



U.S. MAYOR

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House Leaders Committed to October Action on Long-Term Surface Transportation Bill

By Kevin McCarty

House leaders are pledging to act next month on a long-term renewal of the nation's surface transportation law, expecting committee action to be followed immediately by final passage by the full House of Representatives.

The goal set by House leaders is to secure final floor action on a long-term bill prior to October 29, when the MAP-21 law expires.

These officials, led by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (PA) and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (WI), are now working

to reach bipartisan agreements on various policy and revenue changes to provide for a long-term bill of up to six years.

Mayors, along with other local and regional leaders, are calling on House Members, especially those who serve on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, to provide more funding for the legislation and to "localize" more of the available highway program dollars so local leaders in their metropolitan and local areas have greater input over how available resources are invested

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Rawlings-Blake Outlines Aggressive Agenda for Remaining 15 Months in Office

By Ed Somers

Baltimore Mayor and U.S. Conference of Mayors President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced on September 11 that she will not run for reelection.

The general election for Mayor of Baltimore will take place on November 8, 2016. This means the Mayor Rawlings-Blake will fulfill her term as USCM President, and will preside over both the Winter Meeting in Washington, DC on January 22-22, 2016, and the 84th Annual Conference in Indianapolis on June 24-27, 2016.

As USCM President, Mayor Rawling-Blake has been focused on developing a strong, bipartisan action



Baltimore Mayor and USCM President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

agenda to help focus attention on America's cities during the 2016 Presidential and Congressional elections, as well as immediate actions needed to address growing violence and crime rates in many cities.

In announcing her decision the Mayor stated, "As I pre-

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Sacramento, Mayor Johnson Honor Hometown Heroes

By Elena Temple-Webb

Sacramento celebrated its hometown heroes, Spencer Stone, Alek Skarlatos and Anthony Sadler, whose quick thinking helped to stop a terrorist plot when they tackled a suspected Islamist gunman on a train traveling from Amsterdam to Paris on August 21.

Since then, the trio has become globally-recognized heroes and, fittingly, rode on a float in a parade that drew hundreds on September 11.

"It's fitting that we're having this event on September 11. What better way to remember the victims and sacrifices that were made on that tragic day and to celebrate the strength and character of our country," said Mayor Kevin Johnson, who also presented the three men with keys to the city.



Photo Credit: Sacramento City Hall



Conference President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has called our United States Conference of Mayors Leadership to her City of Baltimore on October 2-4 for the purpose of adopting an agenda to present to the Republican and Democratic candidates for President.

Over the summer, since leaving our Annual Meeting in San Francisco, Conference Staff and I worked diligently to provide ten top priorities to our officers for approval. The officers accepted these ten categories with praise to all.

Once the officers approved the ten categories, we were charged to develop more detailed draft language for each category to put before the official leadership of The Conference at our Baltimore Leadership Meeting.

In Baltimore, both Republican and Democratic Mayors assembled will have the opportunity to add or delete language to our proposed recommendations so that mayors can politically embrace, claim ownership, and adopt these priorities, and move forward with total support.

Words and language in our business are most important, but mayors have known that strategic action will be needed if we are to affect the Presidential Campaign and have the political action and support of our next President.

The Summer of 2015 has been, as the pundits call it, The Summer of Trump. It is fair to say that at the present time, the lack of policy discussion is apparent. And while the polls are going up and down and changing, we are hopeful that the circus atmosphere will curtail and eventually the candidates will settle down and offer a more specific set of

actions they will support to keep our nation moving forward.

A part of our strategy will be to assess how we—as Democratic and Republican mayors—might be involved in the primary elections in both parties, which begin just a few months from now.

Earlier this year, Democratic and Republican mayors gathered to determine if there are issues they could support in a bipartisan campaign. Infrastructure modernization is one issue that all mayors support. Survey after survey shows that our outdated and crumbling infrastructure requires attention and federal investment.

I have been raising the question of if we should demand to have one Presidential Debate on The State of America's Infrastructure. It has been decades since President Eisenhower, working with the Conference of Mayors, supported our largest infrastructure project ever—The Interstate Highway System. In 2015, we find our travel needs to be more than our interstate highway system, but it has to be maintained. Today, Americans are seeking alternative transportation, away from the automobile. There are more demands for metro rail service and mass transit in general.

We will be discussing in Baltimore the actions we must take to do our best to make a difference in the Presidential Campaign—actions that will make a difference for our people, our cities, and our nation.

Conference President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake will need your help as we go forward to advocate bold and new measures for our new President. Following our Baltimore Leadership Meeting, we will be contacting our entire membership asking for the help of all mayors as we push our agenda forward before the November election of 2016—just months away. There's work to be done. Please join us so that we can make America better for all.



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**Publisher,
Editor-in-Chief
Tom Cochran**

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Managing Editor:
Ed Somers

Contributing Editors:
David W. Burns
Megan Cardiff
Debra DeHaney-Howard
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Tom McClimon
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Laura DeKoven Waxman
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Chief of Production:
Yvonne Dailey

Proofreader: Larry Jones

Advertising information:
<http://usmayors.org/usmayornewspaper>
advertise@usmayors.org

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Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director

E-mail address changes to:
usmayor@usmayors.org

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Mayors Brownfield Revitalization Efforts Highlighted At EPA Conference

By Judy Sheahan

Mayors were prominently featured at the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Conference that was held in Chicago from September 2-4 including Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, Duluth Mayor Don Ness, Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, and Knoxville Mayor Karen Rogero.

Emanuel spoke on September 2 at the opening plenary. "This year's conference and the 20th Anniversary of the Brownfield Program marks EPA's remarkable work with the City of Chicago and countless other cities in turning brownfields into fields of opportunity," said Mayor Emanuel. "It is only through important investments such as brownfield conversions and community revitalization that we can keep making necessary change toward an environmentally sound future."

