



# U.S. MAYOR

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## Summer Leadership Meeting

# Mayors to Washington: Partnership Needed for Jobs, Economic Growth, Built on Local Innovation

Led by Conference of Mayors President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, more than 40 members of the Conference of Mayors Leadership gathered in Park City (UT) August 1-3 to refine the organization's advocacy agenda on top priorities facing the nation's cities in metro areas.

The members of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board, as well as committee and task force chairs, expressed serious concern with the gridlock in Washington and the need for action on issues related to fiscal growth and job creation.

See LEADERSHIP on page 4



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**Right to left, USCM President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, USCM Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, and USCM 2nd Vice President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake.**

## HUD, Transportation Funding Bills Collapse in Congress See Page 9

# Bi-Partisan Support Builds in House for "Don't Mess with our Bonds" Coalition

By Larry Jones

Maryland Representative Dutch Ruppersberger and Illinois Representative Randy Hultgren, during a July 30 meeting, reassured members of the "Don't Mess With Our Bonds Coalition"

See BONDS on page 7



**Left to right, Representative Randy Hultgren (R-IL), USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, Representative Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD), and NACo Executive Director Matt Chase.**



**August 8, 2013  
Washington, DC**

### **Park City Leadership Meeting**

Conference President Scott Smith designed and led frank, open and enlightening sessions this past week in our Summer Leadership Meeting in Park City (UT). With the exception of a municipal bonds expert, requested by President Smith, there were no outside speakers. There were no media experts, no federal government officials or staff, no congressional staff or members of the private sector. It was pure and unadulterated sessions with mayors and mayors only. President Smith, responding to his own intuition and based on the requests of many mayor members, thought it was time to use this meeting, with the help of our internal elected and appointed membership, to define where we are politically and who we are in our national political world of 2013.

There was serious concern about how we are seen in Washington, and many mayors indicated that Washington often sees us – the mayors of the nation and our organization – as “just another private interest group.” Many in Washington don’t see us as a public interest group. Many Congressional staffers and others have to be reminded that we are the government. And we are the government, to the surprise of many, that people like and respect, according to recent and ongoing polls.

While the American people favor us over the state and federal governments, there are some who don’t care about government; they are only thinking and acting on pocketbook issues. And as we discussed in Park City, there is the need to translate adverse actions from Washington down to the taxpayers’ front door. For example, if Washington and

regional EPAs continue to push down unfunded federal mandates, we have evidence pointing to needed affordability changes for lower or fixed income people who are active voters, tweeters and e-mailers. Another example is the push to cap, at 28 percent, the tax-exempt status of our municipal bonds. We have to show that this action will affect our school modernization, hospitals and libraries, and we have to make a strong argument that this misguided policy from Washington will force many mayors and city governments to raise property taxes for infrastructure needs that are already over burdened due to state and federal misguided actions.

Mayor Smith says we have to go beyond just talking about city governments and we need to talk more about the taxpayers – the people. Pardon the cliché, but we have to put a face on who Washington is hurting.

Many mayors voiced concern that budgetary decisions are made without an iota of concern about how the decision might affect the economic health of our cities. I recall during the Carter Presidency, there was an established mechanism where the economic viability of our cities were considered before policy was set forth.

Another point that resonated was that in Washington, the conservatives don’t want to spend on anything, or as one leading mayor said, “They don’t want to do anything.” And you have liberals who want to do something, but there’s no federal money, so the liberals are passing laws mandating locals to spend our local money on directives from Washington.

The above was an overall theme centering on mayoral priorities and city tools and initiatives under attack and treated with ambivalence or indifference: the continued cutting of CDBG, limiting our 100-year-old tax exemption of muni bonds, financial interests that would stop us from collecting sales taxes that are due and have been overdue for years, and the elimination of our energy block grants.

**See COCHRAN on page 7**



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# Our Residents Are Seeing Their City in a Whole New Light

*By Independence (MO) Mayor Don Reimal*

As mayors, we are constantly looking for new ways to better ensure our cities' long-term financial stability while improving the quality of life for our residents. In my city of Independence, I recently announced a plan designed to meet both goals. By converting nearly 12,000 of our street lights to a new LED lighting solution, Independence expects to save more than \$4 million over the next ten years in energy and maintenance costs, while improving visibility and safety for our residents.

Located just east of Kansas City, Independence is home to President Harry S. Truman and has long been a city steeped in history. In the 1800s, the city was a gateway to the new frontier, and the ruts from covered wagons are still visible on our walking trails. Independence is now continuing its pioneering heritage by becoming the first city in America with a population of more than 100,000 to make a 100 percent change from high pressure sodium street lights to LED fixtures.

I began this effort back in 2010, when the city initiated a pilot project to evaluate the feasibility of replacing traditional street lighting fixtures with LED lights. Our city-owned utility, Independence Power & Light, installed LED fixtures on a small number of streets to test their effectiveness. In addition, we reached out to our local residents and businesses to get their feedback, and we analyzed the impact

the new lights could have on our operational costs. The city decided to move forward, partnering with Philips, and installation of the new lighting system has already begun. I expect that it will be completed by December 2013.

