



# U.S. MAYOR

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## Long-Term Surface Transportation Law Enacted *Gains for Mayors in Moving Local Area Projects Forward*

By Kevin McCarty

President Barack Obama and Congressional leaders finally came together earlier this month to enact a long-term renewal of the nation's surface transportation law, a bipartisan agreement that was the result of nearly two years of deliberations.

The new law, "Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act" or FAST Act, directs more than \$300 billion in funding over five fiscal years to highway, bridge, safety, transit, and passenger rail projects and programs. On December 3, the House of

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House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (PA) addresses mayors on the need for a long-term surface transportation renewal during the Conference's 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in June 2013.

## Rawlings-Blake, U.S. Mayors Participate in Historic Paris Climate Talks

By Paul Leroux

Continuing a legacy of involvement in U.N. climate talks, a delegation from the U.S. Conference of Mayors took part in the 2015 U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP 21) in Paris, which ran from November 30-December 12, 2015.

Led by USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, the delegation also included Second Vice President New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth B. Kautz, and CEO & Executive Director Tom Cochran.

The delegation sought to share the work that local governments are doing to combat

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From left: U.S. Ambassador to France Jane Hartley, USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake.



In Paris at COP 21, Conference President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Second Vice President New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, and Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz released our Conference of Mayors Climate Center report, citing the exemplary work of USA mayors in our effort to protect our globe from climate change.

U.S. Ambassador Jane Hartley hosted our organization at her residence as we released our report to the American and international attendees of the United Nations 2015 Climate Change Conference, COP 21.

Conference President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake proudly spoke at our event, emphasizing that many national leaders and groups have talked and talked about climate issues at 21 international meetings. She, along with other mayors and organizations from America and the world, urged our national leaders to follow our local leaders by agreeing to an international commitment that produces actions at the international level to match the actions of local mayors across the nations.

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu stressed the resilience theme as he has been most involved with the Rockefeller Foundation and the C40 Mayors group, two organizations who are leaders for climate change solutions.

Burnsville Mayor Kautz continued to emphasize the continued work of our USCM Climate Center. She praised the USA mayors' leadership, pointing out that other national organizations of mayors have followed the United States Conference of Mayors and adopted climate agreements such as the USCM Climate Protection Agreement, established ten years ago.

We are most appreciative of the strong partnership we have developed with Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and we profoundly thank her for the recognizing the great work of the United States Conference of Mayors.

No doubt, Paris is still recovering from the dastardly attacks of Friday, November 13. Young law officers with automatic weapons were with us as mayors from around the world gathered at the Place de la République to place memorial white roses on the memorial to those who died so tragically. And even though Paris is tense, there are signs of more people coming out to shop for Christmas and be involved in the social and business activities of that grand city. We remember our aftermath of 9/11 and the fear we as USA citizens had to overcome before we returned to our normal activity on the streets of America.

As the world was recovering from the November 13 attacks in Paris, we were hit on December 2, in San Bernardino, California, where 14 people were killed and 22 were injured in an Islamic extremism-inspired terrorist attack. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who died and are suffering.

And it seems that the attacks will continue. Without question, mayors and police chiefs and police departments are having more put on them than ever before in our history. They continue to have to deal with what I call "everyday" crime: domestic quarrels that result in violence, regular street crime, and common thefts and burglary.

In addition, they are now being attacked, and the confrontation continues in many of our cities following Ferguson in August of 2014. Philadelphia Mayor Nutter and New Orleans Mayor Landrieu were out front on police reform long before Ferguson, citing the deaths of so many black youths that so many in Washington and elsewhere continue to ignore.

On top of these issues, we now are at war with ISIS and the people in our cities, large and small, rely on local police to protect

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## U.S. MAYOR

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# Reserved for the Mayor: Human Rights as a Vision for the Future of our Cities

By Birmingham Mayor William A. Bell, Sr.

The 2015 Presidential debates offer a politically charged, but important snapshot of the national agenda. From aging infrastructure and changing demographics to rising healthcare costs and stagnant wages, the dominant issues are the same concerns that we address in our cities every day. Birmingham is no exception.

To respond to these challenges, and stay ahead of the curve, we balance our day-to-day work of city management with a longer-term view on city sustainability. We strive to think not only about what our community needs next year, but also in the next generation.

Of course, to look forward, we must examine where we are. And, as a nation, we face mounting social and economic inequality. As we know in Birmingham, the challenge of inequality is not new. During the Civil Rights Movement, our residents mobilized and inspired change, laying the groundwork to protect the basic civil and human rights of dignity and equality across the country and around the world.

As we continually strive to achieve the goals of dignity and equality, fundamental human rights principles remain an important touchstone. The basic premise that there is a right to be free from discrimination, and that governments should take steps to realize this right, and create conditions where all individual can meet their basic needs, informs what we do on a daily basis. Human rights provide us with a positive vision that can help our city shape effective solutions calibrated to ensure dignity, opportunity, and fairness for all.

These principles are important as we strive to make Birmingham more livable today and more resilient for tomorrow. They counsel us to look at the relationship among a range of human rights issues within our community. This includes access to the ballot, as well as housing, criminal justice, education, and health. Human rights also call on us to proactively examine how laws and policies can

perpetuate discrimination and inequality, even if that is not their intent. Indeed, we cannot tackle inequality without understanding the factors that contribute to it, and working intentionally to eliminate them.

Our initiatives to address disparities and discrimination reflect human rights principles in a number of ways. We have sought out challenge grants to improve housing and access to food. We are focused on access to quality education for all, as well as the causes and consequences of disparities in the criminal justice system. In all of these efforts to protect basic human rights, we have placed a premium on partnerships. We seize opportunities to partner with community members, with mayors, with businesses, and with thought leaders from around the world.

Human rights offer an important tool and shared framework to make these connections. Challenges like human trafficking, immigrant integration, equitable access to food, health outcomes, and the environment transcend local and national boundaries. To effectively address them, we should think in global terms. Over the past several years, we have witnessed how human rights can help build bridges to confront some of the pressing human rights issues we face in Birmingham.

In 2014, I was invited by the federal government to join an official U.S. delegation to the United Nations. The delegation traveled to Geneva as part of a periodic U.N. review of how U.S. laws and policies measure up to the human rights standards set forth in the international agreement focused on racial discrimination (also known as CERD). Over the span of a few days, I consulted with the federal government representatives, international human rights experts, and U.S. human rights advocates.

The review was an opportunity for me to showcase Birmingham's efforts to protect human rights, as well as USCM initiatives to tackle discrimination and inequality, like the Coalition of Cities Against Racism. Importantly, this trip to Geneva was also a chance



tantly, this trip to Geneva was also a chance to foster relationships with policymakers and advocates from around the U.S., and the world, to learn about common challenges, and common solutions. Grounding the conversation in human rights terms helped to focus discussions on the importance of proactive efforts to achieve equal access and outcomes, and address the unique barriers that different individuals experience as a result of their identity.

My participation in these international dialogues inspired me to involve the Birmingham community in a conversation about human rights – to reflect on our own human rights record and identify avenues for further progress. In March of this year, we took a first step. My office convened a daylong dialogue among community members, local and national advocates, as well as federal and local government representatives, to discuss the status of human rights in the City. The Dialogue occurred at an important time for reflection. It took place on the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the Bloody Sunday March from Selma to Montgomery that precipitated passage of the Voting Rights Act. It also coincided with a comprehensive U.N. review of the U.S. human rights record, known as the Universal Periodic Review.

