2014 Winter Meeting Preview:
SMITH: INNOVATIONS THAT LEAD

President Barack Obama
House Transportation Chairman Bill Shuster
Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx
Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker
Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson
Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz

Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez
HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan
Education Secretary Arne Duncan
HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman
Mexican Ambassador Eduardo Medina-Mora

USCM President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith
USCM Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson
USCM 2nd Vice President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Welcome to our 82nd Winter Meeting!

This year finds an unusual number of newly elected mayors present at our Winter Meeting. We welcome the new mayors.

Also in 2014 at our 82nd Winter Meeting, we find a high percentage of “first-timers” attending. For those mayors who have never been to one of our national meetings, we welcome you and encourage you to sign up now for our 82nd Annual Conference of Mayors in Dallas – June 20 to 23.

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings is here at our Winter Meeting, promoting, and beyond that promotion, he’s laying out the facts on Dallas, Texas, which has emerged as a world-class city with a world-class mayor. We thank Mayor Rawlings for his continued commitment to make our 82nd Annual Conference of Mayors one that will be most meaningful, productive and last but not least – enjoyable.

Conference President Scott Smith, since taking the gavel in Las Vegas last June, has been most successful in proving that without question, it’s the mayors, working with their individual business communities, who have led us out of the greatest recession since the Great Depression. As your President, he has traveled across this nation pushing the metro agenda with our main message to all, that we must keep our metro economies strong with smart governmental investments and business partners. Mayor Smith continues to remind all that our national economy is driven and supported by our metro economies, and if we want to make our national economy strong, we must be smarter about how we invest and support our metro economies.

Conference President Smith announced in June a new priority for our organization – Trade with the Americas. Since June, we have strengthened our relationship with Brazil and Mexico.

Mayor Smith’s priority matches what you will hear from our new Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. Mayor Smith and I met with her earlier this year. She comes to us in a special session Wednesday afternoon to announce a new initiative that supports President Smith’s Trade with the Americas. We will also hear from The Honorable Eduardo Medina-Mora, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States.

Since June, we’ve continued our work with officials, federal and local, of Mexico. In September, Mayor Smith and I met with the Foreign Ministry of Mexico to discuss how we can all work together at the local level to increase trade and reduce trade barriers between Mexico and the United States.

Our Trade with the Americas priority gains ground at our Winter Meeting and it will continue as we go forward with the support of our mayors across the nation, the leadership of President Smith, and with the strong support of our dynamic Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker.

We are pleased that President Obama and his team have invited all of our mayors to the White House for Thursday afternoon sessions culminating with a meeting with the President and Cabinet Members. I have sent all of you information on this part of our Winter Meeting.

Again, welcome to the 82nd Annual Winter Meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors. I look forward to seeing you soon here in Washington.
285 Mayors to Promote Local Innovation, Smart Policy, Investments at 82nd Winter Meeting

By Paul Leroux

Led by Conference President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, the nation’s mayors will come together for the 82nd Winter Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors in Washington (DC) January 22-24. More than 285 mayors, including over 50 newly elected mayors, are scheduled to be in our nation’s capital, where they will engage with nine Cabinet members, several top CEOs, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster, and, in a special White House session on January 23, President Barack Obama. Key themes to be covered over the course of the meeting will include:

- Expanding U.S. export opportunities through trade in the Americas;
- Promoting manufacturing growth and public-private partnerships;
- Strengthening the nation’s infrastructure by adopting a long-term surface transportation bill and modernizing airports, ports, and transit;
- Protecting key parts of the federal relationship with cities, including tax-exempt municipal bonds and the Community Development Block Grant;
- Reducing the burdens on local economies by passing the Marketplace Fairness Act and reducing unfunded mandates; and
- Reforming immigration to build the economy, eliminate incentives for illegal entry, deal humanely with undocumented residents, and keep families together.

Innovations that Lead

Smith has asked a number of mayors to share best practices through “Innovation Moments.” These will highlight local ideas across a broad spectrum of topics including pension reform, food policy, social media, early childhood education, disaster preparedness, applying business practices to government, and harnessing student innovation.