As a result, Independence Power & Light estimates that the city will save 6.6 million kilowatt hours, for an annual savings of nearly \$300,000. The city expects to save an additional \$150,000 annually in maintenance costs because the new lighting system requires less upkeep. That's \$450,000 each year that my city will be able to use for other programs that benefit our citizens.

The switch to LED lighting also will make Independence greener, lowering our carbon footprint. Estimated energy savings are in excess of 60 percent, preventing the release of more than 10.3 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. That's the equivalent of removing 888 cars from the road!

The quality of life for our more than 120,000 residents will improve in other ways, as well. The new LED lights provide a natural white light, improving visibility and making our residents feel safer while encouraging more social and economic activity. This is in keeping with the city's goal of developing and supporting vibrant neighborhoods and a high quality of life across Independence.

As mayor, I am proud of our commitment to projects like this that are environmentally and fiscally responsible,



**Independence (MO) Mayor Don Reimal**

and enhance our great community. The savings in costs and energy, as well as the improved quality of life I expect Independence residents will receive from this new LED lighting solution provides me with the satisfaction of having made a positive impact on my city, and that I am leaving behind a positive legacy. I hope our efforts set the standard for other cities to make similar changes to their lighting infrastructure for the betterment of their communities.



## LEADERSHIP

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Smith reminded the mayors gathered that, "Unlike Washington, the agenda of America's mayors centers on key issues that bind our communities in a collective purpose. These issues are important for the majority of U.S. residents who live in urban areas and we must take seriously our responsibility to advocate not on our behalf, but on theirs. Cities have a unique message for Washington and the nation, and mayors are in a unique position to convey that message. The sequestration cuts now taking effect, moves to limit or repeal tax-exempt municipal bonds, and gouging the Community Development Block Grant program flies in the face of common sense with communities still suffering from slow and anemic job growth."

According to its work with IHS Global Insight, the U.S. Metropolitan Economies reports show cities and their metropolitan areas economies account for over 90 percent of the nation's gross domestic product; nearly 90 percent of wage and salary income; and nearly 86 percent of all jobs.

Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran added, "We are gathered for one reason and one reason only – cities and their suburbs drive the national economy, so if Wash-

ington chooses to ignore the call of mayors, it does so at the nation's peril. By the end of 2013, only 109 of the nation's 363 cities and their metro areas will have recovered the jobs lost during the Great Recession. That's only 30 percent of our metro areas coming back from the brink, so we are still fighting an up-hill battle to create more jobs. We need to invest in, not hinder our metro areas because most of our future economic growth and the vast majority of our Gross Domestic Product will come from them."

Overarching priorities identified for action over the course of the meeting included:

- Passing the bi-partisan Marketplace Fairness Act in the House - legislation endorsed by the Administration and passed by the Senate with a vote of 69-27. This bill would result in over \$23 billion annually for state and local governments, and help save Main-street jobs;
- Preventing adoption of the Administration's proposed 28 percent cap on municipal bond interest, which would result in the loss of 311,000 jobs and \$24 billion in GDP;



Photo by Judy Sheehan, USCM

**Left to right, USCM President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, and USCM Past President Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic.**

- Protecting the Community Development Block Grant program, which was slashed by the House Appropriations Committee by almost 50 percent, to \$1.6 billion;
- Achieving meaningful relief from unfunded federal mandates - especially those related to water issues - from both the EPA and Congress;
- Addressing the growing threat of cyber attacks which threaten both municipal governments and businesses in cities;
- Passing a more metro-focused surface transportation bill - with the current law set to expire at the end of September 2014;

**See LEADERSHIP on page 5**



Photo by Judy Sheehan, USCM

**At right, Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed highlights issues related to reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation law, aviation, rail, and communications. Oakland Mayor Jean Quan, left.**



Photo by Judy Sheehan, USCM

**Left to right, Kansas City (MO) Mayor Sly James, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, and Monrovia Mayor Mary Ann Lutz.**

## LEADERSHIP

from page 4

- Promoting the significant achievements made in the area of climate protection by the nation's mayors, and reinstating energy block grants to support even greater local innovation and energy savings; and
- Enacting comprehensive immigration reform.

In addition, each of the Conference of Mayors standing committees and task forces reported on their priorities and work plans for the coming year.

The mayors also discussed the Detroit bankruptcy and possible impacts on the municipal bond market.



