

4.00 Introduction

The National League of Cities (NLC) believes that the cornerstone of the federal government's comprehensive human development strategy should be the self-sufficiency of every individual. Through policy recommendations and legislative action, the federal government should:

- Establish a coordinated system of social services;
- Establish and implement a national policy on children and youth, from early childhood through opportunity youth;
- Fully fund federally-mandated programs;
- Fund services designed to prevent unwed teenage pregnancy and eliminate poverty;
- Promote full employment;
- Promote equal opportunity efforts in education, employment, and social services;
- Provide a floor of financial support for seniors and persons with disabilities through Social Security;
- Provide assistance to individuals with disabilities;
- Ensure that all Americans have access to adequate physical and mental health care;
- Establish a federal block grant program to enhance our public health system;
- Implement comprehensive immigration reform and restore the refugee resettlement program to historic norms; and
- Support efforts to ensure that cultural resources are accessible to all citizens.

4.01 Social Services

NLC believes that the federal government should give special emphasis to social service funds for the nation's most vulnerable populations. Within this framework, the federal government should allow state and

local governments to determine the types of services most appropriate to meet each community's needs. The federal government should:

- Increase funding for the Social Services Block Grant and other federal block grants that help local communities provide social services;
- Provide coordination, flexibility, and oversight, in full partnership with local officials;
- Ensure that all community-based organizations, including faith-based, that receive federal funds comply with all legal and constitutional civil rights requirements; and
- Focus on assisting senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, children, immigrants and refugees, and homeless individuals.

A. Funding

The federal government should provide sufficient and flexible federal funding to local communities for quality and responsive human services programs. This includes adequate funding of the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), which helps serve many of the needs of special populations, the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which was designed to reduce poverty.

B. Coordination

The federal government should create a coordinated system of administration and delivery of human services to avoid fragmenting services at the local level where public and private services are delivered. The federal government should include local officials in the planning, monitoring, evaluating, and decision-making on federal policies and programs. Federal regulations governing social services should be

sufficiently flexible so that local government can ensure that programs meet local needs.

C. Program Evaluation

Social services programs should be evaluated on the basis of well-defined performance standards that relate to program administration and participant development, as well as on the basis of the numbers served or placed in programs.

D. Faith-Based Organizations

NLC believes that any faith-based organization or system of assistance and service delivery should be required to maintain critical safe guards to ensure the separation of church and state and adhere to all civil rights statutes and constitutional protections when hiring employees and providing services to clients. In addition, faith-based organizations should be required to meet the same accountability standards as any other service provider.

E. Special Populations

NLC supports federal efforts to focus funding and program services on special populations including:

- Senior Citizens (*see also HD Section 4.06, Seniors and Social Security*);
- Individuals with Disabilities (*see also HD Section 4.07, Individuals with Disabilities*);
- Children (*see also HD Section 4.02, Children and Learning*);
- Immigrants and Refugees (*see also HD Section 4.09, Immigration and Refugees*); and
- Homeless Individuals (*NLC Resolution #2016-13*).

4.02 Children and Learning

Cities and their elected leaders play a critical role in education and childcare. While local elected officials rarely control their local

education agencies, local elected officials have a huge stake in educational outcomes and the impact those outcomes have on the local economy and workforce. In addition, local elected officials have significant influence and can mobilize important resources to the benefit of local school systems.

NLC supports all efforts to create effective and comprehensive early childhood development programs and high-quality education systems that ultimately provide individuals with the skills needed to secure meaningful employment and lifetime skills.

NLC believes that the federal government, through funding and program support, should work the states and local communities to improve education in the United States. To ensure school readiness for all students, the federal government should ensure that local communities have sufficient resources to support families, and children and youth from ages zero to 18 years.

Working with local leaders and schools, the federal government should:

- Establish and implement a national policy on children and youth, which is coordinated, holistic, proactive, and focused on prevention;
- Invest in education, including early childhood education, to ensure the reduction of dropout rates, increase graduation rates and address the achievement gap, and to ensure that all children obtain the best education possible;
- Provide a comprehensive array of services that foster appropriate early childhood development;
- Ensure that high-quality, safe, and affordable child care is available to all children who need it;

- Invest in early childcare education programs as a whole and adequately fund Head Start and Early Head Start;
- Fully fund all federally-mandated education acts; and
- Provide resources to local communities to help individual students meet performance standards. and
- Provide resources for innovative pilot programs to more effectively involve parents, strengthen families, and bring communities into our schools.