We hosted a full day of panels focused on

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Representatives first approved the FAST legislation on a 359-65 vote, with the Senate voting 83-16 later that evening to send the measure to the President for his signature.

In the end, Congress and the Administration, led by Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, agreed to legislation that generally builds upon and mostly follows current law, providing local and state officials with a certain long-term funding commitment for the first time in more than a decade.

A key champion of this long-term renewal effort, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (PA) said, "The FAST Act is one of the most important measures this Congress will pass." He underscored the new law's impact on economic growth, stating, "This bill is an investment in America and the infrastructure that underpins our economy."

President Barack Obama echoed similar economic themes, touting the legislation's importance to the U.S. economy in his remarks December 4 just before signing the measure into law (Public Law 114-94).

"Last night, Democrats and Republicans came together to pass a transportation bill that will help us build on America's progress by growing our economy and creating more good jobs for our middle class...I look forward to signing this bill right away, so that we can put Americans to work rebuilding our crumbling roads, bridges, and transit systems, reauthorize the Export-Import Bank that helps our companies compete around the world, and give local and state governments and employers the certainty they need to invest and hire for the long term," the President said.

In their joint statement, Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Jim Inhofe (OK) and the panel's Ranking Member Barbara Boxer (CA) said, "It is our constitutional responsibility to fund our nation's vast transportation and infrastructure network. This bill is what our country needs, and we are pleased to see this last step of the bill being signed into law."



USCM Transportation and Communications Committee Chair Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, at right, talks with House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair Bill Shuster (PA) prior to the panel's opening hearing on renewal of the nation's surface transportation law, held January 14, 2014.

## USCM Praises Long-Term Renewal

In commenting on the legislation, Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran said, "The Conference of Mayors today is pleased that we are finally moving beyond short-term extensions and now have a long-term renewal of the nation's surface transportation law, providing mayors and local leaders and so many others with more certainty and resources to move forward with critically needed transportation projects."

Praising the agreement and how it addresses "so many priorities of the nation's mayors," Cochran also said, "Reaching agreement on a long-term renewal plan is a testament to the hard work and bipartisanship of so many in Congress. The nation's mayors are thankful Congress found common ground for the good of the American people who travel everyday on our bridges and highway, transit and rail systems."

Securing a long-term renewal with growing funding commitments, including directing more resources to local areas, were the organizing principles for the nation's mayors throughout the renewal process.

The Conference's Transportation and Communications Committee Chair Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed first brought these messages to

Chairman Shuster and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, when he testified with other national leaders at the panel's opening hearing, held January 14, 2014. Reed and other Conference leadership mayors worked subsequently with Congressional leaders throughout the process, including Shuster who often met and spoke with mayors, including keynote addresses before the Conference's Annual and Winter Meetings.

As Conference President, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake led the Conference's efforts through Senate and House floor action on their respective renewal plans as well as final action earlier this month when both chambers approved the conference agreement, successfully bringing closure to the Conference's lengthy renewal campaign.

## Mayors to See Gains on Key Priorities

Importantly, the new law preserves important elements of current law, including guaranteed spending levels over the five-year renewal period (FYs '16 – '20) for most highway, bridge, safety and transit programs.

Among the new law's provisions, there are notable funding commitments to discretionary

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grant programs of interest to cities and their metro areas.

**Discretionary Bus Funds:** The new law restores funding to the bus and bus facilities program, which will again provide competitive grants to supplement what transit providers receive through formula grants. This discretionary program, administered by the Federal Transit Administration, will provide \$268 million in FY'16, rising to \$344 million by FY'20. Of these annual amounts, \$55 million is set-aside each year for low and no emission buses, helping boost the deployment of new bus technologies, including all-electric buses.

**Small Starts:** Competitive funding will continue to be available for smaller, fixed guideway transit investments, often streetcars or qualifying Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects, and the new law raises the funding thresholds under this program. A qualifying project can now total \$300 million (\$200 million cap currently) from all sources, with Small Starts funding capped at \$100 million (\$75 million ceiling currently). Notably, the \$100 million cap only applies to Small Starts funding, as the law allows a project sponsor to use other federal transit and highway funds for a qualifying "small starts" investment, totaling up to an 80 percent federal share. Small Starts funding (as well as funding for New Starts and Core Capacity) will continue to be subject to annual appropriations, unlike most other transit and highway programs which receive funding from the Highway Trust Fund and are essentially "guaranteed" annual funding under the law.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** The new law includes many provisions designed to accelerate the deployment of ITS projects and solutions, including \$100 million annually for ITS research, \$60 million annually for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program, and \$67.5 million annually for a Technology and Innovation Deployment Program. Taken together, these programs and other ITS commitments in the new law could help usher in new transportation technologies and applications in cities, demonstrating new solutions for traffic and congestion management, vehicle to vehicle communications, vehicle to infra-



At podium, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chair Jim Inhofe (OK) discusses his bipartisan DRIVE proposal, with Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett, at left, and Ranking Committee Member Barbara Boxer, at right, during a June 23, 2015 press event on Capitol Hill.

structure communications, including connected and automated transportation vehicles, among other activities.

**Freight:** Under the new law, significant new resources are targeted to projects to support freight movement throughout the nation. Overall, nearly \$11 billion in new funding is provided for such projects, with \$4.5 billion allocated to U.S. DOT for competitive grants for states and larger metropolitan areas. The Transportation Secretary is authorized to use \$500 million of these discretionary funds for multi-modal freight projects, including rail freight improvements. (Under another freight-related initiative, each state will receive a share of annual formula grants, totaling \$6.3 billion over 5 years, for the funding of eligible freight projects.)

Under existing formula grant programs, there are a number of notable provisions of interest to cities and their local areas.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP):** Raising the share of STP funds allocated to local areas was a top priority for mayors, with the new law allocating a larger share of STP funds to metro and other local areas. STP funds to local areas are projected to grow by nearly 24 percent during this renewal period (as total STP Program funding increases slightly more than 10 percent). The net effect of these changes is that local areas over five years will receive nearly \$3.4 billion in additional STP funding (above current baseline).

**Bridge Funding:** The new law increases the

amount of federal funds that are available for the maintenance of locally-owned bridges, making certain bridges eligible for funding under the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), even if the bridges are not on the National Highway System but are on the Federal-Aid Highway System. This change seeks to address the funding needs of certain city- and county-owned bridges, which were negatively impacted when the Bridge Program was eliminated in MAP-21.

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)/Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** These two locally-oriented programs are continued mostly as current law provides, with funding growth, ensuring that program resources will continue to be available to cities/local areas for transportation projects and activities that reduce congestion, improve air quality and promote alternatives to driving, among other eligible uses. Metropolitan areas with a population of more than 200,000 are given new flexibility to shift up to half of their formula TAP funding to other STP-eligible projects. For the CMAQ program, there are new funding eligibilities for projects at ports, including certain port-related equipment and vehicles.

## Other Changes

Current rules allowing flexibility to shift funding among highway and transit programs are continued in the FAST Act, although New Starts Program funding for major fixed guide-

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climate change and urged national governments to work towards an agreement on cutting greenhouse emissions. At the conclusion of COP 21, Rawlings-Blake commended the unprecedented deal reached by national-level negotiators.

## Mayors Climate Protection Agreement 10th Anniversary

In Paris, Conference leaders commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement by launching a report at a U.S. Conference of Mayors reception inside U.S. Ambassador Jane Hartley's residence. This event was the signature gathering of American mayors in Paris,

and featured guests from Brazil, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Titled *U.S. Mayors Report on a Decade of Global Climate Leadership*, this Mayors Climate Protection Center publication features profiles of 35 American cities. Each profile details the actions that cities have taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of the climate change that has already occurred.

