



**REMARKS OF BOSTON MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO
PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
TO THE
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

APRIL 30, 2003

I WANT TO THANK THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB FOR INVITING ME HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF THE NATION'S CITIES. I'VE BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS FOR ALMOST A FULL YEAR NOW. OVER THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR, I'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH MANY MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA AND I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INTEREST.

I LOVE THE JOB I HAVE AS MAYOR OF BOSTON BECAUSE EVERY DAY, I GET TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES. ONE NEWSPAPER HAS REFERRED TO ME AS THE "URBAN MECHANIC". WELL, MECHANICS GET TO FIX THE PROBLEMS PEOPLE HAVE, SO I GUESS THAT A LOT OF MAYORS WOULD ACTUALLY FIT THAT DESCRIPTION.

MANY OF THE THINGS WE DO DON'T MAKE THE FRONT PAGES. GIVING OUR EMPLOYEES FOUR HOURS OFF FOR CANCER SCREENING. GUARANTEEING A FULL SALARY TO STAFFERS WHO RECEIVE A CALLUP FROM THE MILITARY IN TIMES OF WAR. OR, GETTING A SINGLE PARENT AND THEIR CHILD A FREE COMPUTER AND TRAINING.

NOW, THESE AREN'T THE ONLY THINGS THAT MAYORS DO. I'M PROUD THAT WE'VE CREATED HUNDREDS OF ACRES OF PARKLAND, THOUSANDS OF NEW HOUSING UNITS AND HAVE MILLIONS OF SQUARE FEET OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SPACE ON THE DRAWING BOARD.

BUT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, ONE PERSON, ONE BLOCK, ONE NEIGHBORHOOD AT A TIME IS WHAT MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES. THAT'S WHAT SHOWS PEOPLE THAT GOVERNMENT CAN WORK AND THAT IT DOES WORK AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. THE HEADLINES MAY COME OUT OF WASHINGTON, BUT EVERYDAY, IN CITIES ACROSS AMERICA, MAYORS ARE SOLVING PROBLEMS AND MAKING LIFE A LITTLE BETTER FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

DURING MY TERM AS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT, MANY OF YOU HAVE SPOKEN WITH ME ABOUT MY PRIORITY ISSUE, SAFE AND DECENT HOUSING FOR ALL AMERICAN FAMILIES. WE'VE ALSO DISCUSSED ISSUES OF JOB TRAINING, EDUCATION REFORM AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS -- ALL OF WHICH ARE SO IMPORTANT.

BUT, AS YOU CAN GUESS, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE DISCUSSIONS I HAVE HAD WITH THE MEDIA OVER THE PAST YEAR HAVE DEALT WITH THESE QUESTIONS:

- **ARE OUR CITIES PREPARED TO HANDLE THE NEXT TERRORIST INCIDENT? AND;**
- **HOW MUCH ARE CITIES SPENDING ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HAVE CITIES RECEIVED ANY MONEY FROM WASHINGTON?**

I'D LIKE TO START OUT BY ADDRESSING THESE ISSUES, THEN I'D LIKE TO SPEND A FEW MINUTES TALKING ABOUT THE FISCAL PROBLEMS THAT STATES AND CITIES FACE, AND WHAT, WE, AS MAYORS, WANT TO HEAR FROM WASHINGTON, FROM THE STATE CAPITOLS AND FROM THE

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AS THE YEAR MOVES FORWARD. I ALSO WANT TO PUT A PROPOSAL ON THE TABLE FOR A BIPARTISAN ECONOMIC SUMMIT AIMED AT GETTING OUR ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN.

THE ISSUE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, OR, "HOMELAND SECURITY" DIDN'T BEGIN ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. YOU CAN GO BACK TO THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING, OR THE THREATS CENTERED AROUND Y2K. MOST LARGE CITIES HAD THEIR OWN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES AND THEY WERE DOING VARIOUS TYPES OF PREPAREDNESS TRAINING. I SENT 80 OF OUR PEOPLE TO MARYLAND FOR FEMA TRAINING BACK IN 1998. AND THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 11, WE HAD PLANNED TO CONDUCT A LARGE SCALE TABLETOP EXERCISE.