A. Early Childhood Development

NLC supports early childhood development programs that have the greatest potential for enriching a young child’s life in the long term. Such programs should include:

- Health and nutrition for proper development;
- Parent training and support, including flexible child care arrangements; and
- Appropriate early learning experiences that focus on play-based learning, which develops a child’s intelligence through experimentation and fosters collaboration with others.

To achieve this, NLC urges the federal government to provide increased funding and programmatic flexibility, and technical assistance and policies that support collaboration and participation across the federal, state and local levels so that local governments are able to provide for early childhood education for all children. This funding should be used for pre- and post-natal health and social services and nutritional assistance so that children ages zero to six develop properly, and parenting skills programs for mothers, fathers, and other caregivers.

NLC urges the federal government to provide direct funding to cities for parenting programs in their communities.

Furthermore, NLC urges the federal government to:

- Increase funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant to ensure that all families can find high-quality, accessible and affordable childcare;
- Ensure that the childcare services are comprehensive, incorporating preventive and protective services for child abuse and neglect, early and periodic health screenings, nutritional programs, educational enrichment, and appropriate interventions for children with special needs;
- Create minimum federal standards for high-quality, safe and affordable childcare;
- Provide supplemental funds to states to improve the quality of their childcare providers;
- Support research on best practices and effective service delivery; and Provide incentives such as training grants, capital improvement funds, liability protection, etc., to encourage home care providers to come into compliance with existing or new regulations.

NLC also recommends that the federal government:

- Provide tax incentives to businesses to provide childcare facilities at worksites and to subsidize the childcare costs of their employees;
- Encourage public-private partnerships through matching funds and financial incentives;
- Educate employers on the economic benefits of providing childcare;
- Provide support and regulations to ensure childcare providers are paid a living wage;
- Improve the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit to make it available to more low-and-moderate-income families; and

- Urge the Small Business Administration (SBA) to view childcare as a legitimate business and make available low-interest loans to those interested in starting day care services.

Further, NLC urges the federal government to strengthen childcare and early learning systems by bridging gaps between childcare and early learning providers and supporting policies within Head Start that foster collaboration with early education programs and childcare.

B. Early Childhood Learning

NLC strongly supports quality, early childhood learning programs for all children, including federally-subsidized, quality, early childhood learning programs for at-risk and low-income children. NLC urges the federal government to:

- Increase funds for the expansion of early childhood learning programs;
- Provide incentives to the private sector to become more involved in early childhood and early learning activities;
- Provide support for development and evaluation of education approaches for pre-school children; and
- Preserve the federal-to-local Head Start funding structure that empowers local collaboration and decision-making.

C. School-Age Children

NLC supports comprehensive programs to raise student achievement. NLC supports Title I of the ESEA, which enables schools serving disadvantaged children to meet their unique educational needs. NLA also supports federal efforts around after-school, summer and year-round youth employment, and vocational programs that are linked to staying in school.

The federal government should increase funding for programs that support students

who have dropped-out of school so they can return to school easily or move into the employment sector effectively. In addition, for students who are not actively pursuing education beyond high school, NLC supports continued federal investment in research and local programs, including vocational programs that help students to transition from school to work.

NLC also supports the long-term success of immigrant students through English language education. Therefore, NLC urges the federal government to:

- Provide sufficient funding to assist local communities help Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and English Language Learners (ELL) students through bilingual teachers, appropriate lessons, and other needed services;
- Continue to implement flexible policies based on different communities' needs; and
- Continue to allow states to give some school districts time-limited waivers regarding assessments of students who are new immigrants.

D. Family and Community Education Programs

NLC supports federal initiatives that encourage and reinforce family involvement in school programs, such as the Communities in Schools program, which makes comprehensive human services like healthcare, family literacy, mentoring, and family counseling programs available at neighborhood schools.

E. Safe Schools

NLC also believes that widespread bullying and harassment—including bullying based on sexual orientation or gender identity—result in poor grades, lower academic achievement, high rates of absenteeism, and a lack of safety within schools, that lead to

poor individual and school scores, higher dropout rates, and student suicides. Therefore, NLC urges Congress and the Administration to pass and sign into law legislation that would address the problem of bullying and harassment in America's schools. The legislation should require that local school districts and their schools to:

- Adopt comprehensive and effective student conduct policies that include clear prohibitions regarding all bullying and harassment, including bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Create effective prevention strategies and professional development programs designed to help school personnel meaningfully address issues associated with bullying and harassment; and
- Implement procedures to maintain and report data regarding incidents of bullying and harassment in order to inform the development of effective federal, state, and local policies that address these issues.