The other Mayors were featured on September 3 in a plenary panel that was moderated by Representative Dan Kildee (MI) and also included EPA's Assistant Administrator for the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response Mathy Stanislaus.

Representative Kildee opened the panel session explaining how cities that have significant brownfield sites didn't get there due to bad luck. "Federal and State policies didn't help the brownfield situation and in fact, they exacerbated the problem," Kildee said, "policies in transportation, housing, and development made it too easy to develop green field sites and there was a failure to recognize that was going on."

Soglin agreed saying, "Federal policies, including the National Highway System, contributed to our problem and Congress has abdicated their responsibility. However, millennials will help drive development back to cities."

The Mayors discussed the challenges, op-

portunities, and benefits of redeveloping brownfield sites.

"The biggest challenge I have to redevelop brownfields is not the fact that there was a property tax cap that started on my first day of office, but the fact that our citizens don't trust the government and it was for good cause," Freeman Wilson said. "My job is to

that was rejected 15 years ago by the city council because the community wasn't sold on the idea. "We spent the next 18 months involving the community with the planning process so by the time it came back to city council in 2007, it was approved," Rogero said. Developers have spent \$6.5 million while the city has provided Tax Increment Financing (TIF) which has resulted in a new



The EPA Brownfields Conference included a panel of Mayors including, left to right, Knoxville Mayor Karen Rogero, Duluth Mayor Don Ness, Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, and Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley.

have my citizen's believe again and deliver on the promises. We need to make a plan and then do it. In that way, you no longer get skeptics but participants." Gary is part of the federal government's Sustainable Cities effort to focus on area wide redevelopment.

Whaley agreed saying, "We are legacy cities and we need patience and time to get this work done. Mayors often act as cheerleaders and you need to be open and inclusive in order to make your citizens believe again. I'm the fourth Mayor that is working on the same site. But for the first time there has been an increase in our population in fifty years and we just opened our first commercial building in 20 years. Sprawl is easy and fast, this work takes time."

Rogero echoed the theme of having a vision and getting buy in with the community. She described the original redevelopment plan

riverwalk with two plazas, streetscapes, plus additional investment including an \$8 million linear park, 1,000 acres of urban wilderness, and an outdoor recreation center.

Ness agreed on the benefits of brownfields redevelopment saying, "Brownfields work is magical through watching this transformation. Our citizens don't know how complex this is. Communication is key. This can't be just about ribbon-cutting, it has to be translated into a narrative. In my community we were facing 20 years of decline, 20 percent unemployment, and one of the most distressed cities. Now we have less than four percent unemployment. It is a compelling story. We owned it, solved it, and took pride. It is easy to point fingers but as community leaders, we need to take ownership and focus on solutions."

See BROWNFIELDS on page 4

Conference Opposes Sanctuary Cities Bill Under Development in Senate Judiciary Committee

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

Despite a promise to act quickly on legislation that would withhold certain federal funding from so-called "sanctuary cities," the Senate Judiciary Committee has postponed planned markups of S. 1814, the Stop Sanctuary Cities Act, three times – once before the August recess and twice so far in September. Now it's considered un-

likely that the Committee will consider such legislation before October.

Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley of Iowa has been working on language that he would offer on behalf of himself and Louisiana Senator David Vitter that would deny Community Development Block Grant, Cops on the Beat,

and State Criminal Alien Assistance Program funding to sanctuary cities as defined in the bill. The bill defines a sanctuary city broadly and could affect as many as 300 jurisdictions.

Apparently there have been disagree-

See SANCTUARY CITIES on page 5

White House Launches Citizenship Campaign

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

On September 17 – Constitution Day and Citizenship Day – the White House announced the "Stand Stronger" Campaign, which aims to break down the barriers eligible immigrants and refugees must overcome to become U.S. citizens. This national, multilingual public awareness campaign is intended to promote the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of citizenship among eligible Legal Permanent Residents and to build a volunteer corps that will support them throughout the naturalization process.

As part of the campaign, the White House is engaging immigrant and refugee-serving organizations around the country that provide in-person assistance and legal services to individuals eligible to naturalize; businesses that are providing citizenship workshops and English language classes to their employees; the philanthropic community; and cities and localities that are bringing immigration services to places where immigrants and refugees live and work.

Among the efforts announced is the Building Welcoming Communities Campaign, which encourages local communities to engage in immigration integration efforts. Through this Campaign, which is organized in partnership with Welcoming America, the President is asking communi-

ties to act on a set of principles to build inclusive, welcoming communities intended to allow all residents to thrive and succeed.

Forty communities so far have accepted this challenge: Allegheny County, PA; Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; Boise, ID; Boston, MA; Buffalo, NY; Charlotte, NC; Chicago, IL; Clinton Township, MI; Columbus, OH; Crete, NY; Dayton, OH; Decatur, GA; Denver, CO; Detroit, MI; Dodge City, KS; Grand Forks, ND; High Point, NC; Houston, TX; Lincoln, NE; Los Angeles, CA; Louisville, KY; Macomb County, MI; Montgomery County, MD; Nashville, TN; New York, NY; Oakley, CA; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; St. Louis, MO; St. Louis County, MO; San Jose, CA Santa Fe, NM; Schuyler, NE; Seattle, WA; San Francisco, CA; Sterling Heights, MI; Toledo-Lucas County, OH; and York, PA.

In addition, USCIS announced that it now has a total of eight municipal partners and that they have established 330 citizenship corners in municipal facilities and conducted more than 20 naturalization information sessions at local government venues. The eight partnering cities are Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Nashville, New York City and Seattle.