BUT AS WE KNOW, SEPTEMBER 11 RAISED THE STAKES FOR ALL OF US. WE NOW HAVE TO BE PREPARED FOR INCIDENTS THAT MOST AMERICANS NEVER IMAGINED COULD HAPPEN. AND MANY OF THE ELEMENTS THAT MAKE OUR CITIES GREAT -- HISTORIC STRUCTURES, SOARING SKYSCRAPERS AND ACCESSIBLE HARBORS -- BECAME POTENTIAL TARGETS FOR TERROR.

MAYORS RESPONDED LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY. WE MADE THE INCREASED SECURITY COMMITMENTS THAT WERE NECESSARY, BECAUSE PUBLIC SAFETY IS OUR HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY. AND WE PAID THE COSTS OF ADDITIONAL SECURITY, BECAUSE THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE.

OUR NATION'S MAYORS CONVENED AN EMERGENCY SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON SHORTLY AFTER 9/11, AND WE CALLED FOR MEASURES TO FEDERALIZE AIRPORT SECURITY, CREATE A HOMELAND SECURITY AGENCY AND BEGIN TO ESTABLISH BETTER COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS. ALL OF THIS HAS

BEEN DONE, AND WE FEEL WE NOW HAVE A GOOD PARTNER IN SECRETARY TOM RIDGE.

HE HAS CONSTANTLY BEEN RESPONSIVE TO THE ISSUES THAT EACH MAYOR HAS BROUGHT HIM. YOU CALL HIM, AND GUESS WHAT, HE CALLS YOU BACK! WE DON'T ALWAYS AGREE, BUT HE'S ALWAYS AVAILABLE AND HE ALWAYS GOES THE EXTRA MILE. EVERY CABINET SECRETARY SHOULD BE AS RESPONSIVE AS TOM RIDGE.

OUR POST 9/11 SUMMIT ALSO CALLED FOR PROVIDING DIRECT FUNDING TO OUR FIRST RESPONDERS IN AMERICA'S CITIES. WE ALSO URGED WASHINGTON TO ENACT AN ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROGRAM TO GET OUR ECONOMY GOING AGAIN. IN BOTH OF THESE AREAS, HOWEVER, WE'RE NOT SEEING THE ACTIONS WE ANTICIPATED.

MAYORS WERE HOPEFUL IN EARLY 2002, WHEN THE PRESIDENT PROPOSED \$3.5 BILLION IN GRANTS TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR HOMELAND SECURITY. TODAY, FOUR MONTHS INTO 2003, MANY CITIES HAVE STILL NOT RECEIVED ANY FUNDING, AND SOME CITIES, LIKE BALTIMORE, GOT SHAFTED WHEN THEIR STATE GOVERNMENTS GAVE THEM A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE FUNDING. IT'S NO WONDER THEN, THAT MAYOR MARTIN O'MALLEY HAS BEEN SUCH A STRONG LEADER AS HEAD OF THE CONFERENCE OF MAYORS HOMELAND SECURITY TASK FORCE.

AS MAYORS, OUR EXPERIENCES MAKE OUR ADVOCACY EVEN STRONGER.

WE ARE MAKING SOME PROGRESS ON FUNDING. CONGRESS RECENTLY APPROPRIATED MORE FUNDING IN THE RECENT SUPPLEMENTAL BILL, INCLUDING \$700 MILLION FOR SO-CALLED "HIGH RISK" URBAN AREAS. THIS IS HELPFUL, BUT WE NEED BETTER CRITERIA FROM WASHINGTON SO THAT CITIES KNOW HOW TO GET THIS FUNDING.