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**Houston Mayor Annise Parker discusses crime reduction and social justice.**



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**Matt Fabian from Municipal Market Advisors discusses the underpinnings of the Detroit bankruptcy, and the overall strength and stability of the municipal bond market.**



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**At right, New Education Reform Task Force Chair Denver Mayor Michael Hancock discusses priorities related to early childhood education and public schools. Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, left.**



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**At left, USCM Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth B. Kautz with American Beverage Association Mayors Advisory Council Chair Doug Palmer, who announced the launch of the 2014 Childhood Obesity Awards Program.**



Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

**At left, Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard with Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett.**

# Thank You

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Photo by Judy Sheahan, USCM

***Left to right, HDR National Director of Civic Affairs and Vice President David Cobb, USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, Comcast Senior Director of Government Affairs Ron Orlando, USCM Second Vice President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, USCM President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, USCM Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, JPMorgan Chase & Co. Vice President Senior Manager in the Office of Corporate Responsibility Peter R. Villegas, and HDR Project Engineer Kimberly Schulz.***



## BONDS

from page 1

that they would continue to fight to preserve the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds. Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran told the two members of Congress that the Coalition includes more than 60 diverse organizations representing state and local governments, schools, hospitals, water and sewer facilities, public power, airports, general contractors and many other groups, that stand ready to work with them to protect tax-exempt bonds. As Chairman of the Coalition, Cochran thanked them for their leadership in the House and reminded everyone that, "Municipal bonds are the country's most important source of financing for vital infrastructure..." and that "...saving the program is a top priority for our organization."

The Coalition praised Ruppersberger and Hultgren for their strong bipartisan leadership after the two spearheaded an effort that resulted in 138 members (45

Republicans and 93 Democrats) signing a June 28 letter urging House Speaker John Boehner (OH) and Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (CA) to reject proposals that would alter the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds. The two representatives sent the letter in response to the House Ways and Means Committee's announced plans to consider a comprehensive tax reform package later this year, which may affect tax-exempt bonds. Although legislation has not yet been introduced; and a growing chorus of members from both parties think time is running out for serious consideration and action on a comprehensive tax reform package, Chairman Dave Camp (MI) says he's still committed to moving a bill.

In case a bill moves, Ruppersberger and Hultgren said they are both ready to work with members of the Coalition to oppose proposals that would eliminate or cap the deduction on municipal bonds interest at 28 percent. As a former county official, Hultgren told coalition members, "I understand how critical municipal bonds are to communities and economic investment. Municipal bonds allow real

work to be accomplished in our communities. It is hard to think of my community without the crucial projects that municipal bonds enable, or to think how much worse our debt crisis would be if we are forced to raise taxes or dip further into the pot."

Also a former county official, Ruppersberger said he too understands the importance of municipal bonds, pointing out that, "There is no question they create jobs and save money." He went on to say, "This is a program that is proven and we know it works. The proposed changes would be detrimental and would adversely impact local property taxes. Municipal bonds are a priority because they are good for America."

National Association of Counties Executive Director Matt Chase, who co-hosted the meeting with Cochran, thanked Ruppersberger and Hultgren for understanding the issue and said, "This is not about state and local governments. It is about the quality of life, global competitiveness and investments for the future. Bonds finance projects that affect everyday life for all Americans."

## COCHRAN

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While at the Park City meeting, we discussed our challenges. And there is no doubt in my mind that our leadership mayors, thanks to President Smith, redefined our immediate mission and left with renewed energy to be stronger with more bipartisan unity and force in 2013.

In the coming months, President Smith will need your help. He has said we must hold ourselves accountable, be true to our mission. Park City will be remembered for what was said – and even more for what we do as a result. With his open style and inclusive leadership, I know our mayors will respond and, as an organization, representing the cities of America, we will stand together to defend and to

advocate. The spirit of Park City is with us. Let's get the job done now. Conference staff, your team, and I as a member of that team, look forward to working with and supporting President Smith and all of you as we go forward.



### MAYORS BUSINESS COUNCIL

#### Member Profile

#### Health Care Service Corporation

*HCSC (Health Care Service Corporation) is the largest customer-owned health insurer in the U.S. and fourth overall, operating through its Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans in Illinois, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.*

*Special Interests: Health Care, Insurance*

*For more Business Council profiles visit the Conference of Mayors website at [usmayors.org/buscouncil](http://usmayors.org/buscouncil)*



By Eugene T. Lowe

President Barack Obama outlined on August 6 a number of ideas that will help middle class homeowners through refinancing by cutting red tape. The President's proposals would also help those who rent and help communities hit hard by the recession rebuild. In reforming the housing finance Government Sponsored Enterprise (GSE) system, the investment portfolios of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would be reduced to a manageable balance by 2018. To facilitate the wind down of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the president called on Congress to confirm his choice for Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) Mel Watt. The FHFA has the responsibility for making sure that Fannie and Freddie operate in a safe and sound manner.

Some of the President's proposals to help middle class homeowners include streamlined refinancing for borrowers,

## President Obama Offers Housing Proposals to Help the Middle Class, Rebuild Communities

waiving of closing costs for borrowers who refinance, and the expansion of eligibility for refinancing so that eligible borrowers would have access through special programs through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) or Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. These steps, President Obama said could help a typical family save \$3,000 or more per year.

While millions of families have credit profiles to qualify for mortgage loans, they are often denied loans because lenders are unclear of lending rules. The President said that regulators should implement mortgage rules that encourage clarity and certainty.

