MAYORS BEST POSITIONED TO BUILD POLICE-COMMUNITY TRUST, JOHNSON TELLS TASK FORCE

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

Testifying at the first listening session held by President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, Conference of Mayors President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson told the

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CONFERENCE OF MAYORS PRESIDENT JOHNSON TO PRESENT FIRST “STATE OF THE CITIES” ADDRESS

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Washington DC
January 13, 2015

It’s a new year – a new Congress and in many ways The United States Conference of Mayors is being led by President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson with his new futuristic Cities – 3.0 theme.

You will hear the first ever – it’s historic – “State of the Cities” address since the Conference was born. Mayors give State of the City for their cities; Governors give State of the States. Presidents give the State of the Union. And our President of The United States Conference of Mayors will give on January 21, 2015 at our 83rd Winter Meeting Opening Session our first State of the Cities address.

While we look to our future, we also face the challenges of running a city and making it safe. The nation’s mood has been turned upside down due to the incidents and grand jury actions in Ferguson and New York City. In our nation, as contrasted with other nations and cities, it is the American mayor and local government that have the public safety responsibility.

Community policing is not new to us. With the leadership of Police Chief Pat Murphy, serving in Syracuse, Detroit, New York City and DC, we supported the formation in 1978 the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) organization. As a founding member, it was Pat Murphy’s goal to provide educational reform minded and strong leadership within every Police Chief in America. And he was successful. Today our Chiefs are overall the best and most professional in the world.

We are pleased to be working with Philadelphia Commissioner Charles Ramsey, President of PERF and Immediate Past President of the Major Cities Police Association, as well as Woodway (TX) Chief Yost Zakhary, immediate Past President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Following our historic meeting in Little Rock October 9 at The Clinton Presidential Center with President Clinton and Attorney General Holder, our President, Mayor Johnson, lead a series of substantive sessions on the challenges we face with today’s policing.

Following Little Rock, President Johnson appointed Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson to chair a working group on strengthening community policing. Mayor Freeman-Wilson has been working with our outstanding group of mayors and police chiefs and she will report out our recommendations during this 83rd Winter Meeting.

President Obama will give his State of the Union on Tuesday night, and we will have a special place to come and hear him together. No doubt, the media will want reactions the next day.

While there has been dysfunction, to say the least, between the White House and Congress for several months now, let’s hope both the executive and legislative branches will come together and produce legislation and resources that will support the efforts mayors are already leading in their cities. Let’s hope that the Congressional leaders and our President will work together. Mayors have to work daily with people they don’t especially like. We laugh about this, but it’s true!

We are pleased to have our Past President Jerry E. Abramson in the West Wing of the White House. Mr. President, listen to him – the mayors want to help you and the Congress get it done. We are a bipartisan organization and Conference President Kevin Johnson continues to hold our feet to the fire against blatant partisanship.

In the Conference of Mayors in 2015, it’s not about partisan issues, it’s whether it will work, it’s about what works, and so we continue with that heritage, that tradition, and today, we have the 3.0 Metro City in the Century of the Cities, and Mayor Johnson is leading us up that path to the future.

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Nearly 300 Mayors to Convene for 83rd Winter Meeting in Washington

By Paul Leroux and Ed Somers

The nation’s mayors converge in Washington (DC) January 21-23 for a historic 83rd Winter Meeting of The U.S. Conference of Mayors. Led by Conference of Mayors President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, nearly 300 mayors are expected to be in the nation’s capital.

During the meeting, mayors will engage with federal leaders including President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster, eight cabinet members, as well as business and thought leaders. This meeting comes at a critical time as the 114th Congress begins and many new leaders enter the policy arena.

While in Washington, the mayors will work with Congress and the Administration on several key priorities. These include reauthorization of the surface transportation law, enactment of the Marketplace Fairness Act, protecting CDBG, passage of comprehensive immigration reform legislation, and continued flexibility in meeting Clean Water Act mandates. All of these fall under Johnson’s yearlong platform of creating and embracing Cities 3.0.

State of the Cities

For the first time ever, the President of The U.S. Conference of Mayors will issue a State of the Cities address. Designed to provide insight on the challenges and opportunities that America’s cities face, this address will help to set the tone for Conference of Mayors work over the coming months. Johnson also aims to inspire specific actions from Washington leaders and in cities across the country. This address will take place during the opening lunch on Wednesday, January 21, the day after President Obama delivers the State of the Union.