DIRECT FUNDING CONTINUES TO BE AN ISSUE. CITIES ARE ON THE FRONTLINES OF HOMELAND SECURITY, AS WE ARE ON SO MANY OTHER ISSUES. WHEN YOU CALL "NINE-ONE-ONE", YOU DON'T GET THE WHITE HOUSE, YOU DON'T GET THE STATE HOUSE -- YOU GET FIRST RESPONDERS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, PEOPLE WHO CAN DELIVER FOR YOU.

WHEN THE "ORANGE" SIGNAL WENT ON RECENTLY, CITIES WENT TO WORK:

- **NEW YORK CITY LAUNCHED "OPERATION ATLAS", A COMPREHENSIVE TERRORISM PREVENTION EFFORT THAT COST \$5 MILLION A WEEK;**
- **PORT CITIES LIKE SEATTLE, NEW ORLEANS, LONG BEACH AND, OF COURSE, BOSTON, BEEFED UP SECURITY COVERAGE ALONG THE WATER;**
- **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS WERE ACTIVATED AROUND THE CLOCK IN MANY CITIES, AND;**
- **LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC HEALTH STEPPED UP SURVEILLANCE SCREENING.**

IF THE STATES NEED SOME FUNDING, LET THEM TAKE A PERCENTAGE, BECAUSE WE DO NEED SOME COORDINATION OUTSIDE OUR METRO AREAS. WE SHOULD ALSO HAVE FUNDING FOR REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS OF CITIES AND TOWNS. BUT LET'S MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO GET OUR POLICE, OUR FIREFIGHTERS AND OUR EMTS THE RESOURCES THEY NEED NOW.

MAYORS ALSO MUST FOCUS ON THE ISSUES OF ECONOMIC SECURITY. THAT MEANS:

- **JOBS FOR WORKING FAMILIES;**
- **TRAINING FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO WORK AND;**
- **QUALITY EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE FOR ALL.**

THIS YEAR, OUR ECONOMIC SURVEY OF AMERICA'S CITIES FOUND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS THAT CITIES WERE LOSING JOBS AND ECONOMIC OUTPUT. MORE THAN

700,000 JOBS WERE LOST IN OUR CITIES OVER THE PAST YEAR AS THE PROSPERITY OF THE 90'S VANISHED.

YOU HAVE TO HAVE A POPULATION OF 30,000 TO JOIN THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS. SIX METRO REGIONS EACH LOST 40,000 JOBS OR MORE IN JUST THE PAST YEAR! AND THE YEAR BEFORE, METRO DETROIT LOST 55,000 JOBS. EACH LOST JOB HAS A STORY THAT GOES WITH IT -- A FAMILY WITHOUT HEALTH CARE, A FORECLOSURE, AND SADLY, THE INCREASED LIKELIHOOD OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

WE KNEW EVEN BEFORE SEPTEMBER 11TH THAT THE ECONOMY WAS SLOWING DOWN. SO, THE MAYORS CONFERENCE PUT SENSIBLE PROPOSALS ON THE TABLE TO STIMULATE THE ECONOMY:

- **INVEST IN HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION;**
- **PROVIDE TARGETED TAX INCENTIVES, AND;**
- **HELP WORKING FAMILIES KEEP WORKING WITH DAY CARE AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS.**

THIS JANUARY, OUR LEADERSHIP MET IN WASHINGTON AND WE REAFFIRMED THESE PRINCIPLES. BUT WE ALSO DID SOMETHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY, WE SUPPORTED FEDERAL AID FOR OUR AILING STATE GOVERNMENTS. WE SAW THE PROBLEMS COMING DOWN THE ROAD, AND WE SUSPECTED THAT IF THE STATES NEEDED TO MAKE CUTS, THE CITIES WOULD PLAY THE ROLE OF FALL GUY.

GOOD GUESS.

