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INVESTING IN AMERICA'S YOUTH

WHEREAS, The Conference of Mayors is committed to promoting the well-being and positive development of the nation's young people; and

WHEREAS, Mayors know how early work experience provides educational and enrichment opportunities leading to academic improvement for millions of disadvantaged youth; and that youth who work are more apt to: stay in school, finish high school, and pursue post-secondary education and/or vocational training; and

WHEREAS, the labor market for the nation's teens has deteriorated considerably since 2000, when 45% of U.S teens had summer jobs, to the historic low of 34% last summer (2007); and

WHEREAS, matching the youth unemployment crisis is the nation's troubling dropout rate: *one in three youth will not graduate from high school with their peers*; and fifty percent (50%) of African-American and Hispanic youth are not completing high school; and

WHEREAS, by 2010 the largest segment of the nation's labor force will be teens and young adults as 41 million new workers enter the workforce beginning to replace 76 million retiring workers; and

WHEREAS, millions of young people are being left behind, disconnected from school and the world of work, and unable to participate in the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS, only a significant reinvestment in all youth, but most especially those young people with low educational attainment and poor connections to work, will reconnect them to the economic mainstream; and

WHEREAS, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) provides the nation's only comprehensive youth system to improve the education and training prospects for at-risk in-school and out-of-school youth; and

WHEREAS, WIA reauthorization has stalled in Congress and it is growing increasingly unlikely that work will be completed on the Workforce Investment Act this year; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Labor's WIA Youth Opportunity Grants represented a major commitment to addressing these conditions and increasing the long term employability of youth living in the poorest communities in our country; and

WHEREAS, the Administration eliminated the Youth Opportunity Grants program in the federal budget, and Congress did not earmark the Summer Jobs Act of 2008 for funding in the first and second economic stimulus packages; and

WHEREAS, disadvantaged youth have been severely underserved since 2000 with the elimination of a separate funding stream for summer job programs; and

WHEREAS, well-organized summer jobs programs bring immediate and long term benefits to teen workers, their communities, and the business sector; and

WHEREAS, developing skills to be productive workers, learning about various industries, and participating in the adult world of work are all important aspects of cultivating the next generation of workers,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to make a major new investment in our nation's youth of at least \$1 billion to address the unmet needs of youth who have been adversely affected since 2000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this new investment provide funding for a new Summer Jobs initiative to generate summer job and learning opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth both in-school and out-of-school which includes:

- Promoting career exploration across a variety of industries and fields helping young people learn more about their interests, aptitudes and the ways these can be applied in the local labor market; and
- Providing internships allowing students to combine academic and employment pursuits; and
- Developing connections to local school curricula so lessons learned at work relate to academics; and
- Developing training for youth supervisors, ensuring summer work experiences are appropriate and fulfilling; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in WIA reauthorization legislation, The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to:

- Retain the WIA Youth formula program and authorization funding for the formula program at not less than \$1 billion, with an additional \$250 million to automatically reestablish the Youth Opportunity Grants program;
- Provide flexibility to local areas to allow for a wide range of programs and strategies, including summer jobs, as currently provided in WIA;
- Retain services to both in-school and out-of-school youth;
- Preserve in-school youth programs and in-school services for 14 and 15 year olds.
- Maintain the focus on youth development;
- Ensure that any new targeted grant program for youth be available for both in-school and out-of-school youth, particularly those in high poverty communities and that it must be funded only in excess of the \$1 billion dedicated for the youth formula program.
- Further, ensure funding in excess of \$1 billion to include \$250 million so that successful Youth Opportunity and Youth Offender programs continue to be funded as part of any new national youth program, assuring local support for such efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any change in the youth formula allocation and any formula for new programs like the Youth Challenge Grants be substantially weighted to reflect the population to which the funds are targeted, such as high school drop outs, youth in the juvenile justice system, and youth aging out of foster care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to incorporate lessons learned from the Youth Opportunity (YO) Grant program into WIA reauthorization and incorporate the YO philosophy of long term, comprehensive support focused on youth development into all youth workforce policies and programs.