To compliment the State of the Cities address, the Conference of Mayors has worked with Zogby Analytics to prepare a poll on American attitudes toward 21st century cities. Johnson and Conference of Mayors Leadership will release that report during the Winter Meeting.

Cities 3.0

Renowned political theorist and author Dr. Benjamin Barber will address the mayors on Thursday, January 22. Barber will speak at the luncheon about his book, If Mayors Ruled the World, and his effort to establish a global parliament of mayors. Barber is working to develop this new global governance institution using the Cities 3.0 principle of open-source leadership, and also uses technology to facilitate connections around the world.

Johnson will also moderate a discussion on the sharing economy with Uber Vice President David Plouffe during the Thursday Plenary.

Discussions with Political Leaders

On the occasion of the start of the 114th Congress, Johnson and Conference of Mayors officers worked tirelessly to secure the participation of key Congressional and Administration leaders from both parties.

The mayors will spend the entire afternoon in the White House in Friday in meetings with top federal officials and President Obama.

Vice President Biden has agreed to speak on Thursday afternoon, January 22, and there will be a special conversation with former mayors in the Administration on Friday, January 23.

The list of prominent federal officials includes:
- President Barack Obama
- Vice President Joe Biden
- House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster
- Senate Assistant Minority Leader Richard J. Durbin

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Discussions on Community Policing, MBK

On Wednesday, January 21, there will be a meeting of the Mayors and Police Chiefs working group to review a plan for improving public safety and community engagement. The following morning, that group will present their recommendations to President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing during a plenary breakfast session.

There will also be discussion on the My Brother’s Keeper initiative, with the Conference of Mayors My Brother’s Keeper Task Force holding a meeting on Friday morning, January 23.

Congress Slated to Renew Key Transportation Laws

On Thursday morning, January 22, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (PA) will discuss his legislative agenda to renew key federal transportation laws – highway/transit, aviation, and intercity rail – during this Congress. As the leader of the House transportation panel, Shuster wants to bring all interests together, including the nation’s mayors, to accomplish this agenda and keep America moving forward. Later that morning, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx will join with mayors in the Transportation and Communications Committee to discuss these renewals and the need for greater investment in the nation’s transportation infrastructure.

Education Pre-Conference January 20

There will be a Cities 3.0 Education Pre-Conference on Tuesday afternoon, January 20, cosponsored by The U.S. Conference of Mayors and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Areas of focus for this meeting will include:

- Leveraging big data and predictive analytics in education.
- Online badging platforms and systems.

New Mayors

Johnson and Conference of Mayors leadership are proud that over 45 new mayors from around the country will attend the Winter Meeting. A special orientation breakfast session will be held for new mayors and first time mayoral attendees Wednesday morning, as well as a roundtable discussion during the Membership Committee meeting that same morning.

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:

- Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards, Sponsored by American Beverage Association
- USCM-Scotts Miracle-Gro 1000 Gardens and Green Spaces Grant Awards
- USCM National Summer Youth Jobs Challenge Awards
- 2015 National Awards for Local, State, and Citizen Arts Leadership
- Dollarwise Financial Literacy Awards, sponsored by Bank of America

Other Important Sessions

There will be informative standing committee meetings, task force meetings, and workshops over the course of the three days.

A special workshop on Summer Jobs and Long-Term Youth Employment on Wednesday morning, sponsored by JP Morgan Chase and Co.

The Women Mayors will meet on Wednesday afternoon, and the Mayors and Business Leaders Breakfast will take place on Thursday morning.

Further special events are still being developed. An updated draft agenda and list of pre-registered mayors are available at usmayors.org.
USCM Winter Meeting Featured Speakers

DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson
HUD Secretary Julián Castro
DOE Secretary Dr. Ernest Moniz
USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack
DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx
DOL Secretary Thomas E. Perez

DOE Secretary Arne Duncan
Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi
U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (RI)
U.S. Senate Assistant Minority Leader Richard J. Durbin (IL)
U.S. Representative House Appropriations Committee Member Charlie Dent (PA)
U.S. EPA Acting Deputy Administrator A. Stanley Meiburg

White House IGA Director Jerry Abramson
Author Dr. Benjamin Barber
U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Michael Froman
COPS Office Director Ronald L. Davis, Executive Director, The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing
Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey, The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing Co-chair
George Mason Professor Laurie Robinson, The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing Co-chair

DHS Undersecretary Francis X. Taylor
Uber Vice President David Plouffe
My Brother’s Keeper Special Assistant to the President Michael D. Smith
Google, Inc. Public Policy and Government Relations Vice President Susan Molinari
American Gaming Association President and CEO Geoff Freeman
Great-West Financial V.P. Government Markets Brent Neese
USCM Winter Meeting Featured Speakers

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panel that mayors stand at the crossroads of their communities, “We are the leaders best positioned to bridge the gaps in trust and understanding among our residents, all of whom want what is best for our cities.” Johnson was joined at the listening session, held January 13 in Washington (DC) by Conference of Mayors Vice President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Conference of Mayors Past President Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter.