Releasing the report, Rawlings-Blake said, "The mayors of the United States acknowledge that sustainable growth, free of carbon, must occur in our cities if we are to meet the global emissions goals necessary to save the earth. And each of us has taken steps in that direction."

Rawlings-Blake also emphasized the Conference's long history of action on climate change. "Ten years ago, the Kyoto Protocol went into force for the countries that had ratified it to date. American cities announced our intention to do our part, and the Conference of Mayors began the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement." Since the Agreement started in 2005, the Conference founded the Mayors Climate Protection Center in 2007, brought a delegation to COP 15 in Copenhagen in 2009, and updated the Agreement in 2013.

The full report, which features cities of various sizes and regions, and mayors of both political parties, is available here:

<http://usmayors.org/pressreleases/uploads/2015/1205-report-climateaction.pdf>

## Climate Summit for Local Leaders

On Friday, December 4, 2015, the Conference delegation participated in the Climate Summit for Local Leaders, at Paris City Hall. Hosted by Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and U.N. Secretary General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change Michael Bloomberg, the gathering included up to 1,000 mayors and local leaders, making it the largest gathering of mayors on climate in history.



During the Climate Summit for Local Leaders on December 4, hundreds of mayors posed for a "Family Photo" on the steps of Paris City Hall (Photo: Office of Mayor Anne Hidalgo)

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At the Climate Summit for Local Leaders, several international officials and thought leaders appeared on panels and brought greetings regarding local action on climate change. Landrieu joined Amman Mayor Aqel Biltaji, Madrid Mayor Ada Colau, and Amazon tribal leader Felix Saniti to discuss the steps that their governments are taking to contain the effects of global climate change. He also appeared earlier in the day at a gathering of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group.

During the Climate Summit for Local Leaders, the assembled mayors adopted the Paris City Hall Declaration, which they presented to U.N Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and COP 21 President Laurent Fabius, the French Foreign Minister. The Declaration acknowledged the role that cities play in combating climate change, given that they account for half the global population and generate two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions. In that Declaration, the mayors agreed to "Advance and exceed the expected goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement to be reached at COP 21 to the full extent of our authorities."



From left: USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, USCM Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, USCM 2nd Vice President New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu.



From left: USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, U.S. Ambassador to France Jane Hartley, USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake release the U.S. Mayors Report on a Decade of Climate Leadership at Ambassador Harley's residence in Paris on December 5.

## Towards an International Agreement

As cities gathered to share solutions, representatives of 196 nations met at Le Bourget, the United Nation's Conference site, to negotiate an international agreement to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. In that no new agreement had been reached since the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and that those commitments were set to expire in 2020, there was immense pressure on negotiators to reach a consensus in Paris.

On Saturday, December 5, American mayors took part in a Day of Action, to strengthen the impetus on negotiators. The action was designed to, "Motivate national leaders to make sure these threats to our climate to not go uncontested," said Cochran. In addition to the USCM delegation, many other American mayors participated in COP 21.

On the last day of COP 21, negotiators reached an agreement to limit the warming of the planet to under 2°C (3.6°F) higher than pre-industrial levels. Each signatory must cut emissions in the coming century and invest in adapting to the effects of climate change.

Upon receiving news of the deal, Rawlings-Blake offered her praise. "America's mayors have called on the nations of the world to act on climate change for over a decade... I am proud of what we accomplished in Paris and am honored to have taken part

in this watershed moment for our planet. As national governments move toward implementation of this historic accord, America's mayors stand ready to do our part."

## Remembering the Victims of Terrorism

In Paris following the attacks of November 13, the USCM delegation offered condolences and solidarity to the people of Paris. In a statement, Rawlings-Blake said, "The mayors of the United States of America stand in solidarity with Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and the people of Paris. This was a senseless act of terrorism and our hearts and prayers go out to all of the victims, their families and loved ones. America's mayors will continue to stand vigilant against terrorism anywhere."

On the evening of December 4, exactly three weeks after the attacks, Rawlings-Blake, Landrieu, Kautz, and Cochran joined with Hidalgo and international mayors in laying flowers at Place de la République, which has become the city's memorial following the attacks.



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## The United States Conference of Mayors COP 21 U.S. Mayors Reception



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# Tampa Mayor Buckhorn Promotes TPP Trade Agreement

By Dave Gatton

The President's Export Council met December 3, 2015, in the White House for the first time after the Administration reached an agreement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) with eleven other nations. U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman briefed the Council on the deal which would significantly reduce the tariffs on 18,000 goods exported by U.S. businesses. In their letter of recommendation, the Council's members advised that the Administration "engage Congress to implement the TPP as soon as possible."

Froman also praised Labor Secretary Tom Perez, who was instrumental in working with such countries as Vietnam to agree to labor reforms that are unprecedented. One of the major selling points of the TPP is that it contains high level and enforceable labor and environmental standards, even though some environmental and labor groups say the deal does not go far enough.

Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn represented the U.S. Conference of Mayors at the meeting, which has a permanent seat on the Council. Buckhorn had recently been named by USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake to lead a newly formed task force to push for Congressional passage of the TPP.

After the meeting, which was attended by four cabinet Secretaries, Buckhorn joined the Council Chair Xerox CEO Ursula Burns, Council Vice Chair Marriott International CEO Arne Sorenson, and Vermeer CEO Mary Andringa on a White House press stakeout to talk about the TPP. The group said the time was now for Congress to pass an unprecedented trade deal that had both national economic and geopolitical benefits. Andringa referenced how TPP would significantly reduce tariffs on large equipment the firm was selling to Malaysia.

Buckhorn told the press that the Conference of Mayors was a strong supporter of Trade Promotion Authority, which passed earlier in the year, and TPP. "This is about expanding



From left: Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn with Marriott International CEO Arne Sorenson following the White House stakeout in support of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal.

our economic reach into a major part of the world's growing middle class," he said, also citing the deal's positive economic impact on Tampa's port, which is Florida's largest. He said TPP would benefit main street businesses looking to expand their sales to the Pacific rim.

Mayor Buckhorn also congratulated Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx for a pending vote that day on passage of the transportation bill that had been a priority for the Council in previous meetings. Included in the Council's recommendations to the President is the formation of a commission of private sector, state, and local government officials to develop a long-term funding source for future transportation bills.

At this meeting, the Council approved a series of recommendations including encouraging the Administration to continue its negotiations with the European Union on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and with China on a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).

## Ex-Im Bank Reauthorization

Council members congratulated Ex-Im Bank Chairman Fred Hochberg on renewal of the Bank's charter. The charter had expired in June of this year, preventing the bank from

providing new credit instruments to exporting businesses, which suffered from the prohibition. The path to reauthorization was long and arduous, with a majority of Senate and House members supporting it, but with key members blocking its vote. The log jam was broken when a discharge petition was filed in



TPP Task Force Chair Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn addresses the press outside the White House following a meeting of the President's Export Council with PEC Vice-chair Marriott International CEO Arne Sorenson.

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# Supreme Court Won't Hear Challenge to Highland Park's Assault Weapons Ban

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

City government efforts to ban assault weapons and large capacity magazines received a boost December 7, when the U.S. Supreme Court denied certiorari in *Friedman v. City of Highland Park*. At issue was Highland Park, Illinois's ban on assault weapons and large capacity magazines, which had been challenged in and upheld by both the Federal District Court and the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. By refusing to hear the case, the Supreme Court let the ban stand.