Washington Leaders

During their three-day meeting, the mayors will have the opportunity to discuss local innovations and federal policies to support them with a wide array of national political leaders. These include:

- President Barack Obama
- House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster
- Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker
- Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan
- Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx
- Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz
- Education Secretary Arne Duncan
- Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson
- Labor Secretary Thomas Perez
- Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
- U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman
- Mexican Ambassador to the United States Eduardo Medina-Mora
- And many more…

Conversations with these leaders will take place in plenary sessions, as well as committee and task force meetings. Secretary Johnson’s address to the closing plenary session on Friday, January 24 will be among his first since taking office late last month.

New Mayors

Smith and the Conference of Mayors leadership are proud to announce that over 50 new mayors from around the country will attend the Winter Meeting. A special breakfast session will be held for new mayors and first time mayoral attendees on Wednesday morning. Smith has also asked a few new mayors to bring brief greetings at various points in the meeting.

Data from the Nation’s Cities

The mayors will release key research reports on metro economies and local innovations while in Washington. These include employment and economic growth projections for 2014 in all of the nation’s 363 metropolitan areas, as well as a clean energy survey that demonstrates local action to embrace innovation and reduce consumption in over 250 cities.

Transportation Reauthorization

In light of one of the Conference of Mayors most critical priorities, Smith has invited the top transportation leaders in both Congress and the Administration to engage in a frank and bipartisan discussion on reauthorization of the nation’s surface transportation bill, which expires later this year. Transportation Secretary and former Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx will address a plenary session and the Conference of Mayors Transportation and Communications Committee on Thursday, January 23. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) will address the closing plenary on Friday, January 24.

Business Leaders

Mayors Business Council Chair Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster will preside over the Thursday, January 23 Mayors and Business Leaders breakfast, which will feature the leaders of major corporations such as Starbucks, Siemens, and Walgreens. The Winter Meeting will also feature several CEOs, including title sponsor Citi’s CEO for North America William J. Mills, Walmart USA’s CEO Bill Simon, and Philips Lighting North America’s President and CEO Bruno Biasiotta.

Awards and Best Practices

In recognition of the spirit of mayoral innovation, a number of important awards will be presented at the meeting. These include:

- USCM National Summer Youth Jobs Challenge Awards (Thursday)

See WINTER MEETING on page 4
• USCM Leadership Award: Leading the Climb to a Bright Financial Future, Sponsored by Great-West Financial (Thursday)
• Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards, Sponsored by American Beverage Association (Thursday)
• 2014 National Awards for Local, State and Citizen Arts Leadership (Friday)
• Dollarwise Financial Literacy Awards, sponsored by Bank of America (Friday)
• USCM-Scotts Miracle GRO1000 Gardens and Green Spaces Grant Awards (Friday)
• USCM-Purdue Pharma Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Awards (Friday)

Other Important Sessions
There will be informative Standing Committee meetings, Task Force meetings, and workshops over the course of the three days, including a gathering of the Women Mayors who will meet on Wednesday afternoon.
A full agenda and list of pre-registered mayors can be viewed at usmayors.org.

Conference of Mayors to Celebrate Arts Leadership

2014 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards – Population Under 100,000
Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol

2014 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards – Population Over 100,000
Akron Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic

2014 National Award for State Arts Leadership
Michigan Governor Rick Snyder

2014 Citizen Artist Award
Actress Fran Drescher

United States Conference of Mayors

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder

Actress Fran Drescher

Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol

Akron Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic
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2014 WINTER MEETING GUEST SPEAKERS

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Richard Cordray
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Labor, Immigration, and Employee Benefits Senior Vice President Randy Johnson
U.S. Department of Justice Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs Karol Mason
Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe
U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office Director Ronald L. Davis
Washington (DC) Metropolitan Police Chief Cathy Lanier

U.S. Army Judge Advocate General LTG Flora D. Darpino
U.S. Army Surgeon General and Commanding General U.S. Army Medical Command LTG Patricia D. Horoho
Major League Soccer President and Deputy Commissioner Mark Abbott
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Chancellor Charles Bantz
University of Akron President Luis Proenza
Citi North America Chief Executive Officer William J. Mills

Citi Community Development and Microfinance Global Director Bob Annibale
DuPont Public Relations Manager Mary Kate Campbell
Walmart USA CEO Bill Simon
American Management Services, Inc. Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Lou Mosca
Great-West Financial Government Markets Vice President Brant Neese
Colonial Life Vice President of Sales Public Sector Carey Adamson
Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, fulfilling a major tenet of his recent campaign, has signed the first Executive Order of his new administration, raising the minimum wage for city workers to $15 an hour. In commenting on the Order, Murray said, “I believe Seattle should be a model – the city itself – for the rest of the employers in this city and in this community.”