STRENGTHENING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the unemployment rate is currently 5.1 percent, and long-term unemployment is higher than it has ever been at this point in the economic cycle; and

WHEREAS, in the month of April 2008, the nation suffered a loss of 80,000 jobs and almost 20 percent of all unemployed have been out of work for six months or longer; and

WHEREAS, the Workforce Investment Act, the law creating the nation's largest program for providing skills training, can provide training for less than one percent of the nation's workforce; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has cut funding for job training programs by over \$1 billion since FY 2002; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has proposed an additional \$1 billion in funding cuts for job training programs in the FY 2009 budget; and

WHEREAS, other developed countries now invest more per capita in workforce skills, have created new entitlements for technical education, and are graduating more people from college; and, as a result, they are growing promising industries, spreading prosperity, and threatening to displace the U.S. as the world's future economic leader; and

WHEREAS, one of America's greatest challenges is to maintain its prosperity, standard of living, and competitive position in the current world economy; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. must create a workforce system that supports businesses to compete effectively by providing talent to fuel an innovative economy and enabling businesses to grow and create jobs; and

WHEREAS, an effective workforce system should serve as the lynchpin to identify where businesses have needs for labor and how to array workforce assets to meet these needs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges the federal government to strengthen the

Workforce Investment Act by significantly increasing its funding to adequately reflect its importance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges the federal government to strengthen the Workforce Investment Act by:

- improving regional and private-sector coordination, and expanding outreach to immigrants;
- Providing incentives for public-private partnerships in workforce development;
- Providing additional training and apprenticeship programs which prepare workers for jobs in the building trades;
- Enlisting regional employers as partners having a vested interest in the success of workforce development programs;
- Providing adequate funding for federal programs which have demonstrated success in developing a competitive workforce, such as summer youth employment, adult education/G.E.D, literacy, Pell grants, TRIO, vocational education, and incumbent worker programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors calls on business leaders to:

- Invest in workforce education and career exploration counseling for high school students;
- Encourage employees (especially within large businesses) to participate in workforce development programs available in high schools, particularly those with lower college placement rates;
- Work with educators and local leaders to develop appropriate curriculum that is responsive to regional workforce trends;
- Collaborate with state education and workforce leaders to identify key regional job trends;
- Support federal and state standards-based education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to ensure that public workforce development resources are accessible to all workers in need of assistance—including adults and youth who have been subject to decreasing investments by the Department of Labor, as well as low-income workers, whose access to Pell grants has been restricted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that within the context of a business-driven, locally-controlled workforce system, data systems and measures must be developed to accurately reflect local service

strategies, economies, and business metrics. Additionally metrics should include not only the measure of an individual's success but also the business's success; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors encourages local workforce systems to have leveraged partnerships with multiple stakeholders allowing local areas to bring more to the workforce system thereby strengthening it to provide comprehensive, cohesive services to jobseekers.

**METRO ECONOMIES GREEN INITIATIVE:
SUPPORTING EMERGING MODELS OF EXCELLENCE**

WHEREAS, the Brookings Institution reports that the 100 largest U.S. metropolitan areas contain 65 percent of the nation's population and 68 percent of its jobs, generating three-quarters of the nation's gross domestic product; and

WHEREAS, metro economies are reported to gather even larger shares of innovative activity (78 percent of U.S. patent activity), educated workers (75 percent of graduate degree holders), and critical infrastructure (79 percent of U.S. air cargo); and

WHEREAS, while employment within the manufacturing sector has remained relatively constant since 1950, manufacturing jobs now account for a significantly smaller percentage of the American workforce (31 percent of U.S. non-farm employment in 1950, as compared to just over 10 percent in 2007); and

WHEREAS, an increasingly competitive global workforce and multinational supply chains within traditional manufacturing industries continue to threaten American economic competitiveness abroad and basic job security and individual self-sufficiency throughout the nation; and

WHEREAS, projections from the U.S. Census Bureau demonstrate that non-Hispanic whites will represent less than half of the nation's prime working-age (25 to 64) population by 2050, with African Americans and Hispanics accounting for more than 90 percent of total growth in that age range during the next 40 years; and

WHEREAS, persons from these communities are largely concentrated in metropolitan areas and remain disproportionately affected by numerous challenges related to education, employment, and incarceration; and

WHEREAS, metro communities remain beset by disproportionate high school dropout rates, with the EPE Research Center reporting that nearly 40 percent of the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas suffer high school graduation rates below 50 percent; and

WHEREAS, minority student populations are particularly likely to demonstrate elevated high school dropout rates, with African

American and Latino students demonstrating graduation rates below 60 percent nationally; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Labor Market Studies has reported that a black male high school dropout will on average receive nearly \$190,000 more in government benefits than he will pay in payroll and income taxes throughout the course of his work life; and

