

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-20

IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

WHEREAS, historically, the cities and towns of the United States are a melting pot of multiple cultures and nationalities based on our nation's history of welcoming immigrants; and

WHEREAS, when admitted through a well-regulated system, immigrants strengthen the United States by creating economic opportunities, increasing America's scientific and cultural resources, strengthening our ties with other nations, fulfilling humanitarian commitments, and supporting family ties and family values that are necessary to build strong communities; and

WHEREAS, failure on the part of the federal government to secure the borders, track visa recipients in the interior, or enforce worksite laws allows illegal immigration to thrive, with an estimated 11-12 million residents living and working in the United States without legal authorization or proper documentation¹; and

WHEREAS, despite increases in border security and upgrades in tracking technology, approximately 500,000 people continue to enter the United States illegally each year²; and

WHEREAS, 30-40 percent of undocumented workers in the U.S. entered legally and overstayed their student, tourist, or employment visas³; and

WHEREAS, the worksite enforcement program does not adequately deter employers who willingly hire unauthorized workers because they face little likelihood that the federal government will investigate, fine, or criminally prosecute them; and it does not help employers who genuinely want to follow the law because their employee verification efforts are hindered by the extensive use of fraudulent documents; and

WHEREAS, the lack of infrastructure and capacity at the federal level makes the federal government unable to adequately track the entry and exit of visitors and temporary workers, and it creates unacceptable application backlogs and long delays, which provide strong disincentives for foreign nationals to abide by the legal means to enter or remain in the country; and

WHEREAS, approximately 206,000 workers in 2009⁴, representing about half of the undocumented seasonal workers in the United States⁵, used the current temporary, unskilled worker programs (the H2-A and H2-B visas); and

¹ Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, "U.S. Unauthorized Immigration Flows Are Down Sharply Since Mid-Decade," Pew Hispanic Center (Sep. 2010).

² Gordon H. Hanson, "The Economics and Policy of Illegal Immigration in the United States," Migration Policy Institute (Dec. 2009).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Aug. 2010).

⁵ William Kandel, "Profile of Hired Farmworkers, A 2008 Update," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (July 2008) (finding that there about 1 million hired farmworkers and noting that the U.S.

WHEREAS, the current immigration system inadequately addresses the growing numbers of individuals wishing entrance to the United States through a temporary work visa program or as legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, roughly one-third of undocumented immigrants have lived in the United States for ten years or more⁶, 1.1 million are children, and another 4 million U.S.-citizen children have at least one undocumented parent⁷; and these families are forced to live “underground,” unable to get drivers’ licenses or car insurance in most states, unlikely to obtain health insurance, and afraid to report crimes to local law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, since immigrants are barred from most federal public assistance, the burden of providing social services, education, and health care falls to the state and local governments, who are increasingly feeling the financial impact of both legal and illegal immigrants living in their communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) urges Congress to move quickly to enact comprehensive reform of the current immigration laws with support of the Administration to implement the immigration laws effectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government enforce its current immigration laws consistently and vigorously to eliminate illegal entry at the borders, visa overstays, working without proper documentation, and employing undocumented workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government must increase enforcement of visa overstays through the full implementation and staffing of the US-VISIT and SEVIS programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local personnel, such as police officers, fire inspectors, educators, health personnel and social service personnel, should not be conscripted into federal service because the federal government has not adequately funded and staffed its immigration enforcement agencies; and the federal government must not transfer the responsibility of enforcing U.S. immigration laws to local personnel by making undocumented status in the U.S. a criminal offense; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government must strengthen its worksite enforcement capacity and dramatically increase enforcement efforts at places of employment, as well as providing employers with a universal, reliable, effective, secure, non-discriminatory, and non-counterfeitable employee verification system, using the most up-to-date technology that will minimize fraud; and

Department of Labor’s National Agricultural Workers Survey finds that “half of all hired crop farmworkers lack legal authorization to work in the United States”).

⁶ Robert McNatt and Frank Benassi, “Econ 101 on Illegal Immigrants,” *Standard & Poor’s RatingsDirect* (Apr. 2006).