In addition to the Executive Order, Murray announced the creation of an Income Inequality Advisory Committee that will look at raising the minimum wage city wide and also identify other recommendations to address income inequality issues throughout the city.
In appreciation for your sponsorship of the U.S. Conference of Mayors 82\textsuperscript{nd} Winter Meeting

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By David W. Burns

The Get Your Business Online City Challenge has been in full swing since the program’s launch in June 2013 with mayors helping to bring more small businesses to the web with a free website for a year. In this time, over 85 cities have signed on to the challenge, worked with their local partners, and have started to do incredible things.

In Redwood City (CA), they’re deploying their Economic Development department to meet with small businesses to encourage them to get a web site. In Hamilton (OH), Mayor Pat Moeller is working with their small business development center to spread the word.

Revere (MA) Mayor Daniel Rizzo has challenged his city government to partner with their chamber of commerce and local schools to encourage businesses to get online. Garland (TX) Mayor Douglas Athas has been using social media and made a video to promote the program.

The United States Conference of Mayors and Google have identified getting small businesses online as a priority. Ninety-seven percent of internet users look for goods and services online, while 58 percent of businesses do not have an online presence at all. Businesses with an online presence are likely to grow 40 percent faster.

For mayors attending the 82nd Winter Meeting, the Get Your Business Online Team will be on site to help you record a professionally-produced video about your participation in the City Challenge—a great resource you can distribute to local media outlets, post on your website, or share via social media.

To secure your own recording session, go to usmayors.org/gybo/psa and sign up today!

If you haven’t done so already, join over 85 mayors and sign up for the Get Your Business Online City Challenge. You can learn more about the challenge and sign up online at usmayors.org/gybo.

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The Municipal Waste Management Association
The environmental affiliate of The United States Conference of Mayors
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Most City Priorities Receive Level Funding or Slight Increases Under Omnibus Spending Agreement

By an overwhelming majority, the House voted 359 to 67 to approve a $1.1 trillion Fiscal Year 2014 Omnibus spending bill on January 15 that will keep federal agencies and programs operating through September 30. The Senate approved the bill by a vote of 72 to 26 on January 16. The bipartisan measure is the result of intense negotiations over the last month between the Chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees – Representative Hal Rogers (KY) and Senator Barbara Mikulski (MD). Many local priorities received increases while others were funded at or near last year’s funding levels.

Disagreement over spending levels forced a 16-day government shut down last year and prevented members of Congress from reaching agreement on the 12 regular appropriations bills that funds all federal efforts. With the 2014 Fiscal Year beginning on October 1 of last year, several temporary spending measures had to be approved to keep things operating until a final spending bill could be adopted.

Included in the final Omnibus is additional funding to reduce the level of sequestration cuts approved in the 2011 Budget Control Act, which called for across-the-board cuts starting in January in both defense and domestic programs. The additional funding agreed to in last year’s two-year budget deal made $45 billion available to soften the impact of the sequestration cuts. As a result many key city priority programs received slight increases or funding at or near last year’s funding level. Community Development Block Grants received $3.030 billion, a slight decrease of 1.3 percent compared to last year. This is significant because the final amount is more than the $2.748 billion requested by the Administration, and the $1.6 billion funding level approved last year in the House appropriations bill. The Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Section 8) program was increased from $165 million to $180 million. The State Homeland Security Grant program was funded at $466 million and the Urban Area Security Initiative was funded at $600 million, both slightly higher than last year.

For job training, the Omnibus bill provides $2.6 billion for Workforce Investment Act Grants to States, an increase of $121 million over last year. It also includes $270 million for Veterans Employment and Training, an increase of $19 million. For education programs, the Omnibus provides $14.4 billion for the Title I/Disadvantage Schools program, an increase of $625 million. It also provides $11.473 billion for Special Education State Grants, an increase of $498 million over last year. The Clean Water State Revolving Funds and the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, funded via the Environmental Protection Agency, were increased. A total of $2.35 billion was included for both programs, $1.448 billion for Clean Water and $907 million for Drinking Water.

