STATEMENT BY CONFERENCE PRESIDENT LOS ANGELES MAYOR ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA ON PRESIDENT OBAMA’S TROOP WITHDRAWAL PLAN

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Conference of Mayors President Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa issued the following statement tonight following President Barack Obama’s announcement to drawdown troops from Afghanistan:

“As the nation’s mayors, we thank our soldiers and their families for their tremendous service to our country.

“We recognize the difficult decisions President Obama must make in balancing foreign affairs, national security, and domestic needs. We applaud his directive to withdraw 33,000 troops from Afghanistan by summer 2012. This is a strong step towards ending the war in Afghanistan and bringing our soldiers – and the billions of dollars we spend each day – home.

"We urge Congress to honor our soldiers by putting 'boots on the ground' in cities across the country to create jobs for our men and women in uniform to come home to.

“Drawing down troop levels is step one. Increasing employment levels is step two. We need to use the billions of dollars we are currently spending in Afghanistan to rebuild our domestic economy.

“As President Obama rightly said, ‘it is time to focus on nation-building here at home.’”

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