"As a Mayor and a mom, I worry about the safety of our children and our families, especially in the wake of the recent increase in mass gun violence.

It is well past time to take action to reduce the gun violence that threatens our nation's safety and peace," Highland Park Mayor Nancy R. Rotering said in a press conference following the Supreme Court announcement.

"There have been over 100 school shootings since Sandy Hook in Newton, Conn. Where does it stop? Banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines is one common-sense action to reduce gun violence and protect our children and our communities from potential mass violence and grief," Rotering continued.

Denial of cert does not mean the Supreme Court agrees with the lower court decision. In a fairly rare occurrence, Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas dissented in the denial of cert.

The Court's announcement means that for the time being jurisdictions in the Seventh Circuit, which covers Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin, may adopt similar bans. The same is true for jurisdictions in the Ninth Circuit, which covers Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. That court recently upheld a similar ban on assault weapons and large capacity magazines.

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## Ten Key Factors in Selecting a Purchasing Cooperative

By Kathryn Kretschmer-Weyland

U.S. Communities is a nonprofit government purchasing cooperative that reduces the cost of goods and services for participating public agencies by aggregating their purchasing power nationwide. It is the only cooperative purchasing program co-founded and sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and the Association of School Business Officials. The cooperative is non-exclusive, allowing cities to exercise due diligence in selecting the best individual contracts for their needs.

Since its inception in 1996, U.S. Communities has saved cities, towns, counties and other public entities hundreds of millions of dollars. U.S. Communities combines the purchasing power of over 55,000 public agencies. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has partnered with U.S. Communities because it is the gold standard for public procurement. The advisory board of cities, counties, and schools provides additional oversight.

Over time, the market has grown to include many other cooperatives. When it comes time for cities to consider a cooperative purchasing contract, prudence must be exercised when looking at the structure of the cooperative. U.S. Communities

has provided counties with a list of questions to ensure that the best cooperative purchasing processes, methods, and structure to provide the best value and protection for municipalities.

1. Was the soliciting entity an independent lead public agency that meets the standard definition of a political subdivision (city, county, school district, state, public higher education or special district)?
2. Was the development of the solicitation, evaluation of the responses, and award determination all performed by public employees of a political subdivision that is separate from and independent of the cooperative organization?
3. Did a National Evaluation Team comprised of public procurement professionals from multiple political subdivisions participate in the creation, evaluation and award process?
4. Was the procurement process substantially similar to the process your agency is required to use?
5. Does the cooperative organization have independent and broad oversight of the program and its operations?
6. Does the cooperative organization conduct independent third-party supplier audits to

ensure contract compliance?

7. Does the cooperative organization have adequate staff relative to the number of awarded suppliers?
8. Does the cooperative organization's staff conduct quarterly performance reviews with supplier executives and Lead Public Agency to evaluate performance and compliance?
9. Does the cooperative organization's agreement contain terms and conditions that require the supplier to provide their best government pricing to your agency?
10. Does the cooperative organization have field personnel focused on educating public agencies on the benefits of cooperative purchasing program and resolving problems or concerns?

Keeping these ten items in mind as your municipality makes decisions about cooperative purchasing will help to ensure your city saves the most money under a transparent, competitive contract.

To learn more about U.S. Communities and other purchasing best practices, please contact Jeffrey Bean, 202-446-8140 or visit [www.us-communities.org](http://www.us-communities.org).

them from ISIS attacks that may come to their city.

As we approach the Christmas Season we pray there will be peace in our nation. I am beginning to wonder if Americans are accepting the deadly massacres that are occurring like they accept tornadoes, floods, or hurricanes. Many thought that after the Sandy Hook killings in Connecticut, things would change, but they haven't.

So the violence continues and you as mayors along with your police chiefs and your first responders must be more vigilant than ever in an atmosphere that is fraught with political turbulence as you try to protect us and prevent the stream of killing that continues to happen in our great nation.

Together, with your help, we will get through this violent era. That's why it's more important than ever for you to be with us at the United States Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting in Washington, January 20-22, 2016. We must come together to share, learn from, and support each other.

From me and the great USCM staff, we wish you, your staff, and your families the most joyful and peaceful holiday season.

## Turner Elected Houston Mayor



Houston Mayor-Elect Sylvester Turner won his runoff against Bill King on December 12. Current Mayor Anise Parker did not seek reelection due to term limits.

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# USCM, Harvard Convene New Mayors

By Tom McClimon

"It's the best job in the world," was the message repeated often to new and newly-elected mayors during a Harvard University seminar. Twenty-three mayors-elect and new mayors gathered for a three-day seminar on exercising leadership and promoting effective public policy.

The 21<sup>st</sup> biennial Seminar on Transition and Leadership, co-sponsored by the US Conference of Mayors and the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School, was held December 8-11. The newly-elected mayors participated in a number of sessions, led by current and former mayors, academicians, and practitioners. Focusing on training for new city leaders, topics included transitioning from the campaign to city hall, budgeting and finance, jobs and economic development, communications during time of crisis, public and homeland safety, and the use of social media.

Participating new and newly-elected mayors were: Daniel Horrigan, Akron; Allison Silberberg, Alexandria, VA; Ethan Berkowitz, Anchorage; Steve Adler, Austin; John Hamilton, Bloomington; Deb Frank-Feinen,

Champaign; John Tecklenburg, Charleston, SC; Andrew Ginther, Columbus, OH; Tim Mahoney, Fargo; Ken Massey, Farmington Hills; Luke Bronin, Hartford; Joe Hogsett, Indianapolis; Adam Paul, Lakewood; Jim Strickland, Memphis; James Donchess, Nashua; Megan Barry, Nashville; Libby Schaaf, Oakland; Terry Tornek, Pasadena; James Kenney, Philadelphia; Jorge Elorza, Providence; Hillary Schieve, Reno; Brian Arrigo, Revere; and Paula Hicks-Hudson, Toledo.



Mayor-Elect Joe Hogsett, Indianapolis; Conference President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake; Mayor-Elect Jim Kenney, Philadelphia; and Conference CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran.



Conference President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake talks to new mayors on the job of being mayor.

Conference of Mayors President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake led the group of current and former mayors who participated as faculty members for the program. In a keynote address, Mayor Rawlings-Blake mentioned that while there is "never an off-switch", it's important to build personal time and breaks into the job. She also stressed the importance of the Conference of Mayors in learning best practices and developing a network among mayors.

Mayor Rawlings-Blake also participated as a panelist in the crisis management session.

In addition the Mayor Rawlings-Blake, three other past Conference of Mayors presidents served as faculty members – former Mesa Mayor Scott Smith helped lead the discussion on Building Intergovernmental Relations, former Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic participated on the panel "Jobs, Economic Development, and Competitiveness", and former Miami Mayor Manny Diaz moderated the session on "Policing and Public Safety".

Tom Cochran, Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director, participated throughout the seminar and welcomed the new mayors along with Maggie Williams,



The New Mayors Class of 2015. (front row, l-r): John Hamilton, Bloomington; Jorge Elorza, Providence; Deb Frank Feinen; Champaign; Terry, Tornek, Pasadena; Libby Schaaf, Oakland; Ken Massey, Farmington Hills; Hillary Schieve; Reno (second row l-r): Brian Arrigo, Revere; Tom Cochran, USCM CEO; Megan Barry; Nashville; Steve Adler, Austin; Adam Paul, Lakewood; Luke Bronin, Hartford. (third row l-r): Paula Hicks-Hudson, Toledo; Ethan Berkowitz, Anchorage; Daniel Horrigan, Akron; Jim Strickland, Memphis; Allison Silberberg, Alexandria; John Tecklenburg, Charleston; Andrew Ginther, Columbus; Jim Donchess, Nashua. Not included: Joe Hogsett, Indianapolis; Jim Kenney, Philadelphia.

see **NEW MAYORS** on page 21

# House of Representatives Passes Comprehensive Energy Bill

By Debra DeHaney-Howard

Concluding action December 3, just weeks before they adjourn for the December recess, the U. S. House of Representatives approved the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act of 2015 by a vote of 249 to 174. The legislation (H.R. 8) seeks to promote energy security and energy efficiency, improve energy-related infrastructure, and expand the use of energy technologies.