Below is a more detailed summary of funds included in the 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill for a variety of programs of interest to Mayors, listed by major categories.

Community Development and Housing

Community Development Block Grants—The bill includes $3.030 billion for CDBG, which is a slight decrease of 1.3 percent from last year’s funding level of $3.071. This is significant when compared to the $2.748 billion requested for the program by the Administration, and even more significant when compared to the $1.6 billion approved last year by the House in its version of the 2014 appropriations bill. In the end, both the Administration’s request and the House recommendation did not prevail. This is due in large part to the tireless efforts on behalf of CDBG.

The Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Section 8) program received a $1 billion increase, from $18 billion to $19 billion. The Public Housing Capital Fund is increased from $1.8 billion to $1.9 billion, the Public Housing Operation Fund is increased from $4 billion to $4.4 billion, and Homeless Assistance Grants is increased from $1.9 billion to $2.1 billion.

Criminal and Social Justice/ Homeland Security

Law Enforcement Assistance—While overall funding for COPS hiring grants increased slightly from $165 million in FY 2013 to $180 million this year (with $29 million of this earmarked for specific purposes), the COPS Office did not receive the $150 million for a comprehensive school safety initiative requested by the President. Instead the Omnibus provides $75 million to the National Institute of Justice, specifying that $50 million of that be used for pilot grants to improve school safety, but not for hiring school resources officers. Byrne Justice Assistance Grants received a slight increase to $376 million, with $31 million of this earmarked for
specific programs. Second Chance Reen-try grants are increased from $63 million last year to $67.5 million.

**Homeland Security**—Once again the appropriations bill rejected the Presi-dent’s proposal to combine the various homeland security grants programs into a single National Preparedness Grant Program. The Conference of Mayors has led a coalition of local government, first responder, and emergency management groups which have opposed this propos-al and asked appropriators to include the language contained in the bill. The Omnibus provides $466 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program, $600 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative, $100 million for public transportation security (with $10 million earmarked for Amtrak), $100 million for port security—all funded at levels slightly more than was available last year. The appropriators bill would allow the Department of Homeland Security to increase the number of areas funded through the Urban Area Security Initi-ative so long as it can demonstrate that it is effectively targeting funds to those areas at greatest risk. In addition the bill delays certain premium increases in the National Flood Insurance Program.

**Job Training**

**Job Training**—The bill includes $2.6 billion, an increase of $121 million, for Workforce Investment Act Grants to States to provide job training skills and assistance to low-skilled adults, dislocated workers, and low-income youth with bar-riers to employment.

**Veterans Employment and Training**—The bill includes $270 million, an increase of $19 million, to expand employment services to transitioning service-members, veterans with disabilities, and their spouses and caregivers.

**Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program Integrity**—The bill includes a mini-mum of $80 million, an increase of $16 million, to conduct reemployment and eligibility assessments and UI improper payment reviews. This level is projected to save State UI trust funds an estimated $315 million by helping claimants exit the UI program faster and avoid exhausting their benefits.

**Education**

**Title I/Disadvantaged Schools**—The bill provides $14.4 billion for Title I funding. These funds help schools, particularly those with concentrations of eco-nomically disadvantaged students, meet high academic achievement standards. This increase of $625 million will sup-port services to an estimated 1 million additional students. Roughly 90 percent of the nation’s school districts receive title I funding.

**IDEA/Special Education**—The bill pro-vides $498 million more for Special Edu-cation State Grants than last year, enough to cover the costs of employing roughly 6,000 additional special education staff. Without this increase, state and local tax-payers would foot the bill for supporting services needed by special education stu-dents. The bill provides $11.473 billion for this program.

**Safe Schools**—The bill includes $140 million, an increase of $29 million, for activities that support safe school environ-ments. Funds may be used to develop or upgrade emergency management plans, create positive school climates and address issues of pervasive violence in some of our communities. Safe, posi-tive school environments can help reduce unhealthy student behavior, increase academic achievement, and counter the effects that violence can have on students.