Johnson briefed the panel on the Conference of Mayors’ efforts to learn from what happened in Ferguson over the last months and the work of the working group of mayors and police chiefs, chaired by Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, which he established and will unveil its recommendations during the Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting, January 21-23 in Washington (DC). Those recommendations will be discussed with the Co-chairs of the President’s Task Force in a January 21 session and officially presented to all of the mayors and to the task force at a plenary breakfast the following morning.

Johnson said that it is important that the panel hear from mayors because the issues it is considering are primarily local and differ from community to community. “Despite similarities in the challenges we face, each of these challenges must be dealt with within the context of the cities we serve. We cannot pretend that there is a one-size-fits-all model,” he said.

Sacramento: Fostering Police-Community Relations,

Understanding

Johnson described efforts underway in Sacramento to bring elected officials, law enforcement, clergy, community leaders, and young people together to discuss issues “proactively and productively,” including a series of well-attended community forums and the development of a framework of public safety measures that the city is now implementing. That framework covers training, diversity, accountability, and outreach.

Accompanying Johnson at the session was Sacramento Police Officers Association President Dustin Smith. Johnson told the panel that officials in Sacramento are partnering with the local police union “in a real way” because the “union and line officers have a vital role in Sacramento’s efforts to build trust and legitimacy.”

Baltimore: Balancing Crime-Reduction Strategies with Community Concerns

Rawlings-Blake discussed the difficulty in balancing crime-reduction strategies that have brought down homicides and other major crimes to lower rates with community concerns “about the tactics used by police officers in order to achieve the crime reductions.”

“In 2014, Baltimore experienced a ten percent decline in homicides, as well as a drop in every major crime category – shootings, robberies and burglaries. We have seen significant decreases in the number of excessive force complaints and lawsuits filed against police, while at the same time more residents are reaching out to law enforcement with helpful tips to take violent criminals off the streets,” she told the panel. “We have demonstrated that Baltimore can learn from its past.”

“My administration has focused police interactions with the community on three core principles – impartiality, legitimacy and procedural justice – and training for the entire department centers on those principles,” Rawlings-Blake said. “Our department is adding ethics lessons and situational training exercises – more opportunities for officers to get hands on experience in the proper ways to work with members of the community. The goal is building the belief in every officer that a safe neighborhood can’t be achieved without the trust and confidence that comes from community engagement.”

Rawlings-Blake also highlighted the need for additional federal funding for...
police officer training, expanding internal affairs divisions, and costs associated with body cameras, including the purchase of the equipment and the storage of data.

Philadelphia: Strengthening the Police-Community Partnership

Nutter discussed the importance of public safety to the success of a city: “I came into office knowing that public safety would be the number one issue I needed to address because without it, none of my other goals – job creation, increased graduation rates, growing our population, attracting businesses – would be possible.”

Describing Philadelphia’s community policing strategy, Nutter said that it “…began with an examination of what ‘good policing’ meant to us. The police could not be seen as an occupying force, they could not ostracize or treat with contempt, and they could not whirl by in vehicles allowing for little or no interaction with residents. This type of hands-off policing did nothing to foster personal relationships or trust between police and citizens – both of which are crucial elements to protecting lives and solving crimes.”

“We wanted to bring about a universal understanding that as much as citizens rely on police to keep them safe, police rely on citizens for the information they need to do their jobs. There needed to be an end to ‘us vs. them,’” he continued. “As a government, our belief in working with the community led to listening to residents about their desires for their neighbor-
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Educate Your Employees on Wellness Programs

For Wellness Programs to Succeed, Employees Must Understand Them

By Carey Adamson

Your city can offer the best wellness program around, but if your employees don’t know about it, you’re getting a poor return on your benefits investment. That means your workers miss out on the opportunity to improve their health and productivity. And you don’t reap the cost savings you’re banking on.

Early in the calendar year, when many of your employees are still working on their New Year’s resolutions to lose weight or get into better physical shape, it’s a great time for you to consider talking about wellness with them.