⁷ Jeffrey S. Passel and Paul Taylor, “Unauthorized Immigrants and Their U.S.-Born Children,” Pew Hispanic Center (Aug. 2010).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government must increase its capacity and infrastructure to enforce the laws and provide efficient means for foreign nationals to obtain legal authorization for temporary visas or legal permanent residency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government must provide an appropriate, legal means of immigration, as is determined to be necessary and effective for the United States, for foreign nationals that want to work here temporarily, become legal permanent residents, or gain citizenship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC supports establishment of a process whereby undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States may earn legalized status through payment of appropriate fees and back taxes, background checks, absence of criminal or gang activity, consistent work history, and meeting English and civics requirements; and that the immigrants who have earned such legal status should also be able to apply for citizenship through additional processes, as appropriate and practical, as long as they do not move ahead of applicants with proper documentation waiting to adjust their status or those waiting on lists in their home countries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government should provide local governments with financial and technical assistance to alleviate the local impact of new immigrants, including the costs of providing social services, health care, education, language services, and civic integration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC also supports federal legislation like the “Dream Act” that can facilitate state efforts to offer in-state tuition to undocumented students and provide certain students with a path to U.S. citizenship.

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-21

ENDORISING PLANS TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

WHEREAS, people experiencing chronic homelessness are our most disabled and vulnerable citizens and most likely to die on the streets of our communities; and

WHEREAS, elected officials in partnership with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness are committed to ending chronic homelessness in our nation's communities; and

WHEREAS, local communities are on the front lines of the response to chronic homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities (NLC) and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness have partnered to prevent and end homelessness in our nation's communities in a partnership of accountability and results; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the partnership with jurisdictional leaders, the private sector, and all other stakeholders, more than 500 local governments have partnered to create 350 jurisdictionally led, community based, business oriented plans to end homelessness; and

WHEREAS, plans have identified innovations, such as cost benefit analysis, Housing First/Rapid Re-housing, private sector Community Champions, Project Homeless Connect, and Assertive Community Treatment Teams that have been adopted by communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, private sector leaders bring a business mindset to the role of Community Champion in the development and implementation of plans to end homelessness, a mindset that recognizes the importance of investing in solutions that are research and data driven, performance based, and results oriented; and

WHEREAS, jurisdictional leaders have adopted the Community Champion model, disseminated as a national innovation by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, in the appointment by jurisdictional elected officials of highly visible and credible private sector leaders not primarily associated with homelessness to lead plans; and

WHEREAS, Community Champions have leveraged significant new resources, including attracting new private sector partners in support of plan implementation, showing direct impact on the results that communities are achieving; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that people experiencing chronic homelessness are very expensive in mainstream health, treatment, and law enforcement systems and may cost the community between \$35,000 and \$150,000 per person per year in their random ricocheting through such systems, versus the cost of providing permanent supportive housing in Housing First/Rapid Re-Housing models which ranges from \$13,500 to \$25,000 per person per year,

offers the central antidote to homelessness in the form of housing, and results in the potential for significant cost savings to community infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, research studies across the country indicate that 85 percent of people experiencing chronic homelessness who move into Housing First/Rapid Re-housing options stabilize and maintain that housing; and

WHEREAS, in order for persons experiencing chronic homelessness to succeed in their housing, supportive services are necessary to mitigate health, substance abuse, and mental health problems; and

WHEREAS, a number of communities implementing plans and adopting these innovations are reporting reductions in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness living on their streets and languishing in shelters, the first such reductions communities have seen in over 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the Third Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) released in July 2008 reported a 30 percent reduction in chronic homelessness, from 175,914 in 2005 to 123,833 in 2007; and