**21st Century Community Learning Centers**—The bill provides $1.149 bil-lion, an increase of $58 million, to sup-port additional learning time programs in communities throughout our nation.

**Pell Grants**—The bill maintains level funding for the Pell Grant program at $22.8 billion. Combined with manda-tory funding, the total maximum award is estimated to rise by $85 to a total of $5,730. The Department of Education will announce the actual mandatory increase, which is based on calendar year 2013 Consumer Price Index data, next month. The number of recipients is estimated to increase by 186,000, from 9,125,000 in 2013-14 to 9,311,000 in 2014-15.

**First in the World**—The bill includes $75 million to create the First in the World Initiative in the Department of Education. This initiative will provide grants to colleg-es and universities to implement innova-tive and effective strategies that improve outcomes and reduce the net price paid by students.

**TRIO Programs**—The bill includes $834 million, an increase of $42 million, to help low-income and first generation college students plan, prepare for, and succeed in college through the TRIO pro-grams.

**Race to the Top - Preschool Development**—The bill allows $250 million to be used for grants to States to help them develop, enhance, or expand high quality preschool programs for children ages 4 and over and from low- and moderate income families or for other State early learning activities that improve the quality of such programs.

**Energy**

The FY 2014 Omnibus provides $10.2 billion for energy programs at the Depart-ment of Energy. This represents a $620 million increase above the FY 2013 enact-ed levels. The bill includes $1.9 billion for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, including programs such as advanced manufacturing, weatherization assistance and building technologies.

**Environment**

**EPA and Army Corps Funding**—Regarding programs at the Environmen-tal Protection Agency that are of interest to local governments, both the Clean Water State Revolving Funds and the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds got a boost from last year’s numbers. In total, there is $2.35 billion in grants to states for local drinking water and sewer construc-
A total of $815 million is provided for the Seniors’ Nutrition programs, which is equal to the FY 2013 enacted level and $46 million more than the post-sequester level, allowing full restoration of meals.

**Nutrition Assistance**

Included in the Omnibus bill is nearly $124.582 billion for Nutrition Assistance, of which more than $101.4 billion goes for food assistance programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Child Nutrition Programs. SNAP is funded at $82 billion, an increase of $4.830 billion above FY 2013 with $3 billion of the funds placed into a contingency fund. The Child Nutrition Program is funded at $19.3 billion, a decrease of $628 million available in FY 2013. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children (WIC) is funded at $6.716 billion, a decrease of about $140 million below FY 2013.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program is funded at $269 million for TEFAP commodities to be purchase with SNAP.

WIC Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program is funded at $16.5 million.

**National Endowment For The Arts And Humanities**

Both the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities saw level funding of $146 million. Funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services saw a slight decrease.

The state side program of the Land and Water Conservation Fund saw pre-sequester levels of $42 million, but added an additional $3 million for “competitive grants.” There was no funding for Urban Parks Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR).

**Transportation**

**Transit/Highways**—The agreement generally reflects spending levels set forth in the MAP-21 law for transit and highway investment. Providing a modest increase over last year, it provides about $8.6 billion in transit grant funding from the Mass Transit Account and another $2.1 billion in capital investment grants. In addition, local multi-modal and other projects will continue to be benefit from continued funding for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program, raising the funding level to $600 million (up from $474 million). Highway programs will receive nearly $41 billion, the same level set forth in the MAP-21, representing an increase of $557 million from the fiscal year.

**Amtrak/Intercity Rail**—Amtrak will receive $1.4 billion in funding for this fiscal year, an increase of $46 million over last year. While no new funds were provided for high-speed rail, $40 million in reprogrammed dollars will be available for competitive intercity passenger rail grants.

**Aviation**—The Federal Aviation Administration is funded $12.4 billion, $168 million below last year’s enacted level. Notably, the agreement provides continued funding for FAA’s NextGen, a multi-year investment to upgrade air traffic control system, and funds the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) that supports local airport capital programs at $3.35 billion.
Atlanta Mayor Reed Pledges Mayors’ Support for Investment in Transportation Infrastructure at House Hearing

By Kevin McCarty

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed helped kick off the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s hearing on the renewal of the nation’s surface transportation law (MAP21) at a January 14 hearing in Washington (DC), pledging the support of the nation’s mayors for additional resources to invest in transit and highway infrastructure while urging that Congress give more emphasis to the role of mayors in allocating available federal resources.