Employers are increasingly looking to wellness programs as a way to deal with the rising costs of benefits. In fact, a 2013 Government Finance Officers Association survey found wellness-related initiatives were among the top cost-control strategies implemented by employers. Nearly 80 percent of those surveyed say they’ve added wellness initiatives to their benefits programs; and 90 percent of them would recommend this strategy to others.

A 2013 Aon Hewitt survey showed wellness programs were also top of mind, with employers ranking increased participation in these programs as the number one outcome they hope to achieve from their health plans. Seventy-six percent of employers surveyed said they seek to increase participation in wellness, health improvement and disease management programs.

There’s a good reason employers look to wellness programs to save money. The return on investment speaks loudly, regardless of the number of employees. Though estimates vary, for every dollar invested in wellness programs, companies can save at least $2 in health care costs and absenteeism, according to the Wellness Council of America.

Wellness initiatives also help employers increase productivity, morale and retention, which supports the bottom line. A Virgin HealthMiles survey of more than 89 percent of employees say the range of an employer’s health and wellness benefits is important in their choice of an employer. According to a 2012 Principal Financial Well-Being Index, 51 percent of wellness program participants said these benefits encourage them to work harder and perform better.

Who’s Offering Wellness Programs?

The majority of employers today offer some type of wellness program or wellness-related initiatives. According to a 2013 survey of employee benefits by the Society for Human Resource Management, 77 percent of employers offer wellness resources and information, and 64 percent offer wellness programs from onsite flu vaccines and CPR training to 24-hour nurse lines and onsite fitness centers.

Regardless of the number and type of wellness benefits offered, employees must choose to participate in them or they will not be effective. That’s where the rub comes in for employers — 58 percent report low engagement as the greatest obstacle to the success of their wellness initiatives, according to Towers Watson.

Lack of Awareness Affects Participation

One reason participation lags in many wellness programs is lack of awareness. Employees can’t participate in wellness programs if they’re not aware of what’s being offered. However, employers and employees don’t see eye-to-eye on this issue.

According to a 2012 Workforce Management survey, more than 57 percent of employers believe their employees have a good understanding of the health and wellness programs they offer and how they can participate. Yet only 41 percent of employees say their employer does a good job of keeping them informed about the health and wellness services available to them. To combat this awareness problem, employers need to take a closer look at their benefits communication efforts.

A Personal Approach to Benefits Communication Can Improve Participation

Improving your benefits communication efforts can stimulate employee engagement and participation in its wellness program. Communication activities can take many forms. Some employers adopt wellness “champions” or ambassadors who help spread enthusiasm about the program throughout the organization. Others include regular articles in newsletters or distribute personal benefits statements that highlight the total compensation package. Some turn to outside resources for communications support.

Partnering with a reliable benefits carrier that offers a full slate of enrollment services, including one-to-one benefits counseling, can help your district achieve the desired results from its wellness initiatives. Individual, personalized benefits education and consistent wellness messaging go a long way in helping employees understand the importance of wellness and how it can improve their lives. Some benefits providers offer these services at no charge as part of their enrollment process.

Surveys of employees who meet individually with benefits counselors during their enrollments prove the effectiveness of the one-to-one method. Virtually all (97 percent) employees surveyed after enroll-

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For additional information on the USCM/Empower Retirement deferred compensation program contact Kathryn Kretschmer-Weyland at 202-302-6944 or kweyland@usmayors.org.

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by Colonial Life say personal benefits counseling improved their understanding of their benefits, and agreed that this type of communication is important (98 percent). In addition, employee morale can improve as workers begin to feel better about themselves and their employers.

Don’t Throw Your Wellness Investment Out the Window

Benefits budgets are tight. Consequently, you’re placing even higher hopes on getting a good return on your employee wellness investment. Don’t throw money out the window because of poor benefits communication. Partner with a carrier that specializes in one-to-one benefits counseling and drive the participation that will help you maximize your wellness dollars.

About the Author

Carey Adamson is vice president of public sector market services for Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company.

Colonial Life is a market leader in providing financial protection benefits through the workplace, including disability, life, accident, cancer, critical illness and hospital confinement indemnity insurance. The company’s benefit services and education, innovative enrollment technology and personal service support more than 80,000 businesses and organizations, representing more than three million of America’s workers and their families. For more information about Colonial Life’s products and services, contact Adamson at 803-678-6156, send e-mail to CLAdamson@ColonialLife.com or visit the website www.ColonialLife.com.
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