Other efforts to promote citizenship which were highlighted in the announcement include customer service enhancements at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; the addition of four new Presidential Ambassadors for Citizenship and Naturalization (chef and restaurateur José Andrés, actress Diane Guerrero, singer and songwriter Dave Matthews, and former Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Fernando Valenzuela); expansion of multimedia and educational ads on naturalization; and grants to public and private nonprofit agencies to help build community capacity to prepare individuals for citizenship.

BROWNFIELDS

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Soglin said, "The challenge is to take risks and the job of Mayor is to minimize those risks. You need to break down barriers within your city divisions and look at critical neighborhoods and ask questions regarding transportation, child care, mental health, food access, nutrition, housing, education and job training and then you need to change your priorities in your budgets."

"We are all legacy cities but we need to create new legacies and we need to do it for our legacy citizens," Freeman-Wilson said.

SANCTUARY CITIES

from page 4

ments among the majority members of the Judiciary Committee about the funding programs to be targeted and a provision that would impose a five-year mandatory minimum penalty on anyone who was deported and then reentered the United States illegally. Discussions are continuing.

On September 16, Conference CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran sent a letter to all Judiciary Committee members registering the Conference's strong opposition to legislation that would withhold federal law enforcement or other assistance from so-called sanctuary cities. Cochran urged the Senators to oppose S.

1814 or any similar legislation that may come before the Committee.

Cochran told the Committee that mayors "believe that decisions related to how law enforcement agencies prioritize their resources, direct their workforce, and define the duties of their employees must reside with local government." He said that this includes the role of local police officers in immigration enforcement. "At a time when law enforcement agencies are working hard to strengthen police-community relations and build trust, S. 1814 and other legislative proposals to withdraw funding from any "sanctuary city" are particularly troubling," Cochran continued.

His letter also discussed the importance of

the programs targeted for penalties by S. 1814, which, he said, "provide resources to local and state governments to help them meet critical needs."

Cochran concluded by urging the Committee to instead focus on fixing the nation's broken immigration system instead of punishing cities trying to build trust with immigrant communities and assure public safety: "The nation's mayors respectfully urge the Committee to focus on fixing our broken immigration system, as it did in bipartisan fashion in the last Congress, rather than passing punitive legislation that penalizes cities trying to build trust with the communities they are charged with protecting and assuring the safety of all of their residents."

The full text of the letter is below.



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

1520 FIVE STREET, NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
TELEPHONE (202) 295-7330
FAX (202) 295-2352
TDD (202) 295-9445
URL: www.usmayors.org/uscm

September 16, 2015

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Member:

I write on behalf of the nation's mayors to register our strong opposition to legislation that would withhold federal law enforcement or other assistance from so-called "sanctuary cities." This includes S. 1814, the "Stop Sanctuary Cities Act," which is currently under development and may be marked up soon by the Senate Judiciary Committee. We urge you to oppose S. 1814 or any similar legislation that may come before the Committee.

We understand that the substitute language that Chairman Grassley is expected to offer on behalf of himself and Senator Vitter would deny Community Development Block Grant, Cops on the Beat, and State Criminal Alien Assistance Program funding to sanctuary cities as defined in the bill. The bill defines a sanctuary city broadly and could affect as many as 300 jurisdictions.

We believe that decisions related to how law enforcement agencies prioritize their resources, direct their workforce, and define the duties of their employees must reside with local government. This includes the role of local police officers in immigration enforcement. Effective policing cannot be achieved by forcing an unwanted role upon the police by threat of sanctions or withholding of law enforcement or other federal assistance funding. At a time when law enforcement agencies are working hard to strengthen police-community relations and build trust, S. 1814 and other legislative proposals to withdraw funding from any "sanctuary city" are particularly troubling.

Shifting the federal responsibility of enforcing civil immigration law to local governments diverts critical resources from their law enforcement agencies, compromises public safety, and hinders local police department efforts to work with immigrant communities in preventing and solving crimes. Immigration enforcement laws and practices must be nationally based, consistent, and fully funded by the federal government. Immigration is a federal, not a state or local, responsibility.

The programs targeted for penalties by S. 1814 provide resources to local and state governments to help them meet critical needs.

Community Development Block Grant: The CDBG program grows local economies and improves the quality of lives for low- and moderate-income citizens by providing formula grants to state and local governments to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities within their communities. The program serves households in need, help neighborhoods, and

provide the flexibility to develop partnerships and projects that are vital to communities. Communities use CDBG to respond to current and emerging community development needs, including assisting businesses and creating and retaining jobs in low and moderate income areas, improving the existing housing stock, funding public improvements such as senior centers and homeless facilities, and providing vital public services, such as day care for low-income working families, health care for children, and meals to the elderly.

Cops on the Beat: The COPS program provides vital resources to local and state police departments that help them to strengthen police-community relations and prevent, reduce, and respond to crime. Since its inception in 1994 it has invested approximately \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. It has funded approximately 125,000 additional officers in more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in jurisdictions large and small. Further, studies have shown that it has helped to reduce the crime rate.

State Criminal Alien Assistance Program: SCAAP reimburses jurisdictions for a portion of the costs they incur incarcerating certain undocumented criminal aliens, including those who have at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions for violations of state or local law. Currently states and localities are only reimbursed at the rate of 18 cents for every dollar they spend incarcerating these individuals.

The nation's mayors respectfully urge the Committee to focus on fixing our broken immigration system, as it did in bipartisan fashion in the last Congress, rather than passing punitive legislation that penalizes cities trying to build trust with the communities they are charged with protecting and assuring the safety of all of their residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Tom Cochran".