The legislation includes provisions that promote renewable energy (including shared solar), provide technical assistance to cities and other entities for model building codes, revise federal building performance standards, enhance emergency preparedness for energy supply disruptions, and streamlines the regulatory process for authorizing U.S. LNG exports.

The legislation also establishes an energy infrastructure modernization fund that would, among other things, establish a competitive grant program to provide grants to States, local governments, and Indian tribes to enhance the resilience and reliability of the electric grid.

## Other key provisions:

- Modernize and improve the security of energy-related infrastructure and promote the development and use of energy-efficient technologies in buildings, appliances, and industrial processes.
- Extend statutory goals for federal agencies to reduce energy consumption, expand requirements for federal buildings to meet certain standards

related to sustainable resource use, and broaden definitions of the types of energy that can be considered renewable.

- Strike a requirement under current law that federal agencies gradually phase out—and eliminate by 2030—the use of energy generated from fossil fuel in newly constructed federal buildings and buildings undergoing major renovations.
- Establish a new Energy Security and Infrastructure Modernization Fund and authorize \$850 million for the fund over the 2017–2020 period, which would be offset by the sale of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

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Our story began in 1971. Back then, we were a roaster and retailer of whole bean and ground coffee, tea and spices with a single store in Seattle's Pike Place Market. Today, we are privileged to connect with millions of customers every day with exceptional products and more than 17,000 retail stores in over 55 countries.

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Areas of Special Interest or Expertise: Retail, Environment, Community Development, Jobs, Education, Workforce, Health, and Food Policy

### Special Interests:

Community Development, Economic Policy, Education, Environment, Health Care, 'Retail Development

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## **USCM CALENDAR 2016**

Wednesday, January 20 - Friday, January 22

### **USCM 84<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting**

Washington, DC

Contact: Carol Edwards [cedwards@usmayors.org](mailto:cedwards@usmayors.org) / 202-293-7330

Sponsorship: Geri Powell [gpowell@usmayors.org](mailto:gpowell@usmayors.org) / 202-861-6774

Register Now at [usmayors.org/84thWinterMeeting/](http://usmayors.org/84thWinterMeeting/)

Wednesday, January 20 - Thursday, January 21

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Washington, DC

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Register Now at [usmayors.org/84thWinterMeeting/](http://usmayors.org/84thWinterMeeting/)

Thursday, February 18 - Saturday February 20

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(Executive Committee, Advisory Board, Committee and Task Force Chairs Only)

Miami Beach, FL

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Sponsorship: Geri Powell [gpowell@usmayors.org](mailto:gpowell@usmayors.org) / 202-861-6774

Registration Open

Friday, June 24 - Monday, June 27

### **USCM 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of Mayors**

Indianapolis, IN

Contact: Carol Edwards [cedwards@usmayors.org](mailto:cedwards@usmayors.org) / 202-293-7330

Sponsorship: Geri Powell [gpowell@usmayors.org](mailto:gpowell@usmayors.org) / 202-861-6774

Registration Opens Spring 2016

Friday, June 24 - Saturday, June 25

### **USCM Workforce Development Council (WDC) Board/Annual Conference**

Indianapolis, IN

Contact: Ida Mukendi [imukendi@usmayors.org](mailto:imukendi@usmayors.org) / 202-861-6724

Registration Opens Spring 2016



# 85 Cities and Counties, USCM, NLC Urge Supreme Court to Review Immigration Executive Action Injunction

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

Led by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, and Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, 85 cities and counties in 28 states, along with the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities, filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the U.S. Supreme Court asking the Supreme Court to review the Justice Department's petition for certiorari filed in the Supreme Court November 20.

That petition was in response to the November 9 decision by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals that affirmed the grant of a preliminary injunction that halted the nationwide implementation of President Obama's executive actions on immigration. If allowed to go into effect the President's executive actions would provide temporary relief from deportation and work authorization to immigrants with longstanding ties to the U.S. who pass a background check and meet other criteria.

The December 4 brief argues that immediate Supreme Court review of the case is needed to resolve an urgent issue of nationwide importance: the implementation of immigration relief by executive action without delay. The brief argues that executive action is urgently needed to protect the integrity of millions of families, promote public safety, and support the economies of cities and counties across the country.

The brief follows on two previous briefs filed earlier this year:

In January the mayors of 33 cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities filed a joint amicus brief in the U.S. District Court opposing a motion by 25 governors seeking a preliminary injunction to halt implementation of the President Obama's immigration executive actions. The effort to bring mayors together to support the brief was led by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and announced during the Conference's Winter Meeting.

After the District Court judge granted the governors' preliminary injunction and implementation of the executive actions was halted, a second amicus brief was filed with the Fifth Circuit appealing the District Court's decision. Attorneys with New York City and Los Angeles also prepared that brief. More than 70 cities and counties, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National League of Cities signed onto it.

## Among participating mayors' comments on the December 4 brief:

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio: "We are urging the Supreme Court to review this case so implementation of the President's executive actions can finally move forward, because the

wheels of justice have been stuck in neutral for thousands of families for far too long. Cities are where immigrants live, and it is our residents, communities, and economies that will reap the benefits from these policies."

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti: "Mayors across the country are asking the Supreme Court to review the decision in *United States v. Texas* because we have a special understanding of how generations of immigrants have contributed to the foundation of our cities and the strength of our nation. Partisan politics should not stand in the way of doing what is right for families who simply want to stay together. These are true American values, and it is our obligation to do all we can to preserve and protect family bonds."

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed: "The City of Atlanta continues to support the President's decision to take action on immigration. President Obama's Administrative Relief has and will continue to bring millions of aspiring citizens into the formal economy, while simultaneously encouraging economic growth in Atlanta and the entire State of Georgia. I voice my support with confidence that the Supreme Court will come down on the right side of history and allow this imperative step toward fixing our broken immigration system."