“As you prepare for renewal of the surface transportation law, I ask that we work together to expand our investment and avoid simply flatlining our commitments,” Reed said.

Appearing before the panel as Chair of the Conference of Mayors Transportation and Communications Committee, Reed spoke directly to its Chairman Bill Shuster (PA) and Ranking Member Nick Rahall (WV), pledging the support of mayors for greater investment in transportation infrastructure. “I also want you to know that mayors across America are prepared in a truly bipartisan way to help you carry this water and to get out all over the United States of America to explain why this work is so essential to the competitiveness of the greatest country on earth.”

Throughout his testimony and during a lengthy question and answer period, Reed spoke often about the importance of transportation infrastructure to metropolitan economies, the need to have “mayors at the table” and the leadership of Shuster and Rahall in moving the Committee forward in a bipartisan way in addressing the nation’s infrastructure challenges.

Metro Economies Key to U.S. Growth

“Increasingly, our success as a country will depend on how we address our transportation and other infrastructure needs in our metropolitan areas,” Reed said.

Citing the Conference’s research on metropolitan economies, he said, “At the Conference of Mayors, we found that over the next 30 years your metropolitan areas will grow by 84 million people. I do want to be clear when we use the word ‘metro’ we don’t simply mean cities, it is the city and the suburbs that surround cities. Mr. Chairman, this is more people than the current population of my home State of Georgia, your home State of Pennsylvania, Arizona, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia combined.”

“I think we can make the argument that the country’s future health is going to be tied to having very healthy metropolitan areas. And, we should take a bipartisan approach to this because this isn’t just about cities but about our suburbs as well,” he said.

Greater Local Role in Decision-making

Reed spoke often about the value of having mayors at the table, reminding the Committee members that they will see greater leveraging and return on the investment of federal dollars.

See TRANSPORTATION on page 16
“I also respectfully ask that you provide cities some flexibility and a larger role at the table. We want to be partners with our Governors. We believe that when cities are directly at the table, along with Governors and states, that we can actually leverage more resources and make the dollars you provide states and cities go further,” he said.

In responding to a question from Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC), Reed said, “I need your help because mayors need to be at the table. When you don’t include your mayors, you are losing federal leverage and federal money. Your federal dollars don’t go as far.” As an example, Reed cited his Atlanta BeltLine project where the city’s investment of $365 million has already leveraged more than $1 billion in private investment. “I can get projects at the local level done faster than you can at the state or federal level,” he added.

“In issue after issue, we think we can make a case that we will be a strong partner to you. And, we also think that the bill you are moving will provide more verifiable jobs, if we get a long-term bill, than almost any bill that will come through Congress,” he said.

Praising Shuster and Rahall for their leadership and bipartisanship on the water resources bill, Reed said, “This Committee has the opportunity to play a powerful role (transportation renewal)… in expanding well-paying jobs when we need well-paying jobs and protecting our competitiveness. We can out compete anybody, but right now if we don’t start long-term planning, we are just giving it away. I think we are just giving our leadership position away.”

Shuster acknowledged Reed’s pledge of mayoral support for his Committee efforts, “I appreciate your commitment to helping us go out across the country to educate the American people and I think this is where it starts and moves into the halls of Congress. I appreciate that commitment.”

Joining with Reed at the hearing, called “Building the Foundation for Surface Transportation Reauthorization,” were National Governors Association Chair Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, Caterpillar Inc. Group President Stuart Levenick, and Amalgamated Transit Union International President Lawrence Hanley.

In her testimony, Fallin spoke to the importance of the transportation partnership. “Federal, state and local governments must partner to invest in quality infrastructure to meet our needs.” During her comments, she also urged House members to preserve tax-exempt bond financing, citing its importance to support infrastructure.

“At the Conference of Mayors, we found that over the next 30 years your metropolitan areas will grow by 84 million people…. Mr. Chairman, this is more people than the current population of my home State of Georgia, your home State of Pennsylvania, Arizona, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia combined.”

– Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed
Seven U.S. mayors visited Saudi Arabia, December 6-13, 2013, as guests of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington (DC). The Embassy organized and funded the mission of U.S. mayors, assisted by The United States Conference of Mayors.