F. Post-Secondary Education

In order to adequately prepare young people to enter the world-of-work, it may be necessary for some to obtain a post-secondary school degree. To ensure a smooth transition from high school to post-secondary school, NLC supports those college preparation programs, authorized by the Higher Education Act, that help to bridge the transition from high school to college. For example, GEAR UP, Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, and Educational Opportunity Centers are all good examples of federal programs that are exclusively targeted at providing college awareness for underserved middle- and high school students. These programs provide critical information about college admissions and student financial aid to disadvantaged

students, and their funding should be increased.

G. Public Libraries

Finally, NLC believes that public libraries are educational institutions that provide critical education services to the community. Therefore, NLC urges the federal government to designate public libraries as educational institutions able to qualify for broader sources of funding.

4.03 Poverty Reduction and Income Support

NLC believes that all levels of government should work to eliminate poverty, ensure a basic quality of life for all Americans, and promote self-sufficiency. To achieve this, the federal government should provide comprehensive and coordinated services to families in need that take into account regional and local differences. In addition, all programs should be administered in an effective and cost efficient manner that incorporates the capacities of all levels of government.

A. Poverty Reduction

NLC supports federal efforts to encourage employment that reduces dependence on welfare. However, NLC urges Congress to review and improve the 1996 welfare reform law by:

- Changing the central focus of TANF from welfare caseload reduction to poverty reduction;
- Eliminating unfunded mandates;
- Eliminating arbitrary time limits for necessary work supports, such as transportation, child care, and housing supplements;
- Including in the definition of work participation in support services, work study, and the pursuit of educational attainment;

- Providing incentives for strong workable contingency plans that would be implemented during recessions; and
- Allowing legal immigrants to receive welfare benefits.

B. Education and Skills Development

NLC urges Congress to permit individuals to use their welfare grants for education and skills training. Allowable activities should include basic and remedial education, with an emphasis on literacy; vocational, technical, and higher education; English language training; work experience; job search and placement assistance; affordable day care; health insurance; substance abuse treatment; entrepreneurial opportunities; and transportation.

The federal government should provide adequate funding to help individuals make the transition from welfare to work by:

- Meeting the diverse and often complex needs of families and children;
- Providing families and children with choices of avenues to self-sufficiency; and
- Recognizing that some families have multiple barriers to employment and providing realistic time frames based on assessments.

Therefore NLC urges Congress to:

- Facilitate better coordination of services offered under existing federally supported financial aid programs for the disadvantaged with the educational needs of citizens qualifying for TANF;
- Invest in workforce development programs, especially for communities of color, LGBTQ+ people, and women;
- Target low-income workers for job training and transitional jobs, if appropriate; and
- Recognize that some individuals who suffer from physical disabilities, health

limitations, or mental health disorders may not be able to work under any circumstance and should receive sufficient financial support to maintain an adequate standard of living.

As part of the federal government's efforts to reduce poverty and lower welfare caseloads, the federal government should require states to use whatever mechanisms that are legal and necessary, including Social Security numbers and state tax records, to track people leaving welfare to determine how many have jobs paying enough to sustain self-sufficiency.

The federal government must increase the EITC to relieve more low-income workers of tax obligations and/or to provide larger refunds to those that qualify. In addition, the federal government should support working families by increasing the minimum wage.

C. Supportive Services

The federal government should provide sufficient funding so that essential supportive services can be continued for a period of time after job placement and until wages increase to a family-sustaining level.

D. Homelessness

NLC believes that the rate of homelessness in America reflects fundamental deficiencies in our ability to meet basic human needs. To respond to this, NLC calls upon the federal government to fund and support a seamless, comprehensive system of services designed to prevent homelessness and to provide housing to those individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness. When necessary, the federal government should fund a comprehensive array of services for sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness as well as families in need of emergency or transitional services. The federal government should:

- Expand the emergency and transitional food and shelter programs;
- Expand programs that provide emergency health services;
- Expand access to additional mental health services;
- Fund social services, especially outreach and counseling services;
- Provide transportation, life skills, education, job training, career counseling, and job placement services;
- Expand federal funding for programs such as HOME and CDBG and, where able, allocate federal funds directly to cities;
- Improve access to federal assistance programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, etc.; and
- Develop a unique set of services and programs to aid and assist homeless veterans.