LET ME READ YOU A FEW LINES FROM NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE COUNTRY DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 13TH:

- **FROM THE TENNESSEAN, "CUTS TO CITIES AND TOWNS IN GOVERNOR'S BUDGET WOULD BE 9 PERCENT";**

- FROM THE WINDSOR JOURNAL IN CONNECTICUT, "GOVERNOR'S BUDGET SHIFTS DEFICIT TO MUNICIPALITIES AND PROPERTY TAXPAYERS -- AGAIN"
- FROM THE EXAMINER.COM IN MISSOURI, "THE STATE'S BASIC AID TO PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS WOULD BE CUT 12.6 PERCENT -- OTHER SCHOOL FUNDING WOULD BE CUT 15 PERCENT"
- ACCORDING TO THE MINNESOTA PAPERS, THE GOVERNOR WANTS TO CUT \$435 MILLION IN LOCAL AID OVER TWO YEARS

AND AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, WE SEE MAYORS EVERYWHERE, TRYING TO COPE. HERE ARE SOME MORE HEADLINES:

- LOUISVILLE STARTS LAYOFFS, PAY CUTS TO ADDRESS DEFICIT;
- DENVER STUDIES LAYOFFS, CUTS IN SERVICES
- FROM PLANO, TEXAS, RECESSION FORCES CUTS IN BENEFITS FOR CITY EMPLOYEES
- IN OAKLAND, DEFICIT HITS \$46.5 MILLION, 350 JOBS AT RISK.

AND THE NUMBERS GROW FROM THERE -- LOS ANGELES COUNTY FACES OVER 2,000 PINK SLIPS; DETROIT HAS HAD 3,400 ALREADY AND NEW YORK CITY COULD HAVE AS MANY AS 10,000 MORE.

THIS ISN'T ECONOMIC RECOVERY, IT'S ECONOMIC MISERY FOR MORE AND MORE AMERICAN FAMILIES.

BOSTON IS NOT IMMUNE FROM CUTS EITHER. WE TOOK A CUT OF \$53 MILLION IN STATE AID FOR THIS FISCAL YEAR AND WAS TOLD TO EXPECT A CUT TWICE AS LARGE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004.

SO I JUST DID ONE OF THE TOUGHEST THINGS, I'VE EVER HAD TO DO, I SUBMITTED A BUDGET TO THE CITY

COUNCIL WHICH REDUCES THE CITY'S WORKFORCE BY ABOUT 1,700 EMPLOYEES. AND THIS WAS ON TOP OF A PAYROLL REDUCED BY 500 THIS YEAR, DUE TO THE STATE BUDGET CUTS I MENTIONED.

BOSTON IS NOT A MEGA-CITY LIKE NEW YORK OR LOS ANGELES. I PERSONALLY KNOW A LOT OF THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BE LAID OFF. SOME OF THEM ARE YOUNG TEACHERS THAT I RECRUITED PERSONALLY. THE SAME IS TRUE FOR THE FIRST RESPONDERS WE HEAR A LOT ABOUT DOWN HERE IN WASHINGTON. I KNOW THEM. THEY LIVE IN MY NEIGHBORHOODS.

BUT ALL THE PLEDGES OF SUPPORT I'VE HEARD FROM WASHINGTON DON'T AMOUNT TO MUCH -- DESPITE IMPLEMENTING MANY COST SAVING MEASURES, WE'RE STILL GOING TO HAVE TO LET SOME PEOPLE GO.

AND THAT, ALONG WITH SO MANY OTHER CUTS, WILL HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY.

RECENTLY, USA TODAY SURVEYED 61 ECONOMISTS ON THE PROBLEMS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. 79 PERCENT SAID THAT CUTBACKS POSED A "SIGNIFICANT DRAG" ON THE U.S. ECONOMY. AND I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL SEE MORE AND MORE PAIN, BETWEEN THE SLASHING OF STATE BUDGETS, AND THE SPILLOVER EFFECTS ON CITY BUDGETS AS WELL.