To help communities still recovering from the recession, Obama cited Project Rebuild that he proposed in the American Jobs Act that would lead to the hir-

ing of more construction workers, demolish blighted vacant homes, and improve communities.

The President said that the current housing finance system is unsustainable where the government guarantees more than 80 percent of all mortgages through Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Such risks, he said, should rest with the private sector and not with taxpayers. He stated that over the next several years, reliance on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac must end. But the president also said that responsible mortgages like the 30-year fixed rate mortgage should continue in both good times and bad through a federal commitment to ensure confidence of long-term investors in mortgage backed securities to accomplish this goal.

## Thompson Confirmed as Census Bureau Director

The United States Senate confirmed John H. Thompson on August 1 as the new director of the U.S. Census Bureau by unanimous consent. Thompson, who was nominated by President Obama on May 23 has been an executive at the NORC at the University of Chicago for the past 11 years, serving as President and CEO since 2008.

Before joining NORC at the University of Chicago, Thompson was a Census Bureau employee from 1975 to 2002 and oversaw the 2000 Census. He succeeds Robert Groves, who left office in August

2012 to become provost of Georgetown University. Following the departure of Groves, former Deputy Director Thomas L. Mesenbourg served as Acting Director. Mesenbourg had previously announced his long-planned retirement, which is effective August 2.

As Census Bureau Director, Thompson will oversee the nearly 180 surveys the Census Bureau conducts annually. He takes office at a critical juncture in the planning process for the 2020 Cen-



**Census Bureau Director John H. Thompson**

**See CENSUS DIRECTOR on page 9**





By Eugene Lowe and Kevin McCarty

## Transportation-HUD Appropriations Bills for FY'14 Fail in House, Senate

House and Senate leaders during the week of July 28 failed on successive days to pass appropriations bills to fund transportation and housing programs as well as certain other federal activities, beginning October 1.

The House pulled its bill July 31 when leaders realized that there were not enough moderate Republicans supporting the measure (H.R. 2610) to muster a majority of the House, due to deep cuts in transportation, housing and community development programs. As examples, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships programs were cut to \$1.6 billion and \$700 million, respectively. In FY13, CDBG was funded at \$3.08 billion and HOME at \$950 million.

House Appropriations Chair Hal Rogers (KY) said of the pulled bill, "... I believe that the House has made its choice: sequestration – and it's unrealistic and ill-conceived discretionary cuts – must be brought to an end."

The Senate Appropriations Committee's version of the bill (S. 1243) failed August 1 to attract the 60 votes needed for cloture, a threshold in the Senate process that ends debate and ultimately brings a measure to a final vote. Only one Republican

– Senator Susan Collins (ME) – voted for cloture. The Senate measure was strongly supported by the Conference of Mayors and members of the CDBG Coalition that consists of national interest groups representing local elected officials, community development practitioners, non-profit organizations, and development organizations. In contrast to the House, the Senate funded CDBG at \$3.150 billion and HOME at \$1 billion for FY14.

### Transportation Funding

Most surface transportation programs, which are funded in the legislation, avoided reductions in the upcoming fiscal year, although the House bill targeted Amtrak for a 30 percent reduction (cut of \$486 million), zeroed out all new TIGER grant funding, and reduced transit Capital Investment Grants below authorized levels and eliminated funding for any new start projects during FY'14.

The proposed reduction in Amtrak funding is most problematic because it would surely result in the dismantling of the rail provider's national passenger rail network. The Senate bill included continuing funding for Amtrak, \$550 million in TIGER grants, and higher than authorized funding for the transit capi-

tal program with no restrictions on new year commitments.

The stark difference in funding between the House and Senate bills is a function of the discretionary funding levels established by each chamber: the House's budget provided \$967 billion for discretionary spending, with the Senate's number set at \$1.058 trillion. Many moderate Republicans in the House thought their funding was too low; on the other hand, nearly every Republican Senator sided with Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) who stated that the Senate's bill went beyond the Budget Control Act (BCA) and its discretionary spending caps.

In his comments on H.R. 2610, House Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Tom Latham (IA) said, "There are some folks who have a hard time voting for any appropriations bill. Then there are some ... that this was probably a difficult vote for them with Amtrak and block grants and stuff."

With Congress now home for the August recess, it is doubtful that either the House or Senate will revisit the bills upon their return in September. The most likely scenario is that both chambers will eventually agree on a continuing resolution (CR) that will provide funding for FY14.

## CENSUS DIRECTOR

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sus, as the agency begins researching and testing new and more cost-effective methods that potentially will save billions of dollars.

"I congratulate John Thompson on his confirmation as director of the U.S. Census Bureau, and thank the U.S. Senate for

confirming him quickly. Given his previous roles at the Census Bureau beginning in the 1970s, I have full confidence that Mr. Thompson will be a tremendous leader of one of the nation's premier statistical agencies," said Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker.