See also CED section 3.06 Housing (C)(7), Providing Transitional Housing and Comprehensive Services for the Homeless

E. Change the Federal Poverty Level

NLC calls upon the federal government to create new federal poverty guidelines that accurately reflect the regional costs of goods and services and the spending needs of individuals and families. The current poverty guidelines were created in the early nineteen-sixties, are outdated, and too low, and do not accurately account for all Americans living in actual poverty.

4.04 Employment

NLC believes that the federal government should maintain an economic environment that promotes job creation and job access. To support America's workers and employers, the federal government should:

- Create incentives for meaningful jobs in areas of high unemployment;

- Make work pay by setting the minimum wage and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) at levels that in combination allow families to support themselves above the poverty level; and
- Protect the financial integrity of the Unemployment Insurance program and maintain the Employment Service, which is responsible for distributing unemployment checks and providing job placement services.
- Increase access to critical technology infrastructure such as high-speed broadband necessary for jobs now and in the future.

A. Workforce Development

The federal government should provide resources for a range of services; including basic educational and job skills training for welfare recipients, structurally unemployed individuals, dislocated workers, and at-risk youth, and job placement services for all Americans to ensure that all Americans have access to higher paying and higher skills jobs.

To ensure that these goals and objectives are met, Congress should fully fund workforce development programs like the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and should:

- Allow cities and towns working individually or together to utilize funds in ways that reflect the local workforce, available jobs, and the needs of the business community;
- Ensure that a portion of the funds are targeted to those most in need: persons living in poverty, those who are structurally unemployed and are not likely to return to their previous jobs, ex-offenders, and disconnected youth who are at-risk of long-term poverty;
- Establish workforce development areas that are based on regional economies

rather than arbitrary measures such as population or political boundaries;

- Prohibit states from diverting all federal funds toward those who are already employed or job ready rather than those in greatest need;
- Ensure that local elected officials play a significant role in the planning, development, and implementation of regionally-based workforce development programs;
- Encourage collaboration between governments, education agencies including community colleges, organized labor, and the private sector to provide job skills training that meets the needs of workers and employers alike;
- Provide two-year base funding so that programs may provide long-term training and services across program years; and
- Allow local governments and workforce development programs to use a variety of training approaches including, but not limited to: individual training accounts, classroom training, and on-the-job training.
- Encourage greater use of apprenticeship programs with access to funding for local programs.
- Establish a permanent summer jobs program for young people ages 14 through 24 that is designed to provide youth, including economically disadvantaged and disconnected, youth with paid jobs that provide measurable world-of-work training and job skills development as well as wrap-around supports to engage them in the workforce system and learn the responsibilities and soft-skills that lead to better jobs;
- Expand the Pell Grant program to cover needed workforce skills training for short-term and certificate training programs;
- Provide streamlined pathways to licensing and certification for immigrants

and refugees who come to the U.S. with existing experience, degrees, and qualifications from other countries; and

- Ensure access to affordable, high-quality childcare and portable benefits system to ensure all those able to engage in the workforce are able.

When the federal government closes military bases or major federal facilities, the federal government should provide direct assistance to ensure that individuals receive the retraining and job placement assistance they need.

B. Job Creation

To reduce poverty, the federal government should provide resources to help local communities address the shortage of living wage jobs.

In addition, the federal government should assist in areas of high unemployment to promote job creation, including tax credits and other incentives to business and industry to locate new jobs in those areas.

NLC also supports transitional jobs, or public sector jobs that are designed to provide individuals with temporary employment that will lead to full-time permanent employment after a period of classroom, on-the-job, and other types of training consistent with permanent, full-time employment. The President and Congress should establish a national infrastructure program with the goal of stimulating job growth, retraining the workforce, and boosting local economies.

C. Job Elimination

When employers downsize, relocate or close businesses they should be required to give advance notice to employees and the local government in which the business resides so that appropriate preparations may be made to meet the needs of the dislocated workers.

Therefore, NLC supports federal laws that require public and private sector employers to:

- Provide advance notice of relocations, reductions in workforce or business closings;
- Consult with local municipal officials so that the individuals and communities affected can plan for needed adjustments; and
- Create incentives for individuals to be re-skilled/re-trained to obtain further employment within the local community; and
- Make supplemental financial contributions to support the unemployment insurance fund to assist in worker transition.

D. Wages and Benefits

NLC urges the federal government to increase the minimum wage and Earned Income Tax Credit to levels that, in combination, allow families to support themselves above the poverty level. NLC opposes a federal sub-minimum wage for youth and supports a minimum wage for all workers regardless of age, sex or job classification.