Below are the cities and counties that signed on:

Albany, NY	Davis, CA	Jersey City, NJ	Oakland, CA	Santa Cruz County, AZ
Alexandria, VA	Dayton, OH	Kansas City, MO	Paterson, NJ	Santa Fe, NM
Arlington County, VA	Denver, CO	Little Rock, AR	Philadelphia, PA	Santa Monica, CA
Atlanta, GA	Dolton, IL	Long Beach, CA	Pittsburgh, PA	Schenectady, NY
Austin, TX	Edinburg, TX	Los Angeles, CA	Plainfield, NJ	Seattle, WA
Baltimore, MD	El Paso County, TX	Los Angeles County, CA	Portland, OR	Somerville, MA
Bell, CA	Evanston, IL	Madison, WI	Prince George's County, MD	Sonoma County, CA
Birmingham, AL	Falcon Heights, MN	Middleton, CT	Princeton, NJ	South Bend, IN
Boise, ID	Gary, IN	Milwaukee, WI	Providence, RI	St. Louis, MO
Boston, MA	Haledon, NJ	Minneapolis, MN	Richmond, CA	State College, PA
Buffalo, NY	Hartford, CT	Montgomery County, MD	Rochester, NY	Sunrise, FL
Cambridge, MA	Hempstead, NY	New Haven, CT	Salt Lake City, UT	Syracuse, NY
Central Falls, RI	Highland Park, IL	New Rochelle, NY	San Francisco, CA	Tacoma, WA
Charleston, SC	Hoboken, NJ	New York, NY	San Jose, CA	Tampa, FL
Chicago, IL	Holyoke, MA	Newark, NJ	San Leandro, CA	Washington, DC
Columbus, OH	Houston, TX	Newton, MA	Santa Ana, CA	West Hollywood, CA
Cook County, IL	Ithaca, NY	Niagara Falls, NY	Santa Clara County, CA	Yonkers, NY

# Mayors Celebrate 2015 CommunityWINS Grants Locally

Four Mayors and their non-profit grant recipients were honored for promoting neighborhood stabilization, economic development and job creation during 2015 CommunityWINS (Working/Investing in Neighborhood Stabilization) Grant local celebrations in West Sacramento, Lima, Baltimore, and Newark.

An independent panel of judges, selected by The U.S. Conference of Mayors, determined the six winning cities from a pool of 162 applicants in three population groups — small, medium and large. The 2015 CommunityWINS awards include monetary grants to city-based nonprofit organizations and recognize mayors for exemplary leadership in developing local programs that promote long-term economic prosperity and improve the quality of life for residents. The awards are part of a nationwide CommunityWINS Program made possible by a grant from USCM and the Wells Fargo Foundation collaboration.

## West Sacramento

On November 5, West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon held his CommunityWINS ceremony at River City High School where an award in the amount of \$150,000 was presented to the West Sacramento Foundation for The FutureReady



From left: USCM Assistant Executive Director Eugene Lowe; West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon; Vice President, Community Affairs, Community Affairs Officer for Wells Fargo's Western Region Kären Woodruff; and West Sacramento Foundation President Paul Kolarik.

"Our prosperity as a community depends on our young people getting access to 21st Century skills, technical training, workplace experience, and quality teaching and learning," said Mayor Cabaldon, who leads the FutureReady steering committee. "We're launching an ambitious initiative in partnership with companies and schools, with a promise that our community's employers will guarantee a paid internship for every high school student who is on track in a high-quality pathway that both prepares them for college and gives them strong skills in one of our fast-growing job sectors.

tion relevant for teens as part of a suite of initiatives to turn our whole city into a classroom."

Junior and senior high school students in the Engineering, Science and Technology Academy at River City High School (the largest high school in the district) in the FutureReady program will be provided high-quality, work-based learning opportunities that align with their curriculum. Through paid internships with local engineering, science and advanced-manufacturing companies, students will be prepared for success in an entry level job and/or post-secondary education. Employers will benefit by having increased access to a local labor pool that has completed industry-relevant academic coursework and has previous on-the-job experience.

"Our students deserve every opportunity to develop the skills they need to be college and career ready," said Washington Unified Superintendent Linda C. Luna. "FutureReady does a great job of expanding on classroom instruction by immersing our kids in relevant, real-world work applications, keeping them motivated and on track to graduate with the skills they need to enter the 21st century workforce."

"Wells Fargo is delighted to collaborate

see **COMMUNITY WINS** on page 17

"Our 2015 CommunityWINS Grant Program gives the Conference an opportunity to showcase positive change happening now in our cities to make a difference in the lives of residents."

- Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and Executive Director

Program - which connects students studying engineering, science and technology to work-based learning internships and job training.

Winning this prestigious national competition is the essential starter fuel to power our success. This is our best hope of closing the skills gap between our workforce and our emerging jobs, and of making educa-

# COMMUNITY WINS

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with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to make this grant available for the West Sacramento Foundation that will enable the nonprofit to make vital improvements and strengthen the neighborhood,” said David Galasso, Lead Regional President, Wells Fargo Northern and Central California. “Wells Fargo cares about the communities we serve and we’re inspired by the City of West Sacramento’s interest in the inaugural CommunityWINS grant program that will add up to make a big difference in helping revitalize neighborhoods.

## Lima

A check presentation was made during Lima Mayor David Berger’s weekly news conference. An award in the amount of \$50,000 was presented to the Lima-Allen County Neighborhoods in Partnership (LACNIP) to assist with the expansion and improvement of the Community Pride cleanup programs, funds will go to an existing community gardens program, and assist the city with maintenance of vacant properties.

LACNIP intends to expand and improve their Community Pride cleanup programs, add to the existing community gardens program, and assist the city with maintenance of vacant properties. Funds will be used to purchase equipment such as a tractor with attachments for a variety of land functions, materials to construct greenhouses enabling year-round gardening, and to contract with an individual to oversee the program.



From left: Wells Fargo Business Liaison Consultant Kimberly A. Martin, USCM Assistant Executive Director Eugene Lowe, Wells Fargo Senior Vice President John Melick, LACNIP President Mildred Stewart, and Lima Mayor David Berger.

The city has struggled with the existence of many vacant properties that have continued to be unused, yet cost the city to maintain. LACNIP approached the city about using an empty fire station, located in a declining neighborhood where businesses were closing and housing stock was in disrepair, to create a resource center for the community.

This will also give the organization, which has existed for 20 years, relying strictly on volunteers, bringing all neighborhood associations together to partner with the city, county, businesses, other nonprofits, law enforcement, schools and universities, and developing programs to fulfill their mission and improving the aesthetics, safety and communication throughout the area, a home.

LACNIP President Mildred Stewart said she was very happy Lima received the money and that it will go toward continuing to improve the community.

## Baltimore

On November 30 USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings held her local event in a vacant lot in the Broadway East community. A \$300,000 grant award was presented to Civic Works, Inc. for its work with the Growing Green Tracks Team — a collaborative effort to address blight and improve the city’s image of Baltimore as seen by millions of passengers along Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor.

Currently there are 16,000 vacant properties in Baltimore City — many along Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor that pass through the city. The Growing Green Tracks Team is a city-led collaborative that sees these vacancies as opportunities to strengthen and connect blighted communities through greening projects and reinvestment. Permanent enhanced greening sites including an integrated network of parks and squares, rain gardens, day-lighted streams, recreational trails, urban farms, wetlands, and community gardens, as well as public art will provide permanent community amenities, while “clean and green” site improvements and aesthetic boarding address problem areas to stabilize the neighborhoods and increase economic development potential. Civic Works’ Community Lot Team employs and trains individuals to transform vacant and abandoned lots into community gardens and green spaces

During the event the lot received “clean and green” improvements from the efforts of the Civic Works community lot team. That lot is



Baltimore City Office of Sustainability Director of Planning Tom Stosur, USCM Assistant Executive Director Eugene Lowe, USCM President Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Wells Fargo President Andy Bertamini and Civic Works volunteers pose before planting trees in the Broadway East Community vacant lot.

see **COMMUNITY WINS** on page 18



# COMMUNITY WINS

from page 17

just below the Amtrak tracks and is at the center of where a lot of other investments are happening – a new food hub soon to be developed to the west, rehab of row houses underway to the south, and a vacant lot to be transformed into a flower farm located to the north. The location showed how the use of these funds can help to build off of the activities and reinvestment underway in the neighborhood and address blight on underutilized vacant lots, to attract additional reinvestment.