"The Census Bureau produces a wealth of data that are critical to America's public and private sector leaders as they make decisions about economic develop-

ment that will create jobs. I am committed to ensuring that the Census Bureau has the resources it needs to continue supplying essential data to businesses and government leaders. I look forward to working with John Thompson and his team as they undertake the years of preparations required for a successful 2020 Census and continue to develop innovative ways to produce and distribute vital information," added Pritzker.



By Larry Jones

## Senate Panel Rejects Ban on Federal Aid to Detroit, Other At-Risk Cities

By a close party line vote of 14 to 16, the Senate Finance Committee on August 1 voted down an amendment to the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill that would bar federal assistance to any local government that defaulted or is at risk of defaulting on its financial obligations. The amendment was sponsored by Senator Lindsey Graham (SC) and cosponsored by Senators John Cornyn (TX), Orrin Hatch (UT), Ron Johnson (WI) and David Vitter (LA), who claim the amendment is needed to ensure that the federal government is not forced to bail out any city or county that mismanages its public finances.

Because of the uncertainty of the bill's impact on the nation's cities and counties,

as well as the anticipated huge increase in reporting and administrative burdens, the Conference of Mayors, along with the National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, the International City Management Association and the Government Finance Officers Association, sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose the legislation.

Detroit recently filed for bankruptcy after decades of decline, which caused the city to: lose over half of its population, lose many auto related industry jobs, and experience record high levels of housing foreclosures. Although the Graham amendment was defeated, Senator Vitter introduced a free standing bill that would achieve similar outcomes. It would

also bar federal funds from being used to purchase or guarantee local assets or obligations if the city or county was either in default or at risk of defaulting. Further, it would bar federal appropriations to any locality that defaults or is at risk of defaulting.

According to an analysis prepared by Senate staff, the Graham and Vitter proposals would impose an enormous bureaucratic nightmare on federal agencies and local governments. Because the proposals do not define what is meant by "at risk of default," every federal agency would be forced to make a credit assessment for every locality, not once, but for every provision of federal aid.

## 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace

Past President Akron Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic, Vice President of Mayors for Peace, joined mayors from across the globe at the 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace, held in Hiroshima, Japan, August 3-6.

During the conference, Mayors for Peace issued the Hiroshima Appeal, calling upon the nations of the world to continue to work toward the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons by 2020. The Hiroshima Appeal is modeled on a resolution passed at the 81st Annual Conference of Mayors in Las Vegas in June.



*Left to right, Halabja, Iraq Mayor Khder Knez; Granolles, Spain Mayor Josep Mayoral i Angtigas; Mayor Plusquellic; Frogn, Norway Mayor Thore Vestby; and a Mayors for Peace special assistant, taking part in a special commemoration ceremony during the meeting.*

# Calendar of Events

(Updated 08/08/13)



## 2013

### September 11-15

**Empowerment Week**, Birmingham. **September 12: Mayors' Day: Coalition of Cities Against Racism**. Contact: Laura DeKoven Waxman waxman@usmayors.org / 202-861-6754. Registration Available Soon

### October 22-23

**Mayors Cybersecurity Summit**, Washington (DC). Contact: Laura DeKoven Waxman lwaxman@usmayors.org / 202-861-6754. Sponsorship: Geri Powell gpowell@usmayors.org / 202-861-6774. Registration Available Soon

## 2014

### January 22-24

**82nd Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting**, Washington (DC). Contact: Carol Edwards cedwards@usmayors.org / 202-293-7330. Sponsorship: Geri Powell gpowell@usmayors.org / 202-861-6774. Registration Available Fall 2013

### April 25-27

**Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports (TAPES) Committee Meeting**, New Orleans. Contact: Jocelyn Bogen jbogen@usmayors.org / 202-861-6727. Registration Available Winter 2014

### June 20-23

**82nd Annual Conference of Mayors**, Dallas. Contact: Carol Edwards cedwards@usmayors.org / 202-293-7330. Sponsorship: Geri Powell gpowell@usmayors.org / 202-861-6774. Registration Available Spring 2014



For updates or changes, visit our website at **usmayors.org**

## MAYORS BUSINESS COUNCIL Member Profile

### International Franchise Association

*The IFA's mission is to safeguard the business environment for franchising worldwide. The association represents businesses in more than 85 industries, including more than 11,000 franchisees, 1,200 franchisor and 600 supplier members nationwide. According to a 2008 study conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, there are more than 900,000 franchised establishments in the U.S. that are responsible for creating 21 million American jobs and generating \$2.3 trillion in economic output.*

*Special Interests: Downtown Development, Economic Development, Economic Policy, Energy, Financial Management, Health Care, Labor Relations, Minority Issues, Political Campaigns, Retail Development, Small Business Development, Tax Legislation, Tort Liability*

For more Business Council profiles visit the Conference of Mayors website at [usmayors.org/buscouncil](http://usmayors.org/buscouncil)

# USCM on the WEB

[usmayors.org](http://usmayors.org)