WHEREAS, these reductions in chronic and street homelessness are improving the quality of life for everyone in the community, housed and homeless alike.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NLC endorses and encourages local communities to develop and implement plans to end homelessness that include the field-tested, evidence-based national innovations of Housing First/Rapid Re-housing, Community Champions, and other best practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC endorses the targeting of federal resources to Housing First/Rapid Re-housing strategies and other innovations that have demonstrated results in reducing and ending the homelessness of our poorest neighbors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC, to achieve the goal of ending chronic homelessness, urges Congress to appropriate \$2 billion in HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants program, which would support communities in developing 15,000 units of permanent supportive housing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC urges Congress to create new permanent funding sources for supportive services for people experiencing homelessness within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to provide additional proposed Section 8 Vouchers for the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC endorses and urges Congress to enact legislation that would provide Federal housing assistance and services to youth over the age of 18 aging out of foster care and in need of assistance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC affirms the value of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and commends its initiatives to support jurisdictional leaders as they implement plans to end homelessness.

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-22

CALLING FOR FEDERAL ACTION TO ADDRESS THE NATION'S JOBS CRISIS

WHEREAS, more than 14 million Americans remain out of work, 6.2 million Americans have been unemployed for six months or longer, and the unemployment rate has hovered at nine percent or above for two years, documenting the difficulty the United States continues to face as it seeks to recover from the 2008 recession; and

WHEREAS, from 2008 to 2009, the median household income in the United States dropped by more than 2.3 percent and in 2010 the median annual household income fell below \$50,000 for the first time since 1996¹; and

WHEREAS, by the end of 2010, the number of persons living in poverty had grown to 46.2 million, an increase of nearly one percent over 2009 and the highest post-recession poverty rate since 1980²; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau, based on poverty and employment data, has determined that this is the worst post-recession economy ever recorded³; and

WHEREAS, economists believe that a sustained growth rate of over 3 percent is necessary to meaningfully reduce unemployment, and the U.S. Commerce Department reported in July that the nation's GDP grew at the annual rates of only .4 percent and 1.3 percent for the first and second quarters of this year, respectively; and

WHEREAS, private sector job growth has stalled due to the lingering economic uncertainties facing American businesses⁴; and

WHEREAS, municipalities continue to lay off and furlough employees due to state aid cuts and declining revenues, which will likely result in cuts to essential services like education and public safety and delays in or cancellations of infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, there is consensus that without a concerted effort to create real and sustainable jobs the United States may face a double-dip recession; and

WHEREAS, a climate ripe for economic recovery must include investments in the public infrastructure that support private sector investments and growth⁵; and

¹ DeNavas-Walt, Carmen, Bernadette D. Proctor and Jessica C. Smith, U.S. Census Bureau, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2011, p.1.

² DeNavas-Walt, p.14.

³ DeNavas-Walt, pp.5 and 13.

⁴ Mutikani, Lucia, "Job growth stalls, fuels recession fears," Reuters, Washington, D.C., September 2, 2011.

⁵ Pollin, Robert, "Testimony before House Committee on Education and Labor on 'Building an Economic Recovery Package: Creating and Preserving Jobs in America,'" October 24, 2008.

WHEREAS, investing in infrastructure development, repair and improvements -- including public transit, roads, bridges, water systems and schools -- is a proven strategy for creating significant numbers of private and public sector jobs⁶; and

WHEREAS, there is a clear and apparent need for a national economic recovery strategy to address the current jobs crisis; and

WHEREAS, there is a clear and apparent need for the federal government to play a lead role in addressing the current jobs crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls upon Congress and the President to enact legislation now that will address the current jobs crisis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC supports the following federal action to accelerate jobs and economic growth in our country:

1. Extending unemployment insurance benefits to help individuals and families facing long long-term unemployment due to a lack for job growth;
2. Investing in occupational training, transitional jobs, and youth employment programs to help ensure that unemployed and underemployed individuals and our youth are prepared for new economy jobs;
3. Funding federal programs that will help protect the delivery of essential government functions in our communities, such as education and emergency management, that are necessary to economic recovery and private sector job creation;
4. Increasing investments in programs to modernize the nation's aging infrastructure – roads and bridges, water and water systems, transit and transit oriented development, schools, and the nation's housing stock – that will lay the foundation for long-term prosperity in our communities; and
5. Providing incentives for business and industry to grow and hire new workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, to avoid a double dip recession that would cause more harm to families and our communities, NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to overcome partisanship with leadership focused on helping create jobs and ensuring the success of our cities and our country.