## Newark

On December 9, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka celebrated as a \$75,000 grant was presented to Newark CEDC for its Model Neighborhood Initiative work and Community Storefront Program or CSP. CSP begins with a 16-week session led by the Newark CEDC where aspiring entrepreneurs participate in over 40 hours of business training and consulting with instructors from the Institute for Entrepreneurship Leadership (IFEL). CSP reduces the barriers to entry that most solopreneurs and entrepreneurs face when starting a new business by placing graduates in a subsidized retail space.

"We are honored to be recognized by the US Conference of Mayors and Wells Fargo for the support that we are providing aspiring entrepreneurs," said Mayor Baraka. "Our mission in transforming Newark's neighborhoods into model communities of prosperity is to encourage Newark residents to create their own businesses, and create a City we can all believe in. Newark is committed to providing the economic assistance and practical training needed so these small business owners can be successful."

The grant is being used to develop the Community Storefront Program and retail incubator located at 790 Clinton Avenue. The space houses five to 10 entrepreneurs on a shared, revolving basis. A rotating schedule allows each program participant to pilot their business ideas and sell their goods and services. The rotation ensures that participants are able to troubleshoot possible problems with their storefront ap-



From left: Newark CEDC President and CEO Otis Rolley, Community Storefront participant and Bricks4Kids President Tara Newark, Mayor Ras Baraka, Wells Fargo Business Banking Manager Mary Makfinsky, and USCM Assistant Executive Director Eugene Lowe.

pearances, maximize the market potential of their businesses, and limit their risks.

"We all saw the need to offer participants mentoring support to ensure long-term success," said Newark CEDC President and CEO, Otis Rolley. "So, we are connecting these local businesses with professional, field-specific mentors. This additional technical assistance not only helps with future expansion, but also works to smooth the transition into the retail incubator.

Community Storefront participant and Bricks4Kids President Tara Willams said the program support was invaluable. "I participated in 16-weeks of training with an hour of mentoring support. The training forced me to focus on the back-office operations which I hadn't paid attention to before CSP."

"Wells Fargo is pleased to collaborate with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to make this grant available to the NCEDC," said Mary Makfinsky, Business Banking Manager, Wells Fargo. "The grant supports NCEDC's storefront program which assists entrepreneurs looking to spur economic development. We also thank Mayor Ras Baraka and other city officials for their continued collaboration on this initiative."

Local celebrations were previously held in Little Rock in September and Green Bay in October.

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# Rawlings-Blake Speaks Out on San Bernardino Mass Shooting

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

"The carnage continues. Today's all-too-familiar bulletin on a mass shooting comes out of San Bernardino," Conference President and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake said on December 2, following the attack on a public health department holiday party at the Inland Regional Center. "Today's body count, at least 14 in early reports, may be the highest since the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy nearly three years ago."

"Tonight America's mayors again reach out to all of the victims, their families, and the

community that has been devastated by this horrific act. While we don't know what motivated this mass shooting, we do know that as a nation we need to fight back against gun violence," Rawlings-Blake continued. "Along with the rest of America, we wait and watch as law enforcement officials continue to respond and begin to determine how and why this tragedy occurred."

In the ensuing days the nation learned that this was a terrorist attack by Syed Rizwan Farook, a health inspector with the San Bernardino County Health Department, and his

wife Tashfeen Malik. In all, the heavily armed assailants shot 36 people, and 14 of them died.

## Help for Victims

San Bernardino Mayor R. Carey Davis has approved a funding mechanism for those wishing to help victims of the San Bernardino shooting. Details are at <https://www.gofundme.com/SupportSB>. Information is also available from Mayor Davis's Chief of Staff, Christopher Lopez, at [Lopez\\_Ch@sbcity.org](mailto:Lopez_Ch@sbcity.org) or (909) 384-5133.

## MAYORS BUSINESS COUNCIL Member Profile



Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc. is a leading integrator of payment and information solutions and related services for intelligent travel applications. Cubic delivers integrated systems for transportation and traffic management, delivering tools for travelers to choose the smartest and easiest way to travel and pay for their journeys, and enabling transportation authorities and agencies to manage demand across the entire transportation network – all in real-time.

Cubic specializes in design, development, manufacture, supply, installation, integration, services and information. Services provided by Cubic include on-site management, central systems, operations support, patron support, business support and field services.

Special Interests:  
Traffic Management, Transportation

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# Efforts to Pass a Permanent Ban on State and Local Taxes on Internet Access Fees Stall in the Senate

By Larry Jones

In support of state and local governments, Senators Richard Durbin (IL), Lamar Alexander (TN), Mike Enzi (WY), and others worked tirelessly with the Conference and other stakeholders to line up a huge bipartisan group of Senators to block action on a measure (Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act) that would permanently ban state and local taxes on Internet access fees. In an eleventh hour move, the measure was tucked in an unrelated customs conference report (Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, H.R. 644) just before consideration on the House floor.

Earlier in the year the House passed PITFA but key leaders in the Senate were successful in putting off action on the measure after the House refused to act on a bipartisan proposal approved by the Senate in 2013. The Senate passed the proposal to help state and local governments collect sales taxes due on Internet and other remote sales. Since that time, key Senate leaders have been looking for opportunities like the extension of the Internet Tax Freedom Act, which expires in December 2015, to use as a leverage to convince the House to take action on the Remote Transactions Parity Act (RTPA), which is similar to the bipartisan proposal approved by the Senate.

After a firestorm of protest from state and local groups, H.R. 644 with the PITFA language was approved by the House on December 11 by a vote of 256 to 158. Most Republicans voted in favor of the measure while most Democrats voted against it.

When the measure reached the Senate, Senators Durbin, Alexander and Enzi took the lead in lining up more than the 41 votes needed to sustain a point of order, a procedural move that can be used when the Senate considers H. R. 644 to demand that the PITFA language be dropped from the bill. In response, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) decided not to schedule the bill for a vote and indicated he will wait until next year to bring it up for consideration on the Senate floor. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune (SD), the sponsor of the PITFA legislation in the Senate, predicted it would remain in the customs conference report despite threats to remove it.

For now, a provision extending the Internet Tax Freedom Act for one year is included in the omnibus spending bill which the House and Senate are expected to approve before they leave for the holiday recess in December. Attempts were made to include RTPA in the omnibus spending bill but they were unsuccessful.

Senators Durbin, Alexander, and Enzi have been trying for months to convince leaders in the House to allow a vote on RTPA, which will require Internet retailers and other remote sellers to collect the same taxes that merchants on Main Street are required to collect. Although, RTPA enjoys strong bipartisan support in the House, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (VA) has refused to schedule it for consideration.

The Conference and other state and local groups support RTPA because it will level the playing field between Internet retailers and local merchants; and enable state and local governments to collect an estimated \$26 billion annually on remote sales. The groups strongly oppose PITFA because it will repeal a grandfather provision under current law that allows the states of Hawaii, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin (along with the local governments in those states) to collect an estimated \$500 million in taxes on Internet access fees. It will also permanently preempt state and local taxing authority and carve out tax breaks for special interests. And, with the trend of customers increasingly shifting from cable to broadband (which is not subject to local taxes) for television service, local governments are at risk of losing significant revenues from cable and franchise fees.



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## NEW MAYORS

from page 12

Director of the Institute of Politics. Cochran told the new mayors that the Conference of Mayors was there to serve them; and that they will play an important role in helping to form the administration of the next President.