NOW, AS I SAID, THE CONFERENCE OF MAYORS REACHED OUT TO THE NATION'S GOVERNORS, AND WE OFFERED TO WORK TOGETHER. I MET WITH GOVERNOR PAUL PATTON OF KENTUCKY, THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION, AND OFFERED HIM OUR BACKING FOR FISCAL AID FOR THE STATES. WE COULD SUPPORT MEDICAID RELIEF, GENERAL FISCAL ASSISTANCE, OR SOME COMBINATION OF AID.

WE DID THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT MANY OF OUR STATE GOVERNMENTS HANDED OUT TAX CUT AFTER TAX CUT IN THE PAST DECADE. IN MASSACHUSETTS, ESTIMATES ARE THAT \$3 TO 4 BILLION IN ANNUAL TAX CUTS WERE ENACTED, MORE THAN ENOUGH TO ACCOUNT FOR THE CURRENT SHORTFALL.

WE DID THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT MANY STATE HOUSES AND GOVERNORS LOOK DOWN ON CITIES -- JUST LOOK AT GOVERNOR PATAKI'S RELUCTANCE TO GIVE MAYOR BLOOMBERG THE RESOURCES HE NEEDS, OR GOVERNOR ROMNEY'S OPPOSITION TO LOCAL TAXING AUTHORITY IN MASSCHUSETTS. ROMNEY ASKED THE LEGISLATURE FOR UNILATERAL POWERS TO MAKE BUDGET CUTS. I AM ASKING FOR THE REVENUE RAISING POWER TO SAVE TEACHERS, COPS AND FIREFIGHTERS.

IRONICALLY, IF YOU LOOK AT THE REVENUES GENERATED BY MY CITY, ONE OUT OF EVERY FIVE TAX DOLLARS THE STATE GAINS COMES FROM BOSTON DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE ARE ONLY 9 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. AND IF YOU LOOK AT THE ECONOMIES OF OTHER REGIONS, YOU WILL FIND THE SAME THING -- CITIES ARE THE ECONOMIC ENGINES THAT DRIVE REGIONS FORWARD.

BUT THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS WANT US TO GET THERE ON AN EMPTY TANK OF GAS!

BUT EVEN IN TODAY'S TOUGH TIMES, CITIES OFFER HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. IN MY CITY, WE HAVE OVER 70 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PENDING, MANY OF WHICH WILL BREAK GROUND IN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS DESPITE THE SLOW ECONOMY. OUR KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY HAS PRIMED US FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE 21ST CENTURY AND WE ARE STILL MOVING FORWARD. MANULIFE IS LOCATING ITS WORLD HEADQUARTERS IN BOSTON, MERCK IS BUILDING A NEW FACILITY IN OUR CITY AND WE ARE ABOUT TO OPEN A

NEW STATE OF THE ART CONVENTION CENTER. AND THE BIG DIG IS REALLY ALMOST FINISHED!

I BELIEVE THAT CITIES CAN CARRY OUR NATION BACK OUT OF RECESSION AND BACK INTO THE PROSPERITY WE SAW FROM 1993 TO 2001. HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

- **WE CAN DO THIS BY INVESTING IN HOUSING PRODUCTION RATHER THAN CUTTING IT. DESPITE RECORD PERCENTAGES OF HOMEOWNERSHIP, WORKING FAMILIES OF LOWER INCOMES ARE DESPERATE FOR GOOD HOUSING. HOUSING PRODUCTION ALSO CREATES JOBS FOR TRADESPEOPLE, BROKERS, THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY AND UTILITIES. IT'S THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS WE NEED.**

- **AND LET'S BOOST THE LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT, INSTEAD OF MAKING IT UNWORKABLE AS THE TAX CUT ON DIVIDENDS WOULD DO. LET'S ALSO ENACT A NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND TO MATCH THE INVESTMENT BEING MADE BY LOCAL FUNDS. I PUT \$30 MILLION OF CITY FUNDS INTO HOUSING THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. I'M NOT ASKING FOR A HANDOUT, I'M ASKING FOR A PARTNERSHIP.**