NLC urges the federal government to review the impact of any wage and overtime rule on cities and towns and to adjust the implementation as is necessary so as not to have an unintended impact on municipal budgets.

NLC opposes any wage and overtime rules that would have automatic updates without purposeful Congressional or Administrative study and action.

E. Family and Medical Leave

NLC supports a minimum of 12 weeks paid leave in the event of a family illness or other life changing event requiring the employee to

be away from his/her/their workplace. Such events include caring for a family member (child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner) or to bond with a new child entering the family through birth, adoption, or foster care placement.

4.05 Equal Opportunity

NLC believes that the federal government should uphold fundamental principles of equality and the rule of law, and address, by enforcing the laws, acts of bias, bigotry, racism, xenophobia, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, and ableism.

To ensure equal opportunity for all, the federal government should:

- Enforce civil rights laws and eliminate discrimination with regard to race, color, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender/identity expression or any social barriers or physical disadvantage;
- Promote and encourage efforts in employment, delivery of services, and health care to ensure that every person is considered only with regard to individual need; and
- Take current action to remedy past discrimination.
- Develop and disseminate legal standards that will provide clear guidance on the use of mechanisms to address present or past racial discrimination;
- Promote diversity;
- Explicitly include women and sexual/gender minorities in the Constitution;
- Provide all employers with information on how to adopt and carry out effective affirmative action programs; and
- Expand opportunities in federal and local procurement for people of color, women, LGBTQ+ and individuals with disabilities.

4.06 Seniors and Social Security

NLC believes that the federal government should ensure that all seniors have:

- A floor of financial support which would provide an adequate standard of living;
- An opportunity for employment free from discriminatory practices because of age;
- Suitable housing;
- An appropriate level of physical and mental health services;
- Ready access to effective social services;
- Appropriate institutional care when required;
- A life and death with dignity;
- Information about available supportive services; and
- Supportive services that enable seniors to age in place.

A. Aging in Place

NLC believes that the federal government should take the lead in planning, research, and development of a universal and comprehensive approach to aging in America that includes culturally relevant programs that will enable senior citizens to “age in place” and enjoy their elderly years in the comfort, safety, dignity and familiarity of their own homes and/or communities. In support of this effort, NLC urges the federal government to enact tax policies that take into account costs associated with aging in place, elder care, and senior homesteading and establish programs that reduce home care costs, increase the quality of care, reduce reliance on nursing homes, address mental capacity and mobility, provide transportation and accessibility services, create a continuum of housing options, and increase access to broadband and internet services to improve healthcare and social networking. Further, the federal government should prioritize action within the Domains of Livability, identified by AARP and the World Health Organization:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social participation
5. Respect and social inclusion
6. Work and civic engagement
7. Communication and information
8. Community and health services
9. Public safety and emergency preparedness
10. Alzheimer’s and other dementias

B. Social Security

The Social Security system should provide participants with a floor of financial support upon retirement or disability which should be supplemented the participants’ private savings, pension and other federal and state programs based on eligibility.

NLC urges the federal government to maintain the current benefits structure and the current method of establishing cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). Should changes in any aspect of the Social Security system be necessary, those changes should be phased in over time and should be designed so that they do not impact those who currently are receiving benefits or are likely to receive benefits within a five-year window.

NLC also believes that the federal government should take into account the number and types of non-traditional families that are emerging and ensure that these families receive the same types of retirement benefits as traditional families, particularly with regard to dependents and survivors.

NLC also believes that the federal government should initiate programs of enforcement and education for employers and employees so that domestic workers and others who may have traditionally worked in the cash economy are not disadvantaged or

disqualified from receiving Social Security benefits.

4.07 Individuals with Disabilities

The federal government should address the range of needs of individuals with physical and intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental illness so that they may live productive, fulfilling lives and fully integrate into society. However, any local assistance mandated by the federal government should be reasonable in its requirements and expectations, and when possible, fully funded by the federal government.

The federal government should:

- Adopt clear rules for cities to follow regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- Provide financial resources directly to cities to help with the costs of compliance including transit and housing options;
- Increase postsecondary opportunities and success for students and youth with disabilities;
- Increase its support to allow persons with disabilities to achieve the maximum degree of self-sufficiency; and
- Fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and reauthorize and fully fund the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

A. City Liability

Federal law should recommend that individuals with grievances should first the local and state grievance procedures prior to requesting a hearing process with the federal government.