# New CDC Report Shows Progress in Slowing Childhood Obesity in U.S.

By Crystal D. Swann

The rate of childhood obesity among preschoolers enrolled in federal health and nutrition programs is showing signs of progress according to a new report issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which shows obesity rates declining among low-income preschoolers. Researchers analyzed weight and height data of about 11.6 million children ages two-to-four that participate in federally funded maternal and child nutrition programs in 18 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The study seems to reaffirm that the

federal, state and local focus on stemming the tide of childhood obesity is working. Federal programs, more specifically, the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program, are now aligned to more closely follow the dietary guidelines for Americans; increase support for breastfeeding mothers; and new nutrition and physical activity standards for early child care programs are cited as possible reasons for the improvements. Nutritional improvements made in the foods served at schools may have had a positive impact on stemming the tide.

Cited in another report, several cities across the U.S. including Philadelphia,

El Paso and New York City, have shown declines in their childhood obesity rates. In addition to the new dietary guidelines for schools, many cities have also increased the quantity and quality of physical activity for their students. Among the states, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, New Jersey, South Dakota and the U.S. Virgin Islands had the "largest absolute" decreases in obesity rates, with "at least one percentage point." The report shows that the rates held steady in 20 states and rose in Colorado, Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

The "Vital Signs" report can be found at [cdc.gov/mmwr](http://cdc.gov/mmwr).

## 2014 CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION Awards Program

Through this initiative a total of \$445,000 in grants will be awarded, to support both new and existing programs initiated by USCM member mayors that address the childhood obesity epidemic in America's cities.

*Awards will be made in three categories: large, medium and small city.*

### APPLICATION DEADLINE:

OCTOBER 1, 2013

### APPLY ONLINE AT:

[www.usmayors.org/childhoodobesity](http://www.usmayors.org/childhoodobesity)



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



# Speech by Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. at Dedication of Monument to 54th Massachusetts Regiment

*Sunday, July 21, White Point Garden*

I wish to thank and commend the Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie Historical Trust, and all who worked so hard on successfully making this 150 anniversary of the Civil War an inclusive, educational, inspirational and unifying experience, including the full agenda of events for the weekend.

Tonight, we will lay two wreaths in honor of the Confederate and Union soldiers who were engaged in battle 150 years ago at Fort Sumter, Morris Island and Battery Wagner, and to dedicate a permanent marker long overdue to the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment.

On this beautiful summer evening, it is unimaginable the horrific tragedy of the Civil War – 700,000 soldiers died, many men wounded with life altering injuries. We lost over three percent of our country's population – north and south – today comparable number would be about 12 million dying in a war fighting each other. We come here tonight not as southerners or northerners but as Americans. The awful crucible of the Civil War did create a more perfect union – one nation – under God – indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation issued on January 1, 1863, among other things, stated that former slaves could join the Union Armed Forces. In February, Governor Andrews of Massachusetts issued Civil War's first call of black soldiers. The call rebounded through the country. While Massachusetts did not have many African American citizens, in two weeks 1,000 men volunteered, including former slaves from the southern states, including South Carolina (with the exception of Florida). They did so in spite of announcements by the Confederate Congress that any black soldier captured would be sold back into slavery and every white soldier in command would be executed. In command



**Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. lays wreaths to mark the 54th Massachusetts Regiment during a July 21 dedication ceremony.**

was Robert Gould Shaw, a Harvard student, son of prominent abolitionists, who had dropped out of college to enlist in the Union army, and had been injured in the Battle of Antietam. He was just 25 years old.

The 54th was all volunteer. The black soldiers joined to fight to ensure that the Emancipation Proclamation and what it portended occurred – a nation where slavery was ended and full citizenship of black Americans was achieved. They also volunteered to fight to prove what many which people doubted – that black soldiers could fight with courage and skills.

On May 28, 1863, the 54th paraded smartly past Massachusetts State Capitol and the Boston Commons saluting the Governor. Governor Andrew said at the end of the parade, "I know not where in all human history to any given thousand men in arms that has been committed a work so proud, so precious, so full of hope and glory as the work committed

to you." That evening the men boarded a ship bound for Charleston and on to the pages of history.

Even as they fought to end slavery in the Confederacy, the African-American soldiers of the 54th were fighting against another injustice as well. The U.S. Army paid black soldiers \$10 a week; white soldiers got \$3 more. To protest against this insult, the entire regiment – soldiers and officers alike – refused to accept their wages until black and white soldiers earned equal pay for equal work. This did not happen until the war was almost over.

Battery Wagner, on the north end of Morris Island, protected Charleston harbor, Fort Moultrie, Fort Sumter, and thereby the city of Charleston and its citizens. Battery Wagner was a strongly built fortress manned by 1,700 Confederate soldiers. The brutal bombardment of

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# CHARLESTON

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Battery Wagner by Union forces had not weakened it as was believed.