Led by Hallandale Beach Mayor Joy Cooper, the delegation included mayors William Bell of Birmingham, Shane Bemis of Gresham, Beth Van Duyne of Irving, Lori Moseley of Miramar, Setti Warren of Newton, and Bryan Barnett of Rochester Hills.

The goal was to give U.S. mayors the opportunity to learn first-hand about the Saudi Arabian economy, government, educational system, culture, and people, through meetings with high-ranking Saudi government officials, businesspeople, museum officials, and others.

Cooper said, “This visit to Saudi Arabia was an incredible opportunity to learn a great deal about its economy, government, people and educational system. The United States and Saudi Arabia are long-time friends and allies. On behalf of our delegation, I would like to express our great appreciation to the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington [DC] for making this experience possible.”

Mayors Meet with U.S. Embassy, Government Officials in Riyadh

The delegation spent December 6-9 in the capital, Riyadh, located in the central part of the nation. The workweek in the Kingdom is Sunday through Thursday. Thus, on Sunday, December 8, the delegation started the day with a briefing from the U.S. Charge D’Affaires Tim Lenderking at the United States Embassy in Riyadh. Consular staff gave an overview of diplomatic issues and insights on the current U.S. priorities in the region.

During the trip, the delegation met with a variety of national and local governmental officials including His Royal Highness Minister Dr. Mansour bin Miteb, the Minister of Municipal and Royal Affairs who provided an insightful discussion on the role of Mayors and how spending is allocated through their national government.

Mayors were given a presentation at the Saudi Arabian Investment Authority (SAGIA) by His Royal Highness Prince Saud bin Khalid Al-Faisal, Deputy Governor. The main objective of the authority is to oversee investment affairs in the kingdom, including foreign investment.

For the first time, mayors visited Princess Nourah University, the largest women-only university in the world. Like other officials with whom the delegation met, Her Excellency Dr. Huda bint Mohammad Al-Ameel expressed great optimism for the U.S.-Saudi Arabian relationship in the future, especially as thousands of students matriculate at U.S. colleges and universities as part of the King Abdullah Scholarship Program.

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Mayors concluded their day with a visit to the National Museum and had the opportunity to experience traditional Saudi cuisine.

Consultative Council, Mayor of Riyadh

Mayors started their day with a presentation from senior officials at the Saudi Arabia Industrial Property Authority (MODON). MODON is responsible for developing and supervising industrial estates and technological zones in the Kingdom.

The mayors met His Excellency Mohammed Al-Jafi, Deputy Chairman of the Shoura Consultative Council (Saudi Parliament), as well as both female and male members of several Consultative Council committees. The Consultative Council proposes new laws and amends existing ones. It consists of 150 members, appointed by the King for four-year terms that can be renewed.

His Excellency Mayor Eng. Abdullah A. M. Al-Moqbel, Mayor of Riyadh, led a discussion with the delegation and exchanged best practice ideas about shared local challenges in governing. The day concluded with a visit with senior officials at the Foreign Ministry and a tour at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies.

Eastern Province, ARAMCO

The delegation traveled to the Eastern Province for Tuesday meetings, where the mayors visited Saudi Aramco Headquarters and the Saudi Aramco Heritage Center. Aramco is a fully integrated, global petroleum and chemicals enterprise, and is the state-owned oil company of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Jeddah

The last two days were spent in Jeddah, a large seaport in western Saudi Arabia located on the Red Sea. The delegation visited the King Abdullah Economic City and touring King Abdullah University for Science and Technology.

On Thursday, mayors began their day with a visit with Jeddah Mayor Hani Aburas, who shared highlights of The Jeddah Strategic Plan that outlines the direction for Jeddah’s development for the next 20 years.

Following the meeting, mayors met with Jeddah Consul General for the United States of America Anne S. Casper, who gave insights into U.S. business interests and priorities in the region. They also met with the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry to discuss U.S. internship opportunities for Saudi Arabian students, to learn about the range of services offered to businesses in the area, and about business and investment opportunities in Jeddah. The Delegation concluded the day on a tour led by the Mayor of Old Jeddah and visited the Naseef House.