WHEREAS, programs intended to provide high school students unlikely to pursue baccalaureate study with a means to transition from secondary studies to high-skill employment are a vital means to provide these students with tools for lifelong self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Literacy, 70% of all prisoners function at the lowest literacy levels and less than 32% of State prison inmates have a high school diploma or a higher level of education; and

WHEREAS, According to the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, nearly 650,000 - about 1,600 a day - people are released from Federal and State incarceration into communities nationwide each year, with the majority of these individuals returning to the nation's metro communities; and

WHEREAS, transitional jobs programs have proven to help individuals with criminal records to return successfully to the workplace and to the community, and therefore can reduce recidivism; and

WHEREAS, these programs, along with traditional technical training programs, and emerging green industries provide at-risk individuals within our nation's metro communities with concrete opportunities for long-term economic self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, the American Solar Energy Society estimates that, in 2006 alone, more than 8 million Americans worked in green industries, generating \$933 billion of revenue; and

WHEREAS, the Society further estimates that these industries can account for more than 40 million American jobs by 2030, generating over \$4.5 trillion in annual revenue; and

WHEREAS, green industries promote employment opportunities that are necessarily local. As such, jobs within emerging green industries offer sustainable employment opportunities to Americans for decades to come,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors encourages Congress, through consideration of legislation addressing global climate change, to authorize programs within the Department of Housing and Urban Development to target designated funding resources to metro communities meeting certain criteria to enable these communities to undertake model green industry economic and workforce development programs of excellence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, among such programs, The U.S. Conference of Mayors will support federal efforts to authorize and fund the following initiatives:

- o Metro Area Green Zones - to support exemplary low-carbon workforce and economic development efforts already underway throughout the nation and establish best practice data consistent with efforts to provide stable employment in emerging green industries to formerly incarcerated, low-income, and difficult-to-employ populations;
- o The Metro Area Green Institute - to serve as a clearinghouse for low-carbon economic development efforts nationally, compiling and disseminating data gleaned through the Metro Area Green Zones program and providing technical assistance to local and municipal green job creation/workforce development programs throughout the country;
- o Mini-Metro Green Grants - to expand and enhance the reach and relevance of activities undertaken by Metro Area Green Zones and the Metro Area Green Institute to ensure the robust participation of smaller, developing municipalities in low-carbon workforce and economic development; and,
- o Alternative Green Academies - to enable local municipalities to partner with not-for-profit organizations, local education agencies, community and technical colleges, and trade associations, and local businesses to provide low-carbon job training, employment opportunities, and other life skills to high school dropouts, formerly incarcerated youth, and students for whom a 4-year higher education is either undesirable or impossible.

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A "GREEN" ECONOMY

WHEREAS, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has passed several resolutions calling on all levels of government to pursue environmentally sustainable municipal practices; and

WHEREAS, "green building" and other sustainable practices will support growth in all sectors of our economy; and

WHEREAS, the Green Jobs Act was signed into law on December 19, 2007, providing funding for workforce training linked to jobs in sustainable industries such as renewable energy and energy efficiency; and

WHEREAS, a leading cause for increased recidivism, poverty, and crime is a lack of jobs that pay a livable wage; and

WHEREAS, one of the most essential elements of a "green" economy will involve increasing the production of energy from sustainable sources and retrofitting existing buildings to be more energy efficient; and

WHEREAS, the promotion of energy policies based on energy efficiency and on renewable sources will not only help our economy, but will do so in a healthy and clean way, saving our cities billions in ancillary costs such as healthcare, infrastructure decay, climate change mitigation and waste management; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Wind Energy Association, adding 30,000 megawatts of wind energy to our capacity by 2010 could reduce carbon emissions to our atmosphere by 100 million tons; and

WHEREAS, according to a National Renewable Energy Laboratory study, a Photovoltaic system meeting half of the electrical needs of a typical household would eliminate approximately half a ton of sulfur dioxide pollution from the air, and 600 pounds of nitrogen oxides; and

WHEREAS, green jobs and sustainable methods of producing energy make-up an increasing percentage of the economy. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, 117,000 jobs in wind and

solar energy production can be sustained with tax credits aimed toward that industry,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors calls upon the U.S. Congress to extend the Wind Production Tax Credit, Solar Investment Tax Credit, and the Energy Efficiency Tax Credit as soon as possible so that 117,000 jobs in that sector can be secured in 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the USCM calls upon the U.S. Congress to fund the programs passed in the Green Jobs Act to their full authorization level for FY 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the USCM calls upon the U.S. Congress to allocate additional funding for the development of new green businesses and workforce development programs for the new energy economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members of the USCM will take steps to better implement and increase the opportunities for green jobs development in their cities such as: 1) competing for the Pathways Out of Poverty Demonstration Grant to fund green jobs for the economically disadvantaged; 2) institute solar alternative power initiatives that increase the number of solar cells attached to our power grids, implement energy efficiency capital improvements, and make use of other energy forms such as wind power or geothermal; 3) work with the business community to form green job councils in our cities that can best direct human resources to growing green industries.