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director

DollarWise Summer Youth Contest Celebrates Another Banner Year

By James Kirby

The US Conference of Mayors' DollarWise Campaign is pleased to announce that 1,800 youth from over 100 cities participated in the 2015 DollarWise Summer Youth Contest, bringing the total number to over 7,000 since the Contest was first launched in 2012. Each year, the DollarWise Campaign, in partnership with the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Workforce Development Council, provides online financial education a financial education curriculum to youth in summer programs to help them save the money that they earn in their paychecks. Participating youth are placed into weekly raffles where they can win prizes including iPads, Kindles, and iPod Shuffles.

During the eight-week contest, twenty-four youth were awarded prizes for their participation. Mayors were invited to hold award presentations in City Hall for the winning youth. Akron Mayor Jeff Fusco, USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Cape Coral Mayor Marni Sawicki, Charlotte Mayor Dan Clodfelter, Charlottesville Mayor Satyendra Huja, East Orange Mayor Lester E. Taylor III, Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra, Houston Mayor Annise Parker, Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, and Tuscaloosa Mayor Walter Maddox each presented prizes to youth.

The Summer Youth Contest curriculum consisted of six modules from Better Money Habits.com, and included information on general better money habits, budgeting, credit and debit cards, how to create an emergency fund, saving for a car, and how to save for college. Better Money Habits.com is powered by Bank of America and the Khan Academy.

During the Contest, cities were encouraged to hold their own raffles using the online DollarWise modules. Baltimore, Apopka, East Orange, Fort Lauderdale, Houston, Philadelphia, Tuscaloosa, and Ville Platte held additional raffles for youth in their programs.

In an effort to provide financial literacy to youth in year-round programs, the DollarWise Summer Youth Contest modules will remain available for use until June 2016. The online modules can be accessed at www.bedollarwise.org/syc.

DollarWise thanks each of the cities and mayors who participated this year in the Summer Youth Contest, and appreciates their dedication to providing financial education to youth in summer and year-long programs.

For more information on the DollarWise Campaign visit: www.bedollarwise.org, or contact Program Manager James Kirby at jkirby@usmayors.org.

The DollarWise Campaign is made possible through a grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.



USCM President Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake



Cape Coral Mayor Marni Sawicki



Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra



Charlotte Mayor Dan Clodfelter



Houston Mayor Annise Parker



Charlottesville Mayor Satyendra Huja



Tuscaloosa Mayor Walter Maddox



Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto

Save the Date:

Mayors Water Summit

October 15-16, 2015

THE LINE Hotel
3151 Wilshire Boulevard – Los Angeles, CA 90010

Register at: <http://usmayors.org/MWCLA>

Mayors will convene in Los Angeles to discuss some of the most pressing water issues facing cities.

Water Quality Standards and Consent Decrees
Legionnaires Disease
California Cities Water Conservation Successes
Green Infrastructure
Public Water Infrastructure Investment: Status and Challenges
Water Quality Standards, Affordability and the Role of Integrated Planning

Meeting starts at 2 pm Thursday, October 15, with a reception at THE LINE Hotel, early evening.
Meeting ends at 2:30 pm Friday, October 16, 2015.

Staff Contact: Rich Anderson, 202-861-6795, randerson@usmayors.org

TRANSPORTATION

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in their areas.

Late last month, Conference President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake joined with leaders of other local and regional government partner organizations, including the National Association of Counties and National League of Cities, to convey the support of mayors and other local officials to House transportation leaders, urging action on a long-term bill with more funding, including more localized funding. "We encourage you to increase funding and authority for local decision-makers and place a renewed emphasis on locally-owned infrastructure. We will do our part to support you and your colleagues as you move this bipartisan legislation forward," [leaders of the six organizations wrote](#).

Attention by the organizational leaders and their members are now specifically directed at the House where local leaders are urging that a larger share of Sur-

face Transportation Program (STP) funds be allocated to local areas, both urbanized areas and other areas in a state. STP funds are particularly important to local decision-makers because these funds are the most flexible dollars available under this massive law. Notably, in the MAP-21 law, which was enacted just over three years ago, the share of STP funds directed to all local areas was reduced by 20 percent, cutting the local share of all STP funds from 62.5 percent to 50 percent.

Reminding House leaders why it is important to raise the share of funding directed to local areas, Rawlings-Blake and her colleagues also wrote, "Our members own almost all of the nation's transit systems and nearly 80 percent of the nation's highways and streets (along with 50 percent of the National Bridge Inventory), including 43 percent of all federal-aid highway miles and nearly 10 percent of the National Highway System."

The Senate approved its 6-year reauthorization of the transportation law

(H.R. 22) in late July, providing for modest annual increases in program funding but providing only enough new revenue to pay for just half of the renewal period. House leaders are strongly opposed to the Senate's approach on revenues and have pledged to fully fund the program during the renewal period. This legislation raises the STP share to 55 percent but sets aside more funds off the top of the program, resulting in reduced STP funding next fiscal year for ALL metro and other local areas.

This legislation – often called "MAP-21 renewal" – is expected to provide more than \$50+ billion each year to state, regional and local transportation agencies for various transit, highway, bridge, and safety projects. For an overview of the Senate bill (H.R. 22), see [last month's U.S. MAYOR article](#) on the Senate bill. Details on what is included in the committee versions of the House bill will not be known until just before the panels take up the legislation in October.



Rochester Hills and Louisville Celebrate 2015 City Livability Awards

Rochester Hills

On August 26, 2015 Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett celebrated his 2015 City Livability Award at a Mayor's Business Council reception held at a local business, Ray-connect which hosted the "Tour de Rochester Hills" a proud member of the Council hosted the ceremony during its celebration of 150 years in business. The Rochester Hills's Mayor's Business Council is an advisory board made up of 100 area business executives, who coordinate with city officials to maintain a business-friendly environment in the city. The group is entirely sponsor-funded; no city dollars are used in achieving its mission. The council was recognized for two unique programs the Mayor's Business Council Talent Initiative (which connects local university graduates to employers) and the Red Carpet Committee (which formally welcomes new companies to the city).



