STATEMENT BY U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
CEO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TOM COCHRAN
ON THE PASSING OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA

Washington, D.C. – The United States Conference of Mayors representing the Mayors of the United States of America CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran issued the following statement:

"Tonight we have lost a man whose basic courage and tenacity survived up against imprisonment, isolation, violence and punishment to be the icon for democracy of the last Century.

"USA Mayors stood firmly with Nelson Mandela and took a strong political stance as The US Conference of Mayors officially endorsed and supported the Sullivan Principles, born in the City of Philadelphia, actively supported and led by Former USCM President Boston Mayor-Vatican Ambassador Ray Flynn, which was an active boycott to the apartheid regime of South Africa.

"Mayors in 1987 took the jail keys of their cities to The United Nations and dropped them into a glass bowl asking South Africa to free Nelson Mandela.

"Mayors met with Mr. Mandela in New York with Mayor David Dinkins where Mr. Mandela thanked all for our support for his freedom.

"On our mission in 2004 we visited Robben Island. We have stood in Cell #5 where he spent 18 years of his 27 years in prison.

"Nelson Mandela brought South Africa together. And his life and the way he lived brought the world closer together. Our organization continues with the gift of his spirit to give us strength as we fight and oppose all racism across our globe."

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,295 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.