B. Self-Sufficiency

The federal government should increase funding for workforce development, social services and housing programs, including permanent, affordable supportive housing for

persons with disabilities. These efforts should include financial incentives for self-sufficiency.

The federal government should recognize the needs of persons with mental illness and provide the necessary support for treatment, employment, social services and housing programs.

C. Education

NLC fully supports the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementation, and urges the federal government to fully fund the commitment it made in 1975 to fund 40 percent of the per-pupil cost of services required by this Act.

4.08 Health

NLC supports universal access to health care. Universal access will improve standard health indicators such as infant mortality, life expectancy, and immunization rates of the young against preventable diseases. It can also eliminate disparities in treatment.

NLC believes that the federal government should:

- Control costs and reduce the rate of growth in health care expenditures and coverage costs;
- Ensure universal health care coverage;
- Maintain and improve Medicaid, Medicare, and the State-Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) and promote school health clinics to expand access and availability of health care;
- Address disease management;
- Reimburse localities fully for the costs of services provided to Medicare, Medicaid, Tri-Care and Veterans Administration patients;
- Adequately fund a federal block grant program to enhance our public health

planning, capacity building, and disaster response systems;

- Assist local public health departments to better address infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and influenza, and increase the number of health services personnel employed;
- Adequately fund community health centers, which play a critical role in providing uninsured and underinsured individuals with health care services; and
- Apply the same laws and rules concerning health care coverage and insurance to cities and town as to any other employer.

In addition, NLC urges the federal government to:

- Enhance access to health care by expanding telemedicine and virtual health options, particularly in rural areas.
- Fund and support increased access to behavioral health programs and services.
- Fund block grant and categorical grant programs for health, such as the Maternal and Child Health Services Program, the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, funding for community health centers and health programs for Native Americans, Migrants and Refugees;
- Require employers to cover the costs of health insurance for laid off workers and their dependents, as well as the creation of subsidized health insurance pools for workers without employment-based coverage;
- Provide funding for programs which offer transitional care and home health care services;
- Expand preventive health care programs for the poor; and
- Pay the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) premiums for people with catastrophic terminal illnesses who have left their jobs and

cannot afford to pay the health insurance premium.

A. Elimination of Disparities

NLC urges Congress and the Administration to address the disparities in health care access and treatment between racial and ethnic minority population groups and Caucasians by following the recommendations of the National Institutes of Medicine, the National Healthcare Disparities Report and the President's New Freedom Commission report. In addition, Congress should adopt legislation and the Administration should develop an administrative initiatives and education campaign that addresses and increases the awareness of the general public, health care providers, insurance companies, and policymakers about physical and mental health disparities based on race and ethnicity, including but not limited to the C,W, Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program so that it remains the single point of access for patients who require matching adult donors and umbilical cord blood.

B. National Health and Wellness Strategy

NLC urges the federal government to partner with cities and towns to improve the health of all Americans, but not to result in unfunded mandates. This should be done by developing a cross-sector, integrated national strategy that identifies priorities for improving the health of Americans and provides to cities and towns the support that is needed to create healthy and safe communities, expand clinical and community-based preventive services, empower people to make healthy choices, and eliminate health disparities. Examples of this include Let's Move and Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities which have as their goal reducing obesity and improving the overall health and wellness of city and town residents and employees. Specifically, NLC urges the federal government to address the significant

problems faced in maintaining clean air, water, and land, and to focus on designing and promoting affordable, accessible, safe and health housing; strengthening local health departments so that they are able to provide essential services; integrating health criteria into decision making; and using health goals and objectives as benchmarks for existing conditions and as targets for future actions.

C. School-Based Health Clinics

NLC supports the use and growth of school-based clinics, which often help both students and local community members obtain a comprehensive array of individualized services that address physical, emotional, and social needs.

D. Local Official Involvement

NLC urges the federal government to recognize that local officials should be involved in the assessment and design of an economic and comprehensive public and personal health services delivery system. Any federal effort to aid states in implementing disaster planning should include a requirement that the states include local officials in the planning process.

The federal government should encourage city officials to actively participate in projecting and certifying the need for facilities and in evaluating the performance of existing facilities in meeting city health needs. After a public health threat, terrorist attack, or natural disaster, the federal government should communicate quickly and effectively with local governments about public health activities and requirements.