GREEN JOBS PLEDGE

WHEREAS, more than 850 mayors from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, representing a total population of over 80 million citizens, have signed the U.S Mayors Climate Protection Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Mayors and local governments are critical when it comes to leading in practical solutions in job creation, climate change and healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government has already approved funds through the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act to stimulate the market for and promote the use of renewable energy technologies through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program that includes specific support for green jobs, and

WHEREAS, private sector investments in the green economy are growing and can be used to leverage local economic development that benefits all of our residents; and

WHEREAS, the purchasing power of our local governments can increase the markets for energy efficiencies and other green industries; and

WHEREAS, we can invest new local government resources into programs and initiatives that align existing public resources, and private sources of capital and finance, toward these same goals,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The U.S. Conference of Mayors shall strengthen and make further progress on our stated commitment to improving the environment in ways that grow both the economy and green jobs locally; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, signatory cities shall work to enhance and develop job training programs in the public and private sector that provide pathways out of poverty for our residents by equipping them for high demand jobs in the green economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, signatory cities shall catalyze green job creation and training by supporting policies that

drive public and private investment in an inclusive local green economy; and

BE IT FINNALLY RESOLVED THAT, we commit to sign on to the green jobs pledge (www.usgreenjobspledge.org) and join together as a movement of local governments across the United States to seize the economic, environmental and social opportunities offered by building an inclusive green economy of high quality jobs and a thriving green workforce.

**URGING INCREASED INVESTMENT IN COLLEGE READINESS AND ACCESS
INITIATIVES**

WHEREAS, only 70 percent of American students currently_earn a high school diploma; and

WHEREAS, minority and low-income students are at greater risk of dropping out of high school and not enrolling in post-secondary education; and

WHEREAS, less than 2,000 high schools (about 12% of all high schools) account for the majority of the nation's dropouts, with 40 percent of all African-American and 33 percent of all Hispanic students attending these schools; and

WHEREAS, high School drop-outs suffer personally for failing to graduate but the nation as a whole also suffers. Every school day 7,000 students become dropouts. More than 12 million students are expected to drop out of high school in the next decade - at a cost of more than \$3 trillion to the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS, In today's competitive, high-tech economy, employers need workers with the knowledge and skills who can compete globally, with the fastest-growing and best-paying jobs now requiring some postsecondary training; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government must address this national crisis and support schools that help at-risk students stay in school and obtain the necessary skills for higher education; and

WHEREAS, mayors must work with local education leaders, including school superintendents and college presidents, to significantly improve the high schools responsible for the majority of our nation's dropouts and develop programs that will provide students a pathway to higher education through college readiness activities and financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, successful federal college-readiness initiatives, such as GEAR UP and Trio, are only reaching a fraction of the eligible students and continue to be under-funded every year; and

WHEREAS, S. 1185 and H.R. 2928, the Graduation Promise Act would create a federal-state-local partnership focused on transforming

the nation's lowest-performing high schools, including new federal funds for a High School Improvement and Dropout Reduction Fund; and

WHEREAS, S. 1920, the GRADUATES Act would create a \$500 million Secondary School Innovation Fund to support partnerships to create models of innovation in secondary schools to increase student achievement and prepare students for success in post-secondary education and the workforce; and

WHEREAS, the US Conference of Mayors supports the idea that all school-age children who want to attend college should be provided the opportunity,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors recognizes that to compete with their international peers, American students must graduate from high school with the academic foundation they will need to participate in post-secondary education and succeed in a 21st century economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The United States Conference of Mayors calls upon the federal education policymakers to work closely with Mayors to ensure a sound federal investment in education initiatives and programs that prepare students for and provide access to college, including increased funding for the GEAR UP and TRIO programs, adopt and fund the Graduation Promise Act and the GRADUATES Act and support financial assistance for all students who desire to do so to attend college.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES

WHEREAS, our nation must use its most effective publicly-funded early childhood resources to strengthen American families and provide our youngest citizens with the best prospects for a productive and rewarding future; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has consistently supported Head Start and subsidized child care and pre-kindergarten programs; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive approach to these early childhood care and education services under the leadership of chief local elected officials will help keep America's cities working, expand parent choice and promote quality care for all children; and

WHEREAS, the availability, affordability and accessibility of these programs are vital for millions of families struggling to cope with the rising cost of everyday essentials, and are the key factor in their being able to continue working; and

WHEREAS, approximately 63 percent of the nation's children under 5 are in nonparental care during part or all of the day while their parents work; and

WHEREAS, according to 2005 data from the Bureau of the Census, nearly 12,000,000 children under the age of 5 are in some type of child care arrangement; and

WHEREAS, almost 80 percent of an individual's total brain development occurs before the age of five; and

WHEREAS, millions of low-income children could benefit from high-quality child care; in 2007, 43 percent of America's children under age 6 lived in families with incomes below 200 percent of poverty; and

WHEREAS, only 30.5 percent of Hispanic 3 year olds attend center-based preschool education programs and 45.8 percent of non-Hispanic children; and

WHEREAS, students who have attended quality preschool programming have less grade retention and increased high school

graduation rates when compared to those who have not attended;
and

WHEREAS, the Head Start program for over four decades has successfully delivered comprehensive early childhood education, health and social services, and has a proud history of bipartisan support in Congress; and

WHEREAS, almost one million of America's most at-risk children and their families currently depend on Head Start programs for a solid foundation for their future, for their first educational experiences, for immunizations, dental and health care, for learning social skills and good nutrition habits; and

WHEREAS, young adults who participated in quality early childhood education programs were arrested less often, had fewer births out of wedlock, and were less likely to use welfare than their peers who did not participate; and

WHEREAS, one-third more at-risk children who attended a quality early childhood program graduated from high school than those who did not attend; and

WHEREAS, these publicly-funded early childhood programs are locally-run and locally-focused, help educate and care for our children, improve and enrich the lives of their parents and siblings, and engage and benefit the residents, organizations and institutions of the neighborhoods and cities in which they operate,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges federal, state, and local governments to invest in expanding access to quality early childhood care and education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges Congress to fully fund the Head Start program and the Child Care and Development Block Grant so that all eligible children can have access to these highly valuable early childhood development and enrichment services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference believes that investing in quality, affordable child care is one of the most cost-effective economic stimulus measures to lessen the financial burden for our working families, reduce public assistance costs and move families out of poverty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that low-income families' co-payments for publicly-funded child care be set at appropriate levels that do not present a significant barrier to access. Currently, low-income families spend as much as 18% of their annual income on their child care co-payment while the average American family spends only 9% on child care--a major impediment for those struggling to stay afloat in today's economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress and the Executive Branch recognize how universally Head Start, child care and preschool programs are melded and leveraged at the local level to meet the early childhood needs of families and communities, and that they acknowledge and support this beneficial coordination by providing sufficient administrative and financial flexibility in these programs.

INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, 20 percent of children entering kindergarten lack the social and emotional skills necessary for classroom learning; and

WHEREAS, less than half of children in poverty attend preschool at ages 3 and 4; and

WHEREAS, children of families with modest incomes, slightly below the average, participate less in preschool education than families in poverty; and

WHEREAS, only 30.5 percent of Hispanic 3 year olds attend center-based preschool education programs and 45.8 percent of non-Hispanic children; and

WHEREAS, almost 80 percent of total brain development occurs before the age of five; and

WHEREAS, children attending high quality preschool programs are engaged in early literacy development training; and

WHEREAS, students who have attended quality preschool programming have less grade retention and increased high school graduation rates when compared to those who have not attended; and

WHEREAS, students having attended preschool programs are less likely to smoke and are more likely to make better personal health decisions; and

WHEREAS, young adults who participated in quality early childhood education programs were arrested less often, had fewer births out of wedlock, and were less likely to use welfare than their peers who did not participate; and

WHEREAS, high quality preschool programs lead to decreased crime and delinquency rates,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges federal, state, and local governments to invest in expanding access to quality preschool education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors believes that the extent of preschool education's impact depends on both quality resources for students and the professional development of teachers, paraprofessionals and staff in early education centers.

INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, after-school tutoring increases the academic achievement of students on state standardized tests; and

WHEREAS, after-school programs provide extracurricular activities that expose students to arts, culture, sports, leadership development, and career exploration opportunities; and

WHEREAS, after-school programs provide constructive activities, supervision, and safety for students outside of school hours; and

WHEREAS, after-school programs participation leads to increased school attendance and graduation rates among students; and

WHEREAS, after-school programs promote personal skills and social development of students,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls for federal, state and local levels of government to support cities and their districts in building and investing in quality after-school programming by:

- o Creating grant opportunities for building city-wide after school initiatives to encourage access to all K-12 students;
- o Providing support and incentives for professional development training for staff and paraprofessionals; and
- o Encouraging the development of evaluations to gauge the impact of after-school programs and to identify additional needs, necessary enhancements, and supports

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors encourages collaboration among government agencies, non-profit organizations and the business community to develop after-school programming.

MAYORAL LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

WHEREAS, cities are beginning to redefine their roles in education; and

WHEREAS, mayors are increasing their interest and engagement in education; and

WHEREAS, mayoral involvement includes both mayors with and without control of their school districts; and

WHEREAS, approximately 3 million students live in cities with formal mayoral control and over 50 million do not; and

WHEREAS, districts under mayoral control have shown the greatest academic improvements in low performing schools; and

WHEREAS, mayoral control has led to increased spending in support services in their district budgets; and

WHEREAS, mayoral engagement leads to new visions in education for a city's student population; and

WHEREAS, mayors use their bully pulpit to build civic capacity among stakeholders across government, non-profit, and business sectors to create education initiatives,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors urges state and local governments to encourage the engagement of mayors in education in both circumstances where there is mayoral control and informal mayoral engagement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors recognized and supports the rightful role of mayors to do what needs to be done to promote the interests of public school student and parents, and the schools, align the efforts of the city and the school system, and improve the lives, education outcomes and opportunities of the children who attend public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors supports mayoral leadership and involvement in education that makes a positive difference in the quality of teaching and learning in the city's schools, whether through direct forms of involvement or informal means; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors fully supports a myriad of choices in selecting the level of mayoral leadership and involvement in education including utilization of the bully pulpit to build political support for education improvement that provides the impetus school districts need to speed reforms; fostering greater student achievement; providing greater visibility to important issues which forces decisions to be made; creating programs when needed; increasing public participation; working to enhance funding and resources; and setting new priorities when necessary.

SUPPORT FOR TEACH FOR AMERICA

WHEREAS, The educational inequity that persists along socio-economic lines is our nation's greatest domestic challenge; and

WHEREAS, the mission of Teach For America is to enlist our nation's most promising future leaders in the movement to eliminate educational inequity; and

WHEREAS, Teach For America recruits, selects, prepares and develops outstanding recent graduates of all majors and career interests to commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools; and

WHEREAS, through their teaching experience, Teach For America Corps Members gain added commitment to address the problem, and insight about real solutions;

WHEREAS, Teach For America alumni become leaders in education and across all sectors, where they attack the challenges of poverty and build the capacity of school systems; and

WHEREAS, since its inception in 1990, the Teach For America network has grown to include more than 17,000 individuals, including some 5,000 corps members currently teaching in 26 urban and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, rigorous research studies conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. and the Urban Institute have demonstrated that Teach For America corps members have a positive impact on student achievement; and

WHEREAS, a significant and growing number of Teach For America alumni hold leadership roles—as lead teachers, principals, nonprofit directors, school board members, and social entrepreneurs—in high-need communities across the country.; and

WHEREAS, Teach For America is in the midst of an aggressive growth plan to maximize the impact of its corps members and alumni; and

WHEREAS, public support of Teach For America is critical to achieving this goals,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges federal, state, and local governments to increase their investment in Teach For America so that it may grow to scale and build a truly effective movement to eliminate educational inequity.

**EXPAND THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT TO BETTER ACCOMMODATE
WORKING FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS**

WHEREAS, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is the nation's largest wage support for low-income workers; and

WHEREAS, while the EITC is an effective support for many low-income workers, it does not provide needed assistance to most low-wage childless workers and noncustodial parents; and

WHEREAS, the broad expansion would be used to encourage and incentivize work for those populations that otherwise would not substantially benefit from the EITC; and

WHEREAS, studies show that non-custodial fathers who earn more, pay more child support, visit their children more often and are more likely to marry; and

WHEREAS, expanding EITC to non-custodial parents that are paying child support encourages both work and responsible parenting; and

