

March DD, 2017

President Trump:

As elected leaders of cities of every size across the country, we write to reaffirm our commitment to using the power of local office and local governments to preserve environmental goals that have directly improved the health, safety and welfare of our residents and communities.

Through organizations such as the National League of Cities and partnerships such as the U.S. Mayors' National Climate Action Agenda, our cities are taking bold actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare our communities for future extreme weather events. As the elected officials closest and most directly accountable to residents, we cannot let our communities down by taking a step back on our actions and commitments to address climate change. We urge you and your administration to partner with us to build cities that can withstand, and reverse, the physically and economically destructive effects of climate change.

There is a long history of partnership between local, state and federal government to address climate change, including: the 2003 Climate VISION program, the Climate Ready Water Utilities program established in 2010, the 2013 State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force On Climate Preparedness and Resilience, and more. These programs have helped leverage new sources of capital, grow new manufacturing and technology jobs, and catalyze a boom in the energy and construction industries. Most importantly, these jobs stay in our communities and cannot be shipped overseas.

Local leaders are taking action on climate change because as first responders, local governments are on the front lines of delivering services and protecting citizens. Extreme weather events such as heat waves, droughts, heavy downpours, floods and other storms, which have become more frequent and more severe, have brought renewed attention to the need for cities to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to their impacts. These extreme weather events severely impact local and regional infrastructure, economies, public safety, public health, natural landscapes and environmental quality. As local elected officials entrusted with the stewardship of tax-payer dollars, we know that the cost of prevention pales in comparison to the cost of inaction — in terms of dollars, property and human life. Moreover, we find that improving energy efficiency and investing in renewable energy makes good economic sense for our residents, our businesses and our communities.

Scientists agree that climate change is occurring and is primarily man-made, but it does not simply threaten our environment. Leading economists agree that it threatens our future prosperity. Farmers agree that it threatens crop production. Doctors agree that it threatens our public health. And military officials agree that it threatens global security. It would be irresponsible to ignore these voices and falter in our commitments to act.

For these reasons, we renew our call on you, your administration and to Congress to expand and accelerate these local initiatives:

- Help cities leverage funds for the hundreds of billions of dollars in transit, energy, infrastructure and real estate development necessary to upgrade our infrastructure for the 21st century.
- Expand the renewable energy sources we need to achieve energy security and address climate change.
- Provide American businesses the certainty to invest through continued tax credits for electric vehicles, solar power, renewable and other clean technology.
- Embrace the principles of the Paris climate agreement to limit global temperature change below 2 degrees and make cities your partner in doing so.

While we are prepared to forge ahead even in the absence of federal support, we know that if we stand united on this issues, we can make change that will resonate for generations. We have no choice and no room to doubt our resolve. The time for bold leadership and action is now.

Sincerely,

Matt Zone
NLC President
Councilmember, Cleveland, Ohio

Chris Coleman
NLC Past President
Mayor, Saint Paul, Minnesota