- **AND THIRD, THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO LIVE UP TO ITS NAME. RIGHT NOW THERE'S NO HOUSING, AND NO URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMING OUT OF THAT AGENCY ONCE YOU GET PAST THE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAMS. THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS STRIPPED AWAY A NUMBER OF PROGRAMS THAT MADE CITIES WORK**
 - **DRUG ELIMINATION GRANTS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING;**
 - **HOPE VI, A VERY SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM TO REINVENT SUBSIDIZED HOUSING AND;**

- **EMPOWERMENT ZONES, WHICH WERE A REPUBLICAN IDEA IN THE FIRST PLACE!**

- **WE NEED A FLEXIBLE AND BALANCED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM TO COME OUT OF CONGRESS THIS YEAR. I WANT TO APPLAUD CHAIRMAN YOUNG'S EFFORTS TO BOOST FUNDING FOR TEA-3 AND WE WANT TO WORK WITH HIM, WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND WITH LEADERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE TO GET THAT LEGISLATION DONE QUICKLY.**

- **IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TAX CUTS, LET'S MAKE THEM PRODUCTIVE TAX CUTS. LET'S GIVE A SHARE OF THE TAX CUTS TO HOUSING PRODUCTION, FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, FOR JOB TRAINING AND FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. AND LET'S GET A SHARE BACK TO WORKING FAMILIES STRUGGLING WITH THE RISING COSTS OF HEALTH CARE AND DAY CARE.**

- **I'VE ALSO PROPOSED THE IDEA OF A TAX CREDIT FOR FAMILIES WHO BUY THEIR FIRST COMPUTER. A RECENT SURVEY SAID THAT 42 PERCENT OF AMERICANS DON'T USE THE INTERNET. MAYBE THAT'S GOOD. BUT MAYBE IT MEANS THAT THERE COULD BE GREAT POTENTIAL FOR EXPANDING THAT MARKET AND THUS STIMULATING MANUFACTURING IN THE HIGH TECH INDUSTRY.**

- **AT THE BEGINNING OF MY REMARKS, I BRIEFLY MENTIONED OUR "TECHNOLOGY GOES HOME" PROGRAM TO TRAIN PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN COMPUTER SKILLS. IT'S THE BEST WELFARE REFORM PROGRAM I'VE SEEN AND IT'S A GREAT EQUALIZER BETWEEN SUBURBAN FAMILIES THAT HAVE TECHNOLOGY AND URBAN FAMILIES THAT DO NOT.**

- **TODAY, I WANT TO EXPAND ON MY TAX CREDIT PROPOSAL TO SAY THAT WE ALSO NEED A CREDIT FOR COMPANIES WILLING TO BUILD A CAREER LADDER FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES BY GIVING THEM A COMPUTER AND SOME TRAINING. AGAIN, WE CAN INCREASE SKILLS, STIMULATE DEMAND AND NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN HAVES AND HAVE NOTS. WE NEED PRODUCTIVE TAX INCENTIVES TO RAISE WORKING FAMILIES UP, NOT TAX BREAKS THAT WIDEN THE INCOME GAP.**

- **FINALLY, WASHINGTON CAN NO LONGER STICK ITS HEAD IN THE SAND AND AVOID THE FISCAL PLIGHT OF THE STATES, AND CONSEQUENTLY, THE CITIES. ONE GOOD PROPOSAL ON THE TABLE IS THE BIPARTISAN SCHUMER SNOWE BILL. IT WOULD PROVIDE \$20 BILLION TO STATES, AND \$20 BILLION TO CITIES, TO PROTECT US FROM CUTS COMING DOWN FROM THE STATES. I UNDERSTAND THERE ARE NOW SEVERAL ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS FOR FISCAL ASSISTANCE SO I HOPE THAT REAL ACTION IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.**

NOW, HOW DO WE GET ACTION? MORE IMPORTANTLY, CAN WE REACH AGREEMENT AS A NATION ON THE STEPS NEEDED TO GET OUR ECONOMY ROLLING AGAIN?