WHEREAS, waiting until age 25, as the current EITC for singles does, may unnecessarily penalize young, non-college-bound workers who are supporting families; and

WHEREAS, currently, if a couple is married both parents' earnings are counted when calculating the EITC, therefore, married families receive significantly less EITC benefits than unmarried couples with children, which creates a marriage penalty; and

WHEREAS, current EITC policy disadvantages low-income married families compared to single parent families and it also discourages couples who otherwise might marry; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the EITC marriage penalty for low-income workers will strengthen American families; and

WHEREAS, public policy that supports low-income working individuals and families and encourages work strengthens American society; and

WHEREAS, since EITC is not indexed to protect against inflation, its value to low-income workers becomes eroded over time,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on Congress to reform the Earned Income Tax Credit so that the benefits available to lower income families and individuals will be increased, simplified, and easier to access; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress substantially expand the EITC amount by tripling it so that it better rewards hard working, lower income families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress expand the eligibility for single adults by significantly increasing the maximum earnings cap for those workers from \$12,000 to \$18,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress expand the eligibility for non-custodial parents who are paying child support by significantly increasing the maximum earnings cap for those workers from \$12,000 to \$18,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress ensure that the EITC encourages an increased attachment to the workforce; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress should lower the age of eligibility for the EITC from 25 years of age to 21 years of age with the exception of making payments to full-time college students who often have other means of support; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress should increase benefits for working single adults and non-custodial parents by increasing the phase-in phase-out rate; and.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress allow families with married parents to file for EITC separately and allow the parent who claims the children to receive the EITC rates for families and allow the other parent to receive the new EITC rate for single individuals, and thereby alleviate the "marriage penalty"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress index the EITC to the minimum wage.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

WHEREAS, there are over 5 million English Language Learners (ELL) enrolled in Pre-k through 12th grade classes; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to help ELL students build oral English skills to verbalize conceptual understandings; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to empower students and communities to overcome the challenges of language barriers; and

WHEREAS, by the year 2010, over thirty percent of all school-age children will come from homes in which the primary language is not English,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors encourages federal, state, and local governments to support educational initiatives geared towards addressing the needs of ELL students and the related challenges it presents to districts and communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors deems city wide multi-cultural events and programs as tools that help to create a supportive environment for ELL students to both share and learn of various cultural backgrounds.

SUPPORT FOR CRADLE TO PRISON PIPELINE INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of youth are funneled down life paths that lead to arrest, conviction, incarceration and even death; and

WHEREAS, a Black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in his lifetime; a Latino boy a 1 in 6 chance; and a White boy a 1 in 17 chance. A Black girl born in 2001 has a 1 in 17 chance of going to prison in her lifetime; a Latino girl a 1 in 45 chance; and a White girl a 1 in 111 chance; and

WHEREAS, poverty, exacerbated by race, is the largest driving force behind the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* crisis, with almost 13 million, or 1 in 6 children in America living in poverty, almost half of whom (5.5 million) live in extreme poverty; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 4 Latino children and 1 in 3 Black children are poor; and

WHEREAS, the number of uninsured children from birth through age 18 rose to 9.4 million in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Latino children are three times and Black children are almost twice as likely to be uninsured as White children; and

WHEREAS, the importance of the early years is dramatically underscored in a U.S. Department of Education study which found that Black and Hispanic children were substantially behind when they entered kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, 86 percent of Black, 83 percent of Latino and 58 percent of White 4th graders cannot read at grade level; and

WHEREAS, 89 percent of Black, 85 percent of Latino and 59 percent of White 8th graders cannot do grade level math; and

WHEREAS, only 48,000 Black males earn a bachelor's degree each year, but an estimated 1 in 3 Black men ages 20-29 is under correctional supervision or control; and

WHEREAS, one-size-fits-all zero tolerance school discipline policies are transforming schools into a major point of entry into the juvenile justice system as children are increasingly

arrested on school grounds for subjectively and loosely defined behaviors; and

WHEREAS, a child is abused or neglected every 36 seconds but four in ten of the children who are confirmed abused or neglected get no help at all; and

WHEREAS, although they comprise only 16 percent of all children, Black children represent 32 percent of the foster care population; and

WHEREAS, a Congressional study found 15,000 children in juvenile detention facilities, some as young as 7 years old, solely because community mental health services were unavailable; and