On July 18, 1863, the 54th Massachusetts prepared to storm Battery Wagner. At dusk, Shaw gathered 600 of his men on a narrow strip of sand just outside Wagner's fortified walls and readied them for action. "I want you to prove yourselves," he said. "The eyes of thousands will look on what you do tonight." The eyes of millions have come to know what they did.

As night fell, Shaw led his men over the walls of the fort. (This was unusual; typically, officers followed their soldiers into battle.) Unfortunately, the Union generals had miscalculated: 1,700 Confederate soldiers waited inside the fort, ready for battle. The men of the 54th were outgunned and outnumbered. Two hundred and eighty one of the 600 charging soldiers were killed, wounded or captured. Shaw himself was shot in the chest on his way over the wall and died instantly.

A Confederate lieutenant, Iredell Jones, who visited the ground the next morning reported: "The dead and wounded were piled up in a ditch, sometimes 15 in a heap, and they were strewn over the plain for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile. The Negroes fought gallantly, and were headed by as brave a colonel who ever lived. He mounted the breastworks waving his sword and at the head of his regiment he and his orderly fell over dead over the inner crest of the works – the Negroes were as fine-looking a set of I ever saw – large, strong, muscular fellows."

Many of the bodies, including Shaw's, were put in a ditch by the Confederate soldiers and covered in an unmarked grave. After the war some suggested exhuming Shaw's body to be buried in Boston. Shaw's father objected. "A soldier should be buried with his men", he said.

After the war, Shaw's regiment, even though they had not been paid, raised contributions to erect a simple monument to read "His deed will be his lasting monument." Eventually, however, the funds were used to establish the 1st free school for black children in Charleston – now the

side of the Shaw Center on Mary Street.

In 1897, a monument designed by the prominent sculptor Augustus Saint Gaudens was installed on the Boston Commons. At the ceremony which received national attention, Booker T. Washington said "to you..., the scarred and scattered remnants of the Fifty Fourth, who with empty sleeve and wanting leg, have honored the occasion with your presence, to you, your commander is not dead. In you and the loyal race you represent, Robert Gould Shaw would have a monument which time could not wear away."

In the late 1970s, Boston's Shaw Monument was to be restored. A group in Charleston, led by Malcolm D. Haven, whom I was pleased to assist, raised money to assist in its beautiful restoration.

In 1997 when the National Gallery of Art in Washington (DC) unveiled St. Gaudens's memorial to Shaw and the 54th Regiment, General Colin Powell said "I stand before you as a direct descendant of every one of these Negroes. I was able to rise to become Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the senior position of the Armed Forces of the United States. But I had a direct lineage back to the men of the 54th...it is a lineage that I will never forget. It is a source of inspiration and strength to me."

So now, at dusk, 150 years and three days almost to the minute from the 54th regiment's courageous assault on Battery Wagner, we dedicate this monument, this marker, to honor them.

In Boston, the monument is where they first marched. In Charleston, it is the view of where they fought and many died, fighting for their freedom and justice of our land.

It reads: *Across from Fort Sumter lies Morris Island, the scene of some of the most intense fighting of the U.S. Civil War. A regiment composed primarily of free black men commanded by white officers, the 54th Massachusetts was raised by northern abolitionists to prove that black men could and would fight for the United States.*

*Assigned to the Department of the South in June 1863, the regiment saw its first major action on Morris Island at the mouth of Charleston harbor where it spearheaded the assault against the Confederate Battery Wagner.*

*Though the attack failed and regiment suffered 40% casualties (272 of some 650 engaged), its famous charge helped influence the United States to increase its recruitment of black soldiers. Before the war ended nearly 200,000 African-Americans had served in the US army, greatly increasing the pressure on the outnumbered Confederates.*

*The 54th Massachusetts continued to serve throughout the siege of Battery Wagner and later participated in numerous campaigns along the South Carolina, Georgia and Florida coasts.*

*Upon the evacuation of Charleston in February 1865, the regiment entered and encamped near the city at Magnolia Cemetery.*

*Further duty included a raid on Camden and occupation duty throughout South Carolina.*

*The regiment was discharged in Boston on September 1, 1865. Their bravery and sacrifice received national attention, helped reduce prejudice in the Northern Military and inspired the Union army's war effort.*

The 54th marker is less than 100 feet away from the Confederate monument to the defenders of Fort Sumter. Both honoring the courage of Americans, tragically fighting each other, after unveiling the marker, we will lay wreath honoring them all – brave, courageous, gallant soldiers, Union and Confederate.

We as Americans are all so grateful that, as Abraham Lincoln resolved at another Civil War bloody battlefield, this nation did in fact have a new birth of freedom – our government of the people, by the people and for the people – not only did it not perish from the earth but it emerged to lead the world.

I close with the words of South Carolina great 19th century was a poet Henry Timrod that really speaks to all of these brave soldiers:

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!  
There is no holier spot of ground  
Than where defeated valour lies,  
By mourning beauty crowned.