Mayors who also served as faculty members were: Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley and Austin Mayor Steve Adler, who served as panelists on the transitioning session; Columbia, SC Mayor Steve Benjamin, who helped the discussion on budgeting and finance; Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, who was a panelist on the jobs and economic development session; South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon, and Lexington Mayor Jim Gray, who served as panelists for attracting the millennial generation to cities; Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, who served as panelists for the session on policing and public safety; Tuscaloosa Mayor Walter Maddox, who helped lead the discussion on responding to natural disasters; Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett, who was a panelist on the social media session, and Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza, who was a panelist on the tech and data driven city session.

Ben Sosenko, press secretary to Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson also participated in the traditional and social media session.

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## TPP

from page 9

the House forcing the bill to the floor, where it passed by wide margin. Eventually the reauthorization was attached to the transportation bill.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors strongly supported reauthorization of the Bank, sending a letter of support signed by over 100 mayors to the Hill. The next hurdle is to reach Senate confirmation on the Board members for the Bank. Currently, the bank's board has only two members, but needs three to conduct business. Hochberg will address the Ports and Exports Task Force, chaired by Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola, at the 84th Winter Meeting of the Conference of Mayors, January 20-22, 2015 in Washington, D.C.

## TRANSPORTATION

from page 5

way transit projects is now capped at 60 percent funding share (although other federal transit/highway program funds can continue to be used to raise the federal share to 80 percent).

On the policy front, considerable attention has been given to provisions designed to accelerate the completion of projects, known as project streamlining, but there are also other changes to ensure that "urban street design" principles are incorporated into state design standards for federal projects and that the U.S. Department of Transportation exerts more leadership in advancing "complete streets" policies at the local and state levels.

The new law also affirms the longstanding practice that local elected officials can serve as representatives of local transit agencies on the governing boards of their metropolitan planning organizations or MPOs. For months now, FTA had been considering a new rule, based on its interpretation of provisions in MAP-21, that might reinterpret the role of local elected officials in this regard. The FAST Act overturns these MAP-21 provisions and reaffirms current practices, allowing local elected officials to continue to serve as representatives of local transit agencies on MPO boards.

Among existing programs, the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program was targeted for the largest funding reduction, with the new law providing only \$1.4 billion over the next five years. Adjustments to loan amounts and funding eligibilities, including qualifying certain transportation infrastructure projects in and around ports, were made as well.

For the first time, the new law does include a substantial Rail Title in a major surface transportation authorization bill, authorizing Amtrak for the first time in seven years, including grants to Amtrak and states for infrastructure, safety, and state of good repair improvements. The law also includes a number of reforms to Amtrak's grant process and business lines and asset plans, among other provisions. When the FAST Act is renewed, renewal of Amtrak and intercity passenger rail investments will also be an integral part of that debate.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

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five human rights issues: criminal justice, education, immigration, homelessness & poverty, and marriage equality. The dialogue was a space for participants to discuss challenges, share their perspectives on successful local policies and programs, and identify strategies for improvement. Throughout the day, there was a focus on how communities and government actors can work together to ensure dignity, equality, and opportunity for Birmingham residents.

Events like this are an important foundation for responsive and participatory policy-making, in line with human rights standards. They offer an avenue to include community voices in decision-making and foster a more collaborative, transparent, and accountable approach to governance based on core human rights principles. Indeed, the conversations that took place will contribute to how we think about our policies moving forward.

There may be a bumpy road ahead. This is true in Alabama, where voting rights have been a hot button issue for years, as well as in our cities. However, we navigate this journey based on the belief that all members of the human family have inherent dignity and equal rights. And we look to civil and human rights leaders, like Martin Luther King Jr., who stated that "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

The idea that human rights start close to home drives our vision for the future. We will continue to work proactively to promote and protect fundamental human rights locally, nationally, and internationally. We hope you will join us.

*Editor's Note: The United Nations has designated December 10 International Human Rights Day. In 1948, the nations of the world came together in San Francisco to proclaim that every individual, no matter where he or she lives, has fundamental rights that deserve protection. Enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are, among others, the right to be free from racial discrimination, the right to think and write what you choose, and the right to fair working conditions.*



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# **THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS 84<sup>th</sup> WINTER MEETING**

**January 20-22, 2016  
Washington, DC**

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## BEST PRACTICES

# Seattle Mayor Murray Challenges “School to Prison Pipeline”

In 2008, five Seattle youth under the age of 18 were killed by gun violence; with this, a tipping point for needed change in three of the city’s communities was reached. In response to the shooting deaths, the City issued a broad-based call to action that resulted in community-based organizations, City departments, the school district, and the Seattle Police Department working together to produce a comprehensive, collaborative governance model that included evidence-based practices contributed by each agency involved: the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.

Those involved in the Initiative were concerned about the “school to prison pipeline” problems that had been getting attention across the nation – problems of students, particularly those of color, being forced out of schools and into environments likely to draw them into criminal activity. And they were concerned about putting police officers in the schools. The local community-based agencies wanted something other than the School Resource Officer program that many police agencies had created. They wanted a unique approach that had been used in a successful community-driven partnership with the City known as the South Park Action Agenda.

The Police Department’s response was the Youth Violence Prevention Unit. With the goal of reducing truancy and suspensions, the members of the Unit, known as School Emphasis Officers, focused on building trust in communities of color, school-based restorative justice practices, and connections to community-based networks. The officers were assigned to specific schools that had high truancy and suspension rates or were located in a community known for abnormally high levels of youth violence. Rather than employ law enforcement techniques, officers began to work closely with school staff on prevention and intervention services. This included conducting mediations and home visits to address the most serious violence offense suspensions and chronic truancy offenders. The officers, who started

working with families as soon as issues were noted, were trained to leverage community and City resources to address crisis situations. Using crisis intervention techniques, officers made referrals for youth most in need of services and worked on a collaborative multi-disciplinary team to ensure the youth involved were receiving the right services.

The result of this effort: Truancy and suspensions have been reduced in schools to which School Emphasis Officers have been assigned (compared to schools with no officers), and this reduction has been occurring during a period in which the student population has increased citywide. A review of the schools to which officers were assigned found no internal investigation complaints since the inception of the Unit. A large number of the youth targeted by this effort have been diverted to social services. There have been no arrests.

Officials say the success of this Unit flows from the strong collaborative relationship that has been built between the school district and the community-based agencies that are part of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. The Unit reported earlier this year that School Emphasis Officers have contributed to 913 mediations, 502 program referrals, 134 mental health case working referrals, and 429 home visits. And beyond the evidence of the officers’ commitment to their assigned tasks is the fact that all of them are also involved in coaching programs, mentorship groups, teaching, and a variety of other school-related activities.

In 2014, the Youth Violence Prevention Unit began a process evaluation of its efforts through George Mason University. This evaluation found that the Initiative does not contribute to the “school-to-prison pipeline” problems of concern in Seattle, nor does it produce any other potentially harmful consequences that could lead to an increase in crime. In 2008, there were concerns in the community about police officers being as-



Seattle Mayor  
Ed Murray

signed to schools. Now, officials say, communities and schools don’t know what they would do without them.

Additional information on Seattle’s program is available from Sergeant Adrian Z. Diaz at (206) 992-0662 or [adrian.diaz@seattle.gov](mailto:adrian.diaz@seattle.gov). This description of the program was provided by the City as part of a joint U.S. Conference of Mayors–COPS Office project and will appear in a forthcoming report on youth violence prevention.

*Seattle Mayor Ed Murray chairs the U.S. Conference of Mayors Task Force on Mayors and Police Chiefs.*

*Mayors are invited to submit the “Best Practices” of their cities to U.S. MAYOR at [usmayor@usmayors.org](mailto:usmayor@usmayors.org)*