USCM City Livability Awards Program Director Jocelyn Bogen presents the 2015 City Livability Award to Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett. Photo Credit: Eric Perry.



Left to right, front row: Waste Management Senior District Manager Mike Fuller, Louisville Metro Council President David W. Tandy, Louisville Mayor Greg Fisher, USCM City Livability Awards Program Director Jocelyn Bogen, Metro Council District 5 Member Cheri Bryant Hamilton and Waste Management Business Development Manager Robert Cheney. Second and third rows: City of Louisville Office of Sustainability staff, and Brightside employees.

Louisville

On September 9th, Louisville Mayor Greg Fisher held a press conference to honor to the Green Living Neighborhood Certification Program which received an Outstanding Achievement City Livability Award in June at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Launched in 2014, Louisville's Green Living Neighborhood Certification Program encourages citizens to reduce their impact on Louisville's natural environment and live healthier lives. Green Living educates individuals and households on how to live more sustainably through a competition-based incentive, by recognizing neighborhoods that achieve predetermined criteria with a Green, Silver, Gold or Platinum certification. The program distributes merit-based certifications based on the percentage of neighborhood households that perform activities such as conserving energy, purchasing local food, and staying active and healthy. Over 300 households spread out over eight self-selected neighborhoods now participate.



Denver Receives 2015 National Education Pathways with a Purpose Grant

By Megan Cardiff

On Thursday, September 3, Stephanie Nellons-Paige, Senior Director for Metro Engagement and Relations, Philanthropy & National Engagement at USA Funds, presented Denver Mayor Michael Hancock with the \$25,000 First Place award for The U.S. Conference of Mayors/USA Funds inaugural 2015 National Education Pathways with a Purpose grants program, at a ceremony held at Denver University Morgridge College of Education.

The grant will support and expand the work of the Denver Education Compact to boost college and career readiness among the city's youth and to ensure students are prepared for future success. The Compact's main goal – to increase the number of high school students who complete a post-secondary pathway and obtain a job with a living wage – supports Mayor Hancock's goal of ensuring young people have the education and workforce skills need to succeed in the 21st century economy.

"Denver's strength has always been our collaborative efforts, and we're proud of that. The funds received today will help us in support city initiatives that build a more purposeful pathway toward college and career readiness," Mayor Hancock said. "We have an obligation to work together and do right by our kids by preparing them for the future. Together, we can build an educated workforce, one in which Denver you can contribute."

"USA Funds partnered with the U.S. Conference of Mayors last year to recognize mayors and communities that have invested in innovative initiatives to promote college and career readiness," said Stephanie Nellons-Paige. "We would love to see model programs, like Denver's, adopted by other communities around the country."

The Compact also focuses on bridging the communication and information gap between business and education. Mayor Hancock recognizes the opportunity to leverage the collective energy of these systems-level change initiatives in the early phases and is mov-

grant awards will be announced at the U.S. Conference of Mayors 84th Annual Winter Meeting from January 20-22, 2016 in Washington, D.C. Grant awards for the second year of the program have been increased to \$100,000 for the Large City win-



Left to right: Erin Brown, Executive Director, Office of Children's Affairs for the City and County of Denver; Stephanie Nellons-Paige, Senior Director, Philanthropy and National Engagement of USA Funds; Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock; Superintendent Tom Boasberg, Denver Public Schools; Curtis L. Esquibel, Director, Denver College of Attainment Network; and TeRay Esquibel, El Pomar Fellow and 2015 Graduate, University of Denver.

ing Denver toward a collective impact model for long-term aligned, collaborative, career-focused education. Denver will use the grant money from USCM/USA Funds Pathways with a Purpose initiative to create a single data dashboard to be shared by all four initiatives and determine a backbone organization to keep initiative operations streamlined and collaborative.

The 2016 USCM/USA Funds National Education Pathways with a Purpose

ner, \$35,000 for the Medium City Winner, and \$15,000 for the Small City Winner. For more information on the 2016 grant awards, please contact Megan Cardiff at mcardiff@usmayors.org.



Mayor Rawlings-Blake Hosts MLB Commissioner and Orioles Legend at Play Ball Event



USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake sponsored a local Play Ball event August 26th in her city. Along with the Mayor were Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred, Jr. and former Baltimore Orioles manager and national league MVP player Frank Robinson.



The US Conference of Mayors partnered with Major League Baseball in organizing Play Ball events in cities during August. Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director, announces that over 130 mayors participated in this year's efforts.

Over 300 children participated in the day's event which focused on encouraging greater youth interest and participation in baseball.



Frank Robinson shows a young boy the proper way to hit a ball.

Congressional Budget Office Estimates No Sequestration Will Be Required for 2015 Funding

By Larry Jones

In a report filed last August, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that no sequestration or across-the-board cuts will be required in defense or nondefense funding in 2015. In the report, CBO said "the discretionary appropriations provided for 2015 did not exceed the caps, and thus, by CBO's estimates, a further sequestration (or cancellation of budget resources) will not be required as a result of appropriations actions this year." Sequestration is the enforcement mechanism prescribed by law for keeping federal spending on discretionary programs in line with spending goals set by Congress.

In 2011 President Obama signed into law the Budget Control Act (BCA), which authorized an increase in the limit on the federal government's borrowing authority in exchange for \$2.4 trillion in deficit reduction over the next ten years. Included in this total was \$1.2 trillion in specific spending cuts identified in the legislation. The remaining \$1.2 trillion

in savings was to be determined by a super committee made up of members from both chambers and both major parties in Congress.