E. Metropolitan Medical Response System

NLC supports the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) program and urges Congress to reauthorize, increase funding, and expand MMRS to work with

additional cities and cover broader geographic areas. This would ensure that all cities have a coordinated response system in place with the necessary equipment and training to respond to bioterrorist events and other disasters.

F. Vaccination Stockpiles

The federal government should accelerate development and procurement of all vaccines and those pharmaceuticals needed to control and treat biological threats, such as smallpox and anthrax. Local health officials should have the ability to quickly access appropriate medical supplies and vaccines through the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

G. Infectious Diseases

A pandemic of any type would cause serious problems worldwide and overwhelm the public safety, health and medical infrastructure, education facilities, public institutions, and private businesses of American cities and towns. The federal government, in coordination with the international community, should further develop and coordinate a comprehensive research and containment strategy that involves commitments of federal funding, supplies, equipment, training, expertise, personnel, countermeasures, and public health measures.

Specific attention should also be placed on the transmission of zoonotic diseases, those that are transmitted from animals to humans, which researchers now believe contributes to no fewer than 2.2 million deaths each year and is becoming an increasingly serious problem resulting from environmental change and increased travel among and between nations.

NLC urges the federal government to put in place effective methods for controlling the spread of zoonotic diseases and to invest in education and training so that city public health officials are prepared to address such outbreaks.

H. Substance Abuse

The federal government should maintain the definition of substance use disorders as illnesses and should ensure that there are enough facilities for those who need substance use disorder treatment, including children and infants who are born with prenatal substance exposure.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH, 2014), 21.2 million Americans needed treatment for a substance use disorder. However, only about 2.5 million people received the specialized treatment they needed.

Additionally, the federal government should provide education and support services for families involved in the recovery process including culturally sensitive community supports and adequate resources to mitigate the impact of intergenerational trauma caused by substance abuse in the home.

Resources should include:

- Accessible, affordable detoxification centers that facilitates entry into long-term treatment and recovery.
- Education and support for family members impacted by the dysfunction associated with substance use, including how adverse childhood experiences increase risk for substance use.
- Community supports, including assistance with basic needs, that ensure individuals and families have the necessary resources to mitigate the stress that can lead to relapse.

I. Protecting the Nation's Blood Supply

NLC remains deeply concerned about the potential for local, regional and national blood shortages that can occur when certain types of men are prohibited from donating blood. Therefore, NLC joins with the American Red Cross, the American Association of Blood Banks and America's blood centers in asking that the Food and Drug Administration address the potential for blood shortages by issuing guidelines that ensure that anyone who is healthy enough to give blood is able to do so regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

J. Mental Health

The federal government should ensure that the civil and constitutional rights of persons with mental health conditions and substance use disorders are protected. In addition, the federal government should provide trauma-informed funding and support to local communities to increase protective factors that promote resilience in children and families without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, ability or gender identity.

NLC supports mental health parity and the provision of comprehensive services to address mental health needs for persons with general mental health conditions, serious mental health diagnoses, and substance use disorders. Whether at the federal, state or local levels, there should be effective plans for preventing, diagnosing, and treating mental health conditions and substance use disorders that reflect the parity between mental and physical health. Mental health and substance use disorder services should be accessible and equal to physical health services. These services should also provide support and stabilization to family systems.

The Federal government should:

- Embed behavioral health supports in existing community centers to promote integrated systems of health care and stress reduction.
- Recognize trauma as a major public health threat and offer mandated trauma-awareness trainings for all entities receiving federal funding.
- Incentivize screenings for social determinants of health including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) screenings understanding that adversity in childhood impacts healthy brain development and increases risk for disease and early death.
- Acknowledge the significant return on investment in early childhood programs and supports for children and families including home visitation, parenting education, and affordable, high quality preschool. These programs allow service providers to identify environmental risks that can lead to substance use disorders and mental health conditions.

K. Tobacco

Any revenues raised by increasing federal excise taxes should be earmarked for health services and tobacco control activities. Any federal legislation on tobacco should not preempt stronger state and local tobacco control laws or remedies.

4.09 Immigration and Refugees

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

The federal government should take immediate responsibility for decisions made regarding the influx and settlement of immigrants into the United States. Immigration and refugee policy are set at the national level, and our entire nation feels the effects of federal immigration policy.

