, and national scientific, risk assessment, and decision making efforts regarding natural resources that benefit communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors recognizes the threats that ocean acidification poses to communities in the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors encourages efforts to decrease atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions, the root cause of ocean acidification; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors encourages research and monitoring on effective adaptation strategies for ocean acidification that will aid decision making intended to strengthen communities that receive benefits from ocean systems; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges Congress to support research assessing the vulnerability of our coastal communities to the impacts of ocean acidification,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that U.S. cities stand ready to work with federal, state, and international governmental and non-governmental partners to share information relevant to community vulnerability and dependence on ocean resources, to collaboratively identify regionally appropriate adaptation strategies addressing ocean acidification, and to take measurable steps towards protecting coastal communities from the consequences of ocean acidification.