When the super committee failed to reach agreement on the remaining \$1.2 trillion in savings, the BCA called for sequestration or across-the-board reductions in the rate of increase in spending for non-exempt discretionary programs. Under the BCA, the federal government over a ten year period is expected to save: a total of \$216 billion from reduced interest payments; and the remaining \$984 billion in savings would come from across-the-board cuts in spending evenly split—\$492 billion from defense programs and \$492 billion from nondefense programs. Annually this translates into \$54.7 billion from defense and \$54.7 billion from nondefense programs.

Although sequestration was scheduled to take effect in January, it was delayed

until March 1, 2013 with the passage of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, which also adjusted the spending caps for 2014 to offset the two-month delay in implementation.

In its recent report, CBO explains that the budget caps set in 2011 were further modified by the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2013, which cancelled the automatic across-the-board spending cuts scheduled to take effect in 2014 and 2015. It also revised the caps on discretionary spending for both defense and nondefense funding by \$22 billion above what the caps would have been in 2014 and by \$9 billion above what they would have been in 2015 if the automatic cuts had taken effect. Under the BBA, the caps on spending were reset at \$1.014 trillion: \$521 billion for defense programs and \$492 billion for non-defense programs.

See BUDGET OFFICE on page 12

MAYORS BUSINESS COUNCIL Member Profile U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry that generates \$2.1 trillion in economic output and supports 14.9 million jobs. U.S. Travel's mission is to increase travel to and within the United States.

Special Interests:

Insurance, Media Relations, Public Relations, Transportation, Travel Issues
For more Business Council profiles visit the USCM Website at usmayors.org/buscouncil

The CBO report also points out that, by law, the budget caps must be adjusted upward whenever appropriations are provided for certain emergencies such as military activities in Afghanistan and disaster relief. According to the CBO, the budget caps on discretionary spending must be adjusted by \$87.1 billion to account for these activities for 2015. Most of this, \$64.4 billion, is an increase in the defense caps to provide for overseas contingency operations. The remaining amount is for adjustments to the non-defense cap including: \$9.3 billion for overseas contingency operations, \$6.5 billion for disaster relief, \$5.3 billion for Ebola preparedness, and \$1.5 billion for initiatives related to Medicare, Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs. Incorporating all of these adjustments, CBO estimates the cap on discretionary spending for 2015 is now \$1.1 trillion. This includes \$585.9 billion for defense programs and \$514.9 billion for nondefense programs.

pard to engage in a vigorous mayoral campaign and participated in planning meetings with my campaign team and volunteers, I came to the realization that every moment that I spend running for mayor would take away from the urgent responsibilities to the City that I love."

"Over the next 15 months, my time would be best spent focused on continuing to move the City forward and building upon our progress, without the distraction of campaign politics," the Mayor added.

Mayor Rawlings-Blake noted her many achievements in office, including instituting pension reform, developing the City's first 10-year financial plan, earning the City's highest combined bond rating in decades, implementing ethics reform, reducing property taxes, investing in repairing the police department's relationship with the community, reducing unemployment by a third, attacking blight through Vacants to Value, reducing teen

pregnancies by a third, and securing more than \$1 billion for school construction.

"As I work with the U.S. Department of Justice to reform our police department, as I fight for more recreational opportunities for our youth, as I seek to attract new businesses and new investments to Baltimore, I do not want to see every difficult decision be evaluated, questioned and critiqued within the context of how it affects a political campaign," Mayor Rawlings-Blake said.

Mayor Rawlings-Blake said she will continue to pursue her ambitious agenda for Baltimore during her remaining 15 months in office, including working to improve police-community relations, fighting for her ambitious plan to invest \$136 million in Recreation Centers for our communities, and continuing to create new jobs and attack neighborhood blight.

"Let me be clear that business of government will continue and I will continue to work to Grow Baltimore. I love this City, and I pledge to work for this City's future, both during my remaining time as mayor and beyond," the Mayor concluded.

MAYORS BUSINESS COUNCIL

Member Profile



KHA Fra Engineering Consultants specializes in environmental engineering, including water and wastewater treatment engineering. We are additionally engaged in engineering specialties of civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, transportation, aviation, value engineering studies, design-build, process, architectural, and GIS work.

Our firm is DBE certified in 40 jurisdictions, including the Department of Transportation in eight states.

We are a can-do company with vision, helping our clients, our communities, and our firm meet today's challenges and achieve tomorrow's goals.

Special Interests:

Environment, Public Works, Transportation, Waste Disposal, Waste Water Treatment
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Blacksburg Celebrates Residential Solar Achievements, Recognizes Community Sustainability Leader

By Kevin McCarty

Mayor Ron Rordam led a special ceremony September 14 to celebrate its 2015 Mayors' Climate Protection Award and the memory of Blacksburg's first sustainability manager.

Blacksburg was honored for its "Solarize Blacksburg Program," an initiative that has already inspired more than two dozen other jurisdictions in Virginia to ramp up their residential solar efforts.

As the top small-city winner of this year's awards, Rordam thanked the Conference of Mayors and Walmart for their support and recognition of Blacksburg's achievement, presenting the \$15,000 grant award to the Susan Garrison Memorial Fund of the Community Foundation of the New River Valley.

Rordam cited the work of the Conference of Mayors and Walmart, and thanked both for their awards program and their leadership on sustainability. "I want to thank the Conference of Mayors for everything you all do at the Conference that we all do together to promote sustainability and to promote awareness about what we owe our communities. I want to thank Walmart for this grant and for what they have done to support this effort and all of the folks there that are involved in it."