The federal government should:

- Provide an appropriate, legal means of immigration, as is determined to be necessary and effective for the United States, for foreign nationals who want to work here temporarily, become legal permanent residents, or gain citizenship;
- Provide local governments with financial and technical assistance so localities can assist new immigrants, including the costs of providing social services, health care, education, language services, refugee resettlement and civic integration;
- Avoid conscription of local personnel, such as police officers, fire inspectors, educators, health personnel and social service personnel into federal service because the federal government has not adequately funded and staffed its immigration enforcement agencies;
- Avoid transferring responsibility for enforcing U.S. immigration laws to local law enforcement;
- Increase federal 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;
- Establish an affordable 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;

- Establish a process whereby once the documentation process has begun, individuals are permitted to obtain a driver's license or other official identification card;
- Establish a process whereby those immigrants who have earned such legal status should also be able to apply for expedited citizenship through additional processes, as appropriate and practical, if they do not move ahead of applicants with proper documentation waiting to adjust their status or those waiting on lists in their home countries;
- Adopt 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;
- Provide an accessible, effective system to ensure that businesses are able to hire foreign workers legally without excessive bureaucratic red tape and that all foreign workers are authorized and documented; and
- Provide same-sex couples with equal rights of immigration sponsorship as opposite-sex couples and amend current law to allow lawful permanent residents to sponsor the permanent partner for legal residence in the United States provided they are over 18 years of age, financially interdependent with the sponsoring individual, not married or in a permanent partnership with anyone other than the sponsoring individual and is not a first, second, or third-degree blood relation;
- Ensure Congressional oversight mechanisms are in place to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion;
- Restore the refugee resettlement program by increasing the annual admission allotment for refugee resettlement to at least the annual

average since program inception (95,000);

- Reopen ports of entry to process asylum seekers in accordance with international law; and
- Adopt (1) a definition of "stateless person" in line with international human rights standards, and (2) legal protections for those identified as stateless in the United States through a federal-level Stateless Status Determination procedure based on the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees Handbook on Protection of Stateless People, to ultimately provide stateless people a designated path to lawful status.

4.10 Cultural Resources

NLC urges the federal government to:

- Increase direct federal funding for cultural resources; and
- Review tax laws to facilitate indirect financial support of the arts.

In addition, federal funds should be available to cities to:

- Develop public lands and facilities use of the arts;
- Provide employment in cultural services; and
- Promote the use of the arts as a stimulus to economic development.

4.11 Veterans

NLC believes that all levels of government have an obligation to support the men and women of the armed services who have made sacrifices to preserve the freedom of the American people.

In order to meet the diverse needs of veterans and their families, NLC believes the federal government should:

- Provide effective veterans' health care;
- Support programs that provide homeless veterans with safe, affordable, and permanent housing and fund programs to eliminate root causes of veterans' homelessness, including research, treatment, and support programs;
- Ensure that comprehensive mental health services are available to veterans and their families;
- Provide veterans with the employment and education resources needed to succeed in the 21st century workforce;
- Ensure that National Guard and Reservists have access to support services when they return from active duty; and
- Focus on the unique needs of women veterans, especially the unique health care needs of women and those women veterans who reside in rural areas.

4.12 International, National and Community Service

NLC believes that federal investment in international, national and community service is an important way to help cities, towns and villages meet pressing needs in areas such as neighborhood revitalization and healthy, affordable housing; conservation and the environment including climate resilience and adaptation; human services; public safety and public health; and education and child/youth development.

In order to support communities towards this end, NLC believes that the federal government should:

- Ensure a range of ways for municipalities to engage with international, national and community service programs, including as project sponsors, hosts of individual

placement and crew-based programs, and participants on State Service Commissions.

- Provide support for engagement of the full range of city, town and village residents in full-time or part-time stipend international, national and community service activities, with post-service scholarship awards, and with special emphasis on involvement of disconnected youth and young adults, seniors, and veterans.
- Ensure leadership opportunities for city and town elected officials on national Days of Service.
- Provide ongoing reporting on the impact of international, national and community service on cities, towns and villages, and about the contributions of our communities towards advancing international, national and community service.

NLC RESOLUTION #37**IN SUPPORT OF ACTION BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) TO STUDY AND ADDRESS VIOLENCE IN AMERICA**

WHEREAS, young men, generally, and African-American males, specifically, are dying at an alarming rate due to homicides, 13 times higher than non-Hispanic white youth¹, and is the number one cause of death for 15-24-year-old African American males², and

WHEREAS, every month, an average of 53 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner, nearly 1 million women alive today report being shot or shot at by intimate partners, and 4.5 million woman have reported being threatened with a gun³; and

WHEREAS, studies show that LGBTQ+ people, especially