Throughout the visit to Saudi Arabia, the mayors were accompanied by Nail Al-Jubeir, Director of Information and Congressional Affairs, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Washington (DC), and Abdullah A. Alakeel of the Information Office.
By Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer

In the earlier part of the decade, three out of five Louisville adults were overweight or obese and at increased risk for chronic diseases associated with obesity. In addition, childhood obesity was steadily on the rise. To reverse these trends, in early 2004 the Louisville Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW), with the support of city leadership, convened a group of stakeholders to develop a response. Over the course of several months the stakeholder group set specific physical activity, nutrition and wellness goals, and identified environmental, systemic and policy changes necessary to transform Louisville into a model healthy community. The Mayor’s Healthy Hometown Movement (MHHM) was launched that September to achieve these goals. Under the leadership of Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer (a staunch program champion), the MHHM has evolved into an innovative, multifaceted program that not only addresses childhood obesity, but creates job opportunities and grooms the next generation of leaders in the process.

The mission of MHHM is to make Louisville one of the healthiest cities in America by making a healthy and active lifestyle an easy choice to make for all Louisvillians. To that end, MHHM works not only on inspiring individual change, but also on systemic and environmental change as well. Since its launch in 2004 the MHHM has been at the core of the implementation of many citywide initiatives, including:

• The placement of bike racks on every Transit Authority bus in Louisville;
• Nearly $500,000 in mini-grants over the past nine years to more than 100 faith-based and community groups, for initiatives to increase physical activity and healthy eating in Louisville neighborhoods;
• The Healthy-In-A-Hurry Corner Store initiative, a partnership between LMPHW and the YMCA of Greater Louisville to provide the infrastructure and expertise for corner stores in low-income neighborhoods to carry fresh fruits and vegetables; and
• The Healthy Hometown Restaurant Menu Labeling Initiative, a program to encourage restaurants to voluntarily post nutritional and caloric information on the foods they serve.

A core tenet of MHHM is that choosing healthier lifestyle options isn’t just a matter of willpower but of empowerment. For example, research has shown that when restaurant patrons are aware of the nutritional content of foods, they tend to choose meals with fewer calories. To help restaurants implement the menu labeling program, MHHM has provided registered dietitians to analyze menu items, local chefs to reformulate recipes to make them healthier, and new menu boards for participating restaurants.

This practice of change through empowerment also drove MHHM to con-
HOMETOWN
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vene the Louisville Youth Advocates (LYA), a group of young people ages 14 to 18 working toward policy change, increased access to healthy food, exercise opportunities, and improved safety in urban Louisville neighborhoods. The MHHM is committed not simply to advocating on behalf of young people, but to equipping young people with the tools to effectively advocate for the changes they deem important.

Early on, with the guidance of adult mentors, LYA youth determined that its top priority was identifying community needs—so LYA youth surveyed residents in key low income Louisville neighborhoods to learn more about their needs and concerns. A top priority identified by community residents was increased access to fresh produce. These neighborhoods, like many lower income communities across the country, were food deserts, usually with more fast food restaurants than healthy food retailers. MHHM responded by teaching LYA youth to grow fresh produce and to sell it to the Healthy-In-A-Hurry corner stores in these neighborhoods, effectively transforming these young people into entrepreneurs as well as advocates.

The $150,000 grant that MHHM received as first place winner (large city) of 2012 Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards has already been put to work. An urban agriculture curriculum, Youth Harvest Louisville, has been developed and implemented for youth aged 14-18. Also, the program has expanded to include youth from across the greater Louisville region and is now known as the Metro Youth Advocates (MYA).

As the initiative has grown, other partners have enabled MHHM to broaden its scope by also developing a plan for sustaining existing school and community gardens, and to create new gardens on vacant city properties. These initiatives fit perfectly within Mayor Fischer’s larger comprehensive platform to advocate for healthy lifestyle choices, youth empowerment and leadership development, new business development and job creation, and developing new community green spaces. Ultimately, MHHM has become far more than a public health project. It is an economic engine, an environmental sustainability initiative, a business incubator and a leadership academy to boot.

Mayors are invited to submit the “Best Practices” of their cities to U.S. MAYOR. Contact Public Affairs at 202-293-7330 or send e-mail to usmayor@usmayors.org

Save the Date:
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Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, Host