TODAY, I AM CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT TO CONVENE A BIPARTISAN ECONOMIC SUMMIT WITH THE NEXT SIXTY DAYS. I ASK HIM TO BRING IN THE LEADERSHIP OF CONGRESS, GOVERNORS, MAYORS, BUSINESS LEADERS, LABOR AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS AND LET'S COME OUT WITH A UNIFIED PLAN FOR ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION.

MAYBE, THERE WON'T BE FULL AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY REGARDING TAX POLICY. BUT MAYBE WE CAN FIND SOME COMMON GROUND ON MEDICAID RELIEF, ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES.

AMERICA RALLIED AS ONE AFTER SEPTEMBER 11 AND AFTER THE DECISION WAS MADE TO INVADE IRAQ. NOW, WE NEED THE SAME SENSE OF PURPOSE ABOUT PUTTING OUR NEIGHBORS BACK TO WORK AND PREVENTING MORE OF THEM FROM RECEIVING PINK SLIPS, WHETHER THEY ARE EXPERIENCED HIGH TECH WORKERS, OR YOUNG TEACHERS.

IN A LITTLE MORE THAN A MONTH FROM NOW, JUNE 9 IN DENVER, THE US CONFERENCE OF MAYORS EXPECTS TO HEAR FROM MANY OF THE CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT IN 2004. WE DON'T WANT TO HEAR PARTISAN RHETORIC -- WE WANT TO HEAR SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FROM THEM ABOUT HOW THEY WOULD GET OUR ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN AND WHAT ROLE THEY SEE FOR CITIES.

AND FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO COME, WELL, THAT SAYS SOMETHING ALSO.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO SEE THEM STEP FORWARD AND TALK ABOUT EMPOWERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, SO THAT WE ARE NOT SHACKLED ANY LONGER BY WHITE HOUSE OR STATE HOUSES. WE NEED A NATIONAL DISCUSSION ON THIS ISSUE. MAYORS BLOOMBERG, HAHN AND DALEY RUN CITIES MANY TIMES THE SIZE OF THE STATE OF VERMONT. SHOULD THEIR HANDS BE TIED BY A DISTANT STATE HOUSE?

BUT DON'T JUST PAY ATTENTION TO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES. LISTEN TO MY FELLOW MAYORS SPEAK OUT AS WELL. FROM VETERAN MAYORS LIKE RICH DALEY IN CHICAGO AND WELLINGTON WEBB IN DENVER TO EXCITING NEW MAYORS LIKE JANE CAMPBELL IN CLEVELAND AND DAVID CICILLINE IN PROVIDENCE, OUR TALENT POOL IS AS DEEP AS ITS BEEN IN MANY YEARS. OUR TASK MAY BE TOUGHER THAN IT WAS IN THE 90'S BUT WE ARE JUST AS COMMITTED TO HELPING THE

PEOPLE WE MEET IN THE PARKS AND AT THE SUPERMARKETS EVERY DAY.

FINALLY, I WOULD INVITE ALL OF YOU IN THE MEDIA TO VISIT BOSTON IN 2004, BUT IT SEEMS THAT ABOUT 15,000 OF YOU ARE COMING ANYWAY! I LOOK FORWARD TO HOSTING BOSTON'S FIRST NATIONAL POLITICAL CONVENTION NEXT JULY AND I PROMISE YOU A SPECTACULAR TIME.

IN FACT, YOU SHOULD COME TO BOSTON FOR THE CONFERENCE OF MAYORS ANNUAL MEETING IN JUNE, GO TO THE CAPE OR THE VINEYARD FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS, COME BACK FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION FOR A WEEK, THEN GO BACK TO THE BEACH TO RECOVER FROM THE CONVENTION FOR A FEW WEEKS! DO YOU REALLY WANT TO GO BACK TO WASHINGTON IN AUGUST?

AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME TODAY, AND REMEMBER THIS, AS OUR CITIES GO, SO GOES AMERICA.