During his remarks, Rordam noted the importance of mayors working together as supporters of the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. "There is a lot of power in cooperation and working together."

Foundation leaders joined with Rordam, members of Garrison's family and others for the event. Garrison, who lost her battle with cancer in 2013, was Blacksburg's first sustainability manager and led its initial climate protection



Left to right: Community Foundation of the New River Valley Board President Courtney Grohs, Community Foundation of the New River Valley Executive Director Jessica Wirgau, and Blacksburg Mayor Ron Rordam.

work, helping develop its climate action plan for this university community, home of Virginia Tech. Praising Garrison for her leadership, Rordam said, "It is so appropriate that Susan's name is on this (award)."

Thanking the community leaders and family members, Rordam pledged that these "funds will be put to great use and do wonderful things for the Town of Blacksburg and continue these efforts."

"Solar Energy Is Our Future"

"Solar energy is our future," said Virginia Tech Professor Emeritus John Randolph who joined the ceremony as a member of the "Solarize Blacksburg" Leadership Team.

"Solar energy after 2040 will be the biggest source of new power in the world," Randolph said. Explaining that Virginia had been slow to adopt solar, he explained how the program was about accelerating solar energy use in Blacksburg and in the state. With

35 installed systems in Blacksburg over a decade prior to the launch of the program, 114 systems were added afterwards, Randolph said. Solarize Blacksburg was about "branding it and building the trust of homeowners to really get involved with it."

Randolph said the initial goal was to double the amount of residential installed capacity, but the program increased it three and one half times. Because of this effort, Blacksburg's residential solar capacity, he explained, now places it second in the state, ahead of much large communities like Richmond, Arlington County, Virginia Beach and Alexandria.



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Columbia Mayor Stephen Benjamin Keynotes U.S. Communities Summit

By Kathryn Kretschmer-Weyland

On August 17, the city of Columbia, South Carolina held a U.S. Communities Summit for a group of community leaders, city employees, and other guests gathered at a summit to hear what the city's mayor had to say about the U.S. Communities purchasing program. This summit was a result of a noteworthy collaboration between U.S. Communities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The Summit presented a terrific opportunity for community members to learn more about the program, meet with the local program manager, and interact directly with suppliers such as Graybar, Supply-Works, and Cintas.



Columbia Mayor Stephen Benjamin (far left), Tyler McCall, U. S. Communities (far right), Sandra Wright, Columbia Purchasing Director is accepting the Customer Appreciation Award surrounded by city staff.

Tyler McCall, U.S. Communities program manager for the state, hosted this event along with the city of Columbia and the various suppliers exhibiting. Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin, is an enthusiastic advocate for U.S. Communities, was the keynote speaker. In his address, Mayor Benjamin praised U.S. Communities as the only purchasing cooperative created "by public agencies for public agencies," and encouraged attendees to register and use the program as a way to "do more with less."

Following the Mayor's address, McCall presented, on behalf of U.S. Communities, a Customer Appreciation Award to the City of Columbia Purchasing Team. Customer Appreciation Awards are given to honor organizations that are leaders in saving dollars through the use of cooperative purchasing, and the City of Columbia was easily identified as a worthy recipient.

McCall then gave attendees a comprehensive overview of the U.S. Communities program, noting that users – local and state government agencies, school districts, and nonprofits – can have access to goods and services at reduced costs. He listed "what makes U.S. Communities different" (including no user fees, Advisory Board oversight, third party audits, etc.), and brought attention to the wide variety of offerings provided by the program's suppliers. He also empha-

sized the fact that U.S. Communities guarantees the best overall supplier government pricing as well as the quality of the supplier brands in a wide variety of categories, services, and solutions.

This summit could not have taken place without the sponsorship and support of four suppliers: Garland (roofing), Graybar (electrical, LED lighting systems, telecommunications, data, and security solutions), Safeware (homeland security and public safety), and Cintas (facility cleaning, janitorial services, and uniform and work apparel). Representatives from each company gave brief presentations on their main operations and provided examples of how they can be used through U.S. Communities.

McCall also took the opportunity again to introduce the other attending suppliers and allow them to say a few words about their business. Those present included SupplyWorks (janitorial supplies), HD Supply (maintenance and hardware), Club Car (utility, transportation and golf vehicles), Premier (K-12 and higher education food service and products), Haworth (office furniture), and Unicom (technology products). Attendees spent time meeting with these suppliers to learn more about their goods

and services – the "exhibit hall" atmosphere was well-received and hugely successful.

To learn more about how you can get involved in an upcoming summit, please visit www.uscommunities.org/news-events/sourcing-summits/. Each summit serves as an educational seminar that gives you a fast and easy way to learn how to maximize your time and budget through the U.S. Communities program. It also provides an opportunity to network with peers and other public agencies and non-profits.

Upcoming sourcing summits:

- September 23, Los Angeles, CA
- September 24, Columbus, OH
- September 30, Indianapolis, IN

U.S. Communities is the leading national government purchasing cooperative, providing solutions and savings to members by aggregating the purchasing power of public agencies nationwide. U.S. Communities provides county users with access to a wide variety of competitively solicited contracts with national suppliers that have committed to providing their lowest overall public agency pricing. For more information, please visit www.uscommunities.org.

Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett Named Among “Politico 50”

By Crystal Swann

Oklahoma City Mayor and Conference Vice President Mick Cornett made the list of the 2015 Politico 50, highlighted as a list “those who have found ways around the gridlock and dysfunction stalling today’s government (and a few of those who’ve embraced it).” These are the doers, thinkers and visionaries who are transforming American politics.