WHEREAS, children who age out of foster care are less likely to graduate from high school or college, and experience more serious mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder, than children generally and they are less likely to receive adequate health and mental health care, and are more likely to experience homelessness, and to be involved in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, alcohol and other substance abuse treatment for youth and for parents and adults is in too short supply; and

WHEREAS, Black youth are about four times as likely as their White peers to be incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, most juvenile correctional facility programs focus on punishment rather than treatment and rehabilitation, often creating environments that further harden youth and makes it more difficult for them to productively reintegrate into their communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to fighting for policies that put children on track to a productive adulthood and against the criminalization of children at younger and younger ages and urge the President of the United States and Congress to; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to ending poverty through investments in high quality education for every child, livable wages for families, income supplements like the Earned Income and Child Tax Credits, job training and job creation, and work supports like child care and health coverage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to ensuring every child and pregnant woman has access to affordable, seamless, comprehensive health and mental health coverage and services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to making early childhood development programs accessible to every child by ensuring such programs are affordable, available and of high quality; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to helping each child reach his/her full potential and succeed in work and life by ensuring our schools have adequate resources to provide high quality education to every child; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to expanding prevention and specialized treatment services for children and their parents, connect children to caring permanent families, improve the quality of the child welfare workforce and increase accountability for results for children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference of Mayors is committed to reducing detention and incarceration by increasing investment in prevention and early intervention strategies, such as access to quality early childhood development and education services and to the health and mental health care children need for healthy development.

**IN SUPPORT OF FULL FUNDING AND 'BEST PRACTICE' IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE SECOND CHANCE ACT**

WHEREAS, The U.S. Conference of Mayors has long established policy on the reintegration of ex-offenders covering the last ten years; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the USCM called upon the Federal Government to implement better funding methods through the States for addressing youth violence and juvenile justice issues; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the USCM adopted policy supporting passage of the Second Chance Act as well as encouraging the efforts of faith-based and community initiatives to aid the reentry community; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the USCM made its boldest statement to date on reentry concerns by outlining specific actions that should be taken by all levels of government to provide ex-offenders with greater opportunities to attain self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the USCM reiterated its call for better regulation of the sealing, expunging and releasing of juvenile records, particularly those associated with nonviolent crimes, so that young people affected have the maximum opportunity to become self-sufficient, successful adults; and

WHEREAS, these policies have taken on added significance thanks to the successful passage and signing into federal law of the "Second Chance Act of 2007." Now, there exists federal authorization for ex-offender efforts that have been championed by mayors for years; and

WHEREAS, the Second Chance Act endorses a more comprehensive approach to addressing reentry, requiring collaboration amongst federal agencies such as DOJ, HHS, and DOL, as well as state/local government and private service providers; and

WHEREAS, the Second Chance Act also helps to bridge the nexus between work and reentry by collapsing barriers to institutional aid experienced by those attempting to reenter society, including, for example, bans of financial assistance for higher education, HUD's 'one-strike-and-you're-out' policy, and a lifetime ban on TANF and food stamp benefits for ex-offenders with certain convictions; and

WHEREAS, the Second Chance Act contains several critical authorizations for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 such as \$55 million for Adult and Juvenile Offender State/Local Reentry Demonstration Projects; \$10 million for state/local family-based abuse treatment programs; \$10 million for state/local evaluation efforts of educational methods at prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities; \$15 million for state/local governments toward the Reentry Substance Abuse and Criminal Justice Collaboration Program; \$10 million for state/local governments toward the Technology Careers Training Program; \$15 million for nonprofit organizations toward Mentoring Programs; and

WHEREAS, Section 101 of the Second Chance Act requires that each local government applicant develop a comprehensive strategic reentry plan that contains annual and five-year performance outcomes,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors calls upon the U.S. Congress to fund the Second Chance Act for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 at the full authorized amount; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the USCM calls upon the U.S. Congress to begin discussions on a reauthorization of the Second Chance Act upon the convening of the 111th Congress for an additional period of more than a two years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the USCM Ex-Offender Task Force work in close coordination with the Second Chance Act's National Resource Center, assisting the Center in meeting its mandate of collecting data and information on best practices in reentry programming and partnering with the Center in disseminating 'best practice' knowledge to state and local governments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that mayors commit to assessing and reducing the barriers that exist in their own municipal regulations to hiring, promoting, and providing increased compensation opportunities for ex-offenders in city-paid positions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the USCM calls upon the U.S. Department of Labor to assess each state's obstructions to employing ex-offenders and list those obstructions in a timely publication that can be used by state and local governments to reduce such impediments.