## Leveraging Wet Weather Consent Orders to Strengthen Our Neighborhoods

*By Columbus (OH) Mayor Michael B. Coleman*

While Columbus is blessed with a thriving economy, a vibrant downtown and wonderful neighborhoods, it does not have the benefit of having white-sand beaches or snow-covered mountains. The city's greatest natural asset is its rivers. One of the major focuses during my tenure as mayor has been to enhance our rivers and improve the relationship between our downtown and our river front. We have had many successes, including a private-public partnership that resulted in a dazzling riverfront park, the Scioto Mile. This park has changed the way our citizens interact and view the Scioto River.

But my job is not just to enhance the riverfront, but also to protect the river. That is why my administration has been and always will be fully committed to meeting the requirements of the Clean Water Act. We entered into consent orders with our state regulators in 2002 and 2004, and committed to controlling separate sanitary sewer overflows and combined sewer overflows.

In the ten years since we entered the first consent order, we have made extraordinary progress. We submitted a plan in 2005 that committed us to substantially reducing our combined sewer overflows by 2010 – in just five years. We met that commitment by building massive upgrades to our two wastewater treatment plants. Both plants are now successfully treating 50 percent more water during wet weather events. These improvements have resulted in a dramatic reduction in overflows to the river. In fact, we had the wettest year ever recorded in

2011, and still had fewer overflows than in previous years.

In addition, we are constructing a 20-foot diameter, four-and-a-half mile tunnel to further reduce combined sewer overflows. This tunnel will eliminate most of our downtown combined sewer overflows, and control our largest combined sewer overflow to only four events in a typical year. Upon completion, we will have largely complied with United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) combined sewer overflow policy roughly ten years from the time we submitted our plan.

So far we have spent a billion dollars on reducing sewer overflows. And our rates have steadily increased to pay for this work.

Unfortunately, we are nowhere near done. We still have to invest billions of dollars to eliminate our sanitary sewer overflows. The current plan calls for two more tunnels, much longer and much more expensive. We calculate that the work left to do will cost our ratepayers another \$2.5 billion.

And the worst part is that it doesn't even feel like we are closing in on the goal, because EPA keeps shifting the goal post. The new stormwater rules that EPA is contemplating for next year will layer on another unfunded mandate that will ultimately be paid for by the city and its ratepayers. Depending on the final scope of the rules, we fear that compliance with the new rules may rival the cost of complying with our consent orders.

This is why I was so encouraged about two recent actions EPA has taken, at the urging of the Conference of Mayors. The recent statement that EPA is committed to revisiting its policy on affordability is



**Columbus (OH) Mayor Michael B. Coleman**

welcome news. Columbus has always taken the position that EPA's reliance on two percent of median household income as the sole indicator for affordability is inconsistent with its own policy, and does not adequately measure what a city can afford. We look forward to participating in this important dialogue.

I was also very pleased to see EPA's issuance of the Integrated Planning memo. Integrated Planning allows a city to meet the Clean Water Act's many mandates with a common-sense approach of tackling the worst problems first. It also encourages using green infrastructure, which was already a priority for Columbus.

Based on the Integrated Planning memo, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency recently agreed to allow Columbus to delay construction of the next tunnel while the city explores whether there is a better way to meet our commitment to the Clean Water Act. We have agreed that by 2015, we will develop a proposal that concentrates on two things: getting

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# Best Practices

## WET WEATHER

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stormwater out of sanitary sewers so that they don't overflow, and putting that stormwater into green infrastructure so that it is cleaner when discharged to the river. We are calling this endeavor: Blueprint Columbus. Clean streams. Strong Neighborhoods.

The benefits of Blueprint Columbus are enormous. It is a much better investment for everyone. It will do more to improve water quality in the rivers than tunnels alone. It will get Columbus ahead of the curve on the impending stormwater rules. And it will save ratepayers money. By dealing with wastewater overflows and stormwater in an integrated plan, we can avoid the wasteful duplication of efforts that would come from viewing these requirements in isolation.

It is also a much better investment for our neighborhoods. Tunnels are out-of-sight, out-of-mind, and do nothing for our neighborhoods. Our plan will instead focus on rehabilitating our aging infrastructure, by repairing sewer lines and laterals so they don't leak. We can install rain gardens, porous concrete sidewalks, and trees in right-of-ways, improving home values. We can take down vacant houses, and replace them with amenities such as porous pavement basketball courts.

Blueprint Columbus can also directly benefit our economy. Unlike tunnels, the plan we are envisioning focuses on small capital jobs that can be designed and built by our small businesses. In addition, the green infrastructure will have to be maintained, which creates local, permanent jobs.

If we have to spend billions of dollars

to comply with the Clean Water Act, we should be doing everything we can to maximize the benefits of that investment. I look forward to working with my fellow mayors and the Conference of Mayors in educating everyone on the significance of integrated planning.

Blueprint Columbus has the potential to transform our city into a stronger, greener, healthier place to work, live and raise a family.

*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](mailto:usmayor@usmayors.org)*



# MAKE PLANS NOW

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**Washington (DC)**  
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**Registration opens**  
**Fall 2013**