Mayor Cornett, ranked number 38, was honored for his tireless work to reduce his city’s obesity ranking among American cities. Cornett’s journey started as a personal one when he decided in 2004, weighing in at 220 pounds, that he needed to lose some weight. As he began his journey, he began to take stock of how his city’s sprawl landscape, as he says, “designed for the automobile,” encouraged a sedentary lifestyle instead of a healthy, vibrant one. Cornett set out to change that landscape.

In 2007 he announced that his city was

going on a diet and in 2012 his city collectively lost 1 million pounds and was ranked the 23rd fittest city in the United States. But Cornett’s journey to redesign his city didn’t stop there, with the help of a tax payer approved 1 cent tax, funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others, the city is on the path to constructing its first central park, adding hundreds of miles of improved sidewalks, constructing bicycle and hiking paths, and equipping the Oklahoma River to encourage rowing.

The rewards of Mayor Cornett’s efforts include a resurging downtown, more young people moving to Oklahoma City (5 percent population growth since 2010) and re-election, to become the longest serving mayor in Oklahoma City history.

Read more: <http://www.politico.com/magazine/politico50/2015/mick-cornett#ixzz3m0m6kTiS>



US Conference of Mayors Vice President Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett.

Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards

Applications open for nearly \$450,000 in grants

visit www.usmayors.org/childhoodobesity for more information

APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

Colonial Life - Celebrating Those Who Serve America

By Carey Adamson

Some celebrate the return of cooler weather after a hot summer. Others celebrate a quiet house after the children finally head back to school. And many will celebrate their favorite high school, college and pro football teams and their return to the field.

Colonial Life is celebrating too. We're celebrating the great work that happens each day by the millions of men and women who work for America. Without the schoolteachers, postal workers, police officers, custodial staff, office employees, firefighters, maintenance team members and so many others, our lives would not be the same.

In our business, we take pride in protecting and serving those who protect and serve us. We do that by providing the best financial protection products and benefits communication we can.

In fact, we've been working for those who work for America for so long that we're celebrating our own milestone this year – 60 years of serving public sector employees – on Sept. 15. We're holding a virtual birthday party from 2 to 4 p.m. Eastern, and you can take part on Twitter @ColonialLifePS.

In 1955, our products were offered for the first time through payroll deduction to public employees in North Carolina – a unit of the state highway patrol. In the 60 years since, we have grown to serve 5,000 local governments, 34 state governments and 2,700 educational agencies.

Through our decades of service to those who work for America's workers, we've learned a lot about how America works. Colonial Life can help your city's leaders demonstrate their concern for their employees' individual needs with a strong, customizable benefits package.

There's a high degree of correlation between how employees feel about their benefits package and how they feel about their employer, according to the 2014 U.S. Worker Study. Of employees who rate their benefits package as "excellent" or "very good," 76 percent also say their company is an "excel-

lent" or "very good" place to work. Only 5 percent rate it "fair" or "poor."

On the flip side, employees who give their benefits package just a "fair" or "poor" rating are much more likely – 45 percent compared with the 5 percent above – to say their company is only a "fair" or "poor" place to work. And only 18 percent of these employees say their employer is "excellent" or "very good."

We have learned that the best way for employees to understand and value their benefits is for them to understand what's available to them. Helping employees understand their benefits, and where coverage gaps may or may not exist, is one of the things we do best.

Celebrate your city's employees this year by closing the benefits communication gap as we head into enrollment season. What gap, you ask? Nearly all employees (98 percent) in a 2013 Colonial Life-Harris Interactive poll said it's important to understand their benefits. But only a third (34 percent) of employees whose employers offer benefits say they understand their benefits very well – and 7 percent don't understand them well at all.

The good news is you may be able to easily close this communications gap at little to no direct cost to your employees by taking advantage of the resources of your benefits provider (see a list of best practices in benefits communication below). Top voluntary benefits partners can take the burden off your limited staff to deliver effective, consistent benefits communication that helps your employees understand their benefits and make the best choices for their individual needs.

So by providing your employees a strong benefits package and benefits communication program, you can make your workplace a happier place. And that's something we can all celebrate.

About the Author: Carey Adamson is vice president of public sector market services for Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company. For more information about Colonial Life and the product and services they provide cities, please contact Kathryn Kretschmer Weyland at kweyland@usmayors.org.

Here are some of the best practices in benefits communication:

One-to-one support. A one-size-fits-all approach to benefits communication no longer works. Insurance is complex, and relying on self-education or technology alone isn't realistic. Having access to a trained benefits specialist who personalizes the decision-making experience for employees can create real satisfaction. Employees appreciate having someone help them understand all the terminology and choices, as well as give them the confidence they need to make good decisions for their families.

Multiple employee touch points. Give employees multiple options to enhance benefits communication. Some basic methods you should offer include one-to-one meetings, group meetings and Internet or self-enroll methods. Supplement these methods with online resources, printed benefits booklets, printed enrollment guides and interactive multimedia tools.

Interactivity. Today's benefits communication and education involves more than just developing a message and delivering it. It's about creating employee participation. Using tools such as workbooks and interactive needs analysis helps create true engagement and participation.

Convenience. Providing tools to give access to employees throughout the year, not just at annual enrollment, is important. The use of corporate portals, for example, has become increasingly popular, giving workers easy, 24/7 access to a wide range of web-based benefits information they can use year-round at their convenience.

Year-round communication. No one's life is static, and benefits communication shouldn't be either. Think about your new employees and employees who experience life changes throughout the year, such as marriage, retirement or the birth of a child. You need a way to keep up the communications efforts year-round.



SAVE THE DATE:

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Washington, DC

Registration Opens Fall 2015

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Sponsorship:
Geri Powell
gpowell@usmayors.org
202-861-6774

