ARIZONA SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN MEETS WITH THE NATION’S MAYORS

The U.S. Conference of Mayors Hosts Winter Leadership Session in Phoenix

Phoenix – Arizona Senator John McCain talked immigration with the nation’s mayors on Friday, February 21st at the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) Winter Leadership Meeting in Phoenix. Led by USCM President Mesa (AZ) Mayor Scott Smith, a bipartisan delegation of more than forty local leaders who serve in the organization’s leadership gathered on Friday, February 21 and Saturday, February 22 to determine the policy direction of the Conference for the winter term.

As Congress languishes in gridlock, the nation’s mayors engaged in action-oriented strategy sessions on a range of federal issues including Transportation, Municipal Bonds, the Marketplace Fairness Act, EPA Water Mandates, Energy Efficiency, Trade and Exports, and Immigration.

Senator McCain spoke with the mayors assembled about the likelihood of an immigration bill passing Congress this year. “I believe we have galvanized a broad base of support for this legislation. But I am very disappointed that it seems to be stalled. ... What kind of a nation are we if we have a permanent population living in the shadows in our country?” McCain also reminded the mayors, “If there is any group that people rely on and respect, it is our nation’s mayors. You are in a unique position to help move this legislation forward. Mayors are respected and influential, and bring an incredible amount of focus and energy to this policy discussion.”

USCM President Smith, who sees fixing the broken immigration system as a key economic driver said, “Our experience tells us that the economic gains our cities and country will reap from fixing immigration make the effort well worth it. One thing about which we are certain is that maintaining the status quo is simply not acceptable. The social, political and financial costs of not securing our borders and fixing our immigration system will be staggering. These are costs that our cities, and we as a nation, cannot afford to bear.”

Mayor Smith also reiterated the findings of USCM’s most recent economic report showing employment and economic growth projections for 2014 in all of the nation’s 363 metropolitan areas. Done in conjunction with IHS Global Insight, the report shows all of the nation’s 363 metropolitan areas are expected to see real economic growth in 2014, unlike in 2013 when 96 metropolitan areas experienced declining economies. The report also shows that nearly all metros areas expect to see real Gross Metropolitan Growth of one percent or higher, compared to only 183 metros seeing the same growth in 2013. The report can be found at: http://www.usmayors.org/metroeconomies/2014/0114-briefing.pdf.

“Our message is simple,” said USCM President Smith. “Our nation’s future economic prosperity depends directly on the productivity and growth of our cities and their metro areas. And the innovations that drive this country begin with cities and their mayors. In order for our nation to reach its full potential, it is clear that mayors must be deeply involved in conversations on federal policy.”

On the heels of the Conference’s 82nd Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. where mayors met with Congressional leaders, top CEOs, Cabinet Officers and President Obama, USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran said, “We are gathered here for one reason - cities and their suburbs drive the national economy. As we all know, U.S. cities and their metropolitan area economies account for over 90 percent of the nation’s gross domestic product, nearly 90 percent of wage and salary income, and nearly 86 percent of all jobs. Congress needs to invest in, not hinder our metro areas because most of our future economic growth and the vast majority of our Gross Domestic Product will come from them.”

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are nearly 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor.
USCM 2014 Winter Leadership Meeting (Participating Mayors):
Mesa, AZ Mayor Scott Smith, USCM President
Sacramento, CA Mayor Kevin Johnson, USCM Vice President
Baltimore, MD Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake, USCM Second Vice President
Burnsville, MN Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, USCM Past President
Akron, OH Mayor Don Plusquellic, USCM Past President
Indianapolis, IN Mayor Greg Ballard, USCM Advisory Board Member
Rochester Hills, MI Mayor Bryan Barnett, USCM Advisory Board
Salt Lake City, UT Mayor Ralph Becker, USCM Advisory Board
Gresham, OR Mayor Shane Bemis, USCM Energy Committee Chair
Columbia, SC Mayor Stephen Benjamin, USCM Trustee
Albuquerque, NM Mayor Richard Berry
Johns Creek, GA Mayor Mike Bodker, USCM Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment and Sports Committee Vice Chair
Carmel, IN Mayor James Brainard, USCM Climate Protection Task Force Chair
Jacksonville, FL Mayor Alvin Brown, USCM Advisory Board
West Sacramento, CA Mayor Christopher Cabaldon, USCM Advisory Board
Arlington, TX Mayor Robert Cluck, USCM Advisory Board
Columbus, OH Mayor David Pepper, USCM Metro Economies Committee Chair
Hallandale Beach, FL Mayor Joy Coopersmith, USCM Trustee
Des Moines, IA Mayor Frank Cownie, USCM Trustee
Beaverton, OR Mayor Denny Doyle, USCM Advanced Manufacturing Task Force Co-Chair
Orlando, FL Mayor Buddy Dyer, USCM Advisory Board
Louisville, KY Mayor Greg Fischer, USCM Advisory Board
Long Beach, CA Mayor Bob Foster, USCM Trustee
Denver, CO Mayor Michael Hancock, USCM Education Reform Task Force Chair
Monrovia, CA Mayor Mary Ann Lutz, USCM Women’s Mayors Caucus Chair
Tallahassee, FL Mayor Terri Rizzo, USCM Trustee
Clarksville, TN Mayor Kim McMillian, USCM Advisory Board
Tempe, AZ Mayor Mark Mitchell
Miramar, FL Mayor Lori Moseley, USCM Advisory Board
Pembroke Pines, FL Mayor Frank Ortis, USCM Advisory Board
Houston, TX Mayor Annise Parker, USCM Criminal and Social Justice Committee Chair
Santa Ana, CA Mayor Miguel Pulido, USCM Advisory Board
Atlanta, GA Mayor Kasim Reed, USCM Transportation Committee Chair
Santa Barbara, CA Mayor Helene Schneider, USCM Hunger and Homelessness Task Force Co-Chair
Hartford, CT Mayor Pedro Segarra, USCM Trustee
St Louis, MO Mayor Francis Slay, USCM Advisory Board
Madison, WI Mayor Paul Soglin, USCM Advisory Board
Phoenix, AZ Mayor Greg Stanton, USCM Environment Committee Chair
Little Rock, AR Mayor Mark Stodola, USCM Ports and Exports Task Force Vice-Chair
Anaheim, CA Mayor Tom Tait, USCM Immigration Reform Task Force Co-Chair
Irving, TX Mayor Beth Van Duyne, USCM Advisory Board Member
Piscataway, NJ Mayor Brian Wahler, USCM Membership Committee Chair
Newton, MA Mayor Setti Warren, USCM Community Development and Housing Committee Chair

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