⁶ Rodriguez, Francisco, *The Role of Infrastructure Investment in Economic Growth*. The Century Foundation, New York and Washington, September 2011.

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-23

RESOLUTION ON DISPARITIES WITHIN THE BONE MARROW REGISTRY

WHEREAS, the National Marrow Donors Program (NMDP) has been funded by the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program (Program) to provide a single point of access for patients to access matching adult donors and umbilical cord blood; and

WHEREAS, the program is funded at levels substantially below those recommended for the program; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to increase recruitment of African-Americans and other minorities in the NMDP registry; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans, in particular, and people of color, in general, have a substantially smaller chance of finding unrelated donors as whites because the NMDP, which lists more than 6.2 million donors, is not sufficiently diverse to ensure that the pool of African-American donors and donors representing other people of color are included in the NMDP; and

WHEREAS, there is general consensus that the costs of tissue testing and current privacy issues must be addressed in order to increase the number of minority donors in the NMDP; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans and other minorities should be educated on the importance of joining the registry;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Congress and the Administration maintain the Cell Transplantation Program so that it remains the single point of access for patients to access matching adult donors and umbilical cord blood; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cell Transplantation Program establish an expanded national inventory of donors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress and the Administration adopt legislation and policies that fund, at sufficient levels to ensure that anyone who wishes to participate may do so, the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program.

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-24

**IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO IMPROVE
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, disadvantaged youth, in general, and male students and students of color, including African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders, face unacceptably high dropout rates, low graduation rates and widening achievement gaps between themselves and those who graduate;

WHEREAS, parents, educators, business and community leaders, local elected officials, and federal policymakers must put the education needs of all school-age children first, but especially those of potential and actual dropouts, so that all children have the education and skills they need to adequately contribute to American society; and

WHEREAS, putting the interests of children first means using every educational tool at our disposal to improve the quality of education, and making every educational option available so that otherwise disadvantaged students are successful in school and society at-large;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls upon the federal government to make the necessary investments in education, especially those targeted at reducing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates and addressing the achievement gap, to ensure that all children obtain the best education possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC supports increased educational opportunities for all children, especially those who are disadvantaged, scholarship tax credit and opportunity scholarship programs to help all disadvantaged students who are in need, including African-American, Latino, Native American, and Pacific-Islander children succeed in school.

NLC RESOLUTION #2012-25

IN SUPPORT OF HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING (HEAL) CITIES CAMPAIGN

WHEREAS, the prevalence of obesity in the US is 32.2% among adult men and 35.5% among adult women⁸; and more than half of United States' adults are overweight or obese and therefore at risk for many chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, and, hypertension; and

WHEREAS, obesity is a costly condition that can reduce an individual's quality of life and increase their risk for many serious chronic diseases and premature death; and

WHEREAS, obesity and associated chronic diseases disproportionately affect low income communities and communities of color, particularly those without healthy food retail and safe places to engage in physical activity; and

WHEREAS, one in four youth between the ages of 9 and 16 in the United States is overweight; more children are being diagnosed with diseases linked to overweight and obesity previously seen only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease; and

WHEREAS, the League of California Cities' efforts encouraging cities to embrace policies that promote healthier lifestyles and communities has led to the inception of the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Campaign in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the League of California's efforts to encourage cities to embrace healthier lifestyles through the HEAL Cities Campaign is about to become a national program;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the National League of Cities calls upon the federal government to adopt programs like the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Campaign which have as their goal the reduction of obesity and the improvement of the overall health and wellness of city and town residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC supports the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Campaign and urges member cities and towns to adopt HEAL's policies and implement its programs so that all American cities can become healthier, better places to live.

¹ Prevalence and Trends in Obesity Among US Adults, 1999-2008