



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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President Bush, Senate Majority Leader, and Speaker of the House Headline 72nd Winter Meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors

Mayors Release Blueprint for America's Future and New Homeland Security Survey

Washington, D.C. – More than 250 of the nation's mayors met with top Administration officials, including President George W. Bush, Senate Majority Leader, Bill Frist, and Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert, during 72nd Winter Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

"For the first time in the history of this meeting, mayors heard from the President, Senate Majority Leader, and Speaker of the House all in the same week," said Conference President Mayor James A. Garner. "Mayors welcomed the opportunity to hear from the Administration on several issues affecting our cities."

The day after the State of the Union Address, mayors released the "*U.S. Mayors '04 Presidential Agenda for America's Future*", a five-point plan outlining key priorities mayors want addressed during the Presidential primaries and into the general election. In the Mayors '04 Metro Agenda, called **Keeping America Strong**, the nation's mayors called on all presidential candidates to seriously consider and respond to these five points:

- homeland security
- infrastructure investment
- job growth for the future
- targeted tax incentives to foster Public/Private Partnerships
- expanded healthcare coverage

"Presidential elections are the single greatest opportunity for America to direct its future. As mayors, we invite the Presidential candidates to engage with us on these issues that are vital to keeping America strong," Garner said. "This is not a partisan agenda. This is our blueprint."

Also, during the Winter Meeting, mayors released a new homeland security report that revealed 76 percent of cities surveyed are still left empty-handed and have not received any money from the largest homeland security program designed to assist first responders such as police, fire, and other local officials.

"This new survey shows that there are still too many cities that have not received funds," said Garner. "As leaders of cities which must be prepared to move at any time to higher terrorism threat levels – just as we did one month ago – this is completely unacceptable."

The nationwide survey, entitled, the ***Second Mayors' Report to the Nation: Tracking Homeland Security Funds Sent to the 50 State Governments***, based on responses from 215 cities representing all 50 states and Puerto Rico, assesses the flow of federal homeland security money through the states to the cities. The survey examines ten different homeland security programs designed to strengthen cities' ability to protect their residents.

"We will continue to closely monitor the flow of federal funds from the states to the cities. As I always say, the money went to the states by Federal Express, but went to cities by Pony Express," Garner said.

During the three-day meeting, mayors also heard from other Congressional officials and business leaders on a variety of issues, including Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director (CDC), Dr. Julie Louise Gerberding, music legend Tony Bennett, actor and author, Henry Winkler; Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell and Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley, among others.

The Conference will end with a Closing Luncheon featuring Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The U.S. Mayors '04 Metro Agenda and the new Homeland Security Survey can be found online at the U.S. Conference of Mayors website, usmayors.org.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

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