



The United States Conference of Mayors

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**STATEMENT OF BALTIMORE MAYOR MARTIN O'MALLEY,
ON BEHALF OF THE NATION'S MAYORS,
AT INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO ESTABLISH DOMESTIC DEFENSE FUND**

March 6, 2003

"I welcome Senator Clinton's bill on behalf of America's mayors, as it clearly recognizes the difficulties facing mayors across the nation. New York City, Baltimore, and other U.S. cities are the frontline in the war on terror and even President Bush now admits that first responders have not received the financial support that they need to be effective. This bill is important to the U.S. Conference of Mayors because it acknowledges the need to provide direct funding to local communities across the country to help them cover some of the costs of emergency preparedness. I am also pleased that the bill includes the creation of a reserve fund that cities and states can tap into in times of heightened threat.

"The U.S. Conference of Mayors estimates that cities nationwide spent more than \$2.6 billion on homeland security through the end of 2002. Mayors have stepped up and faced their responsibility to protect their citizens, and will continue to do so in the future. But at a time of shrinking state and federal budgets, we need the financial support that the President promised us in the months following 9/11. We cannot fund the war on terror at home with local property tax revenue and fire hall bingo proceeds. The U.S. Conference of Mayors is encouraged at the support that Senator Clinton and Senator Daschle have shown us in anticipation of the upcoming war appropriation. We cannot neglect those on the frontline at home: our firefighters, police officers and healthcare workers."

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of the nation's 1183 cities with populations of 30,000 or more. Each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. More information is available at www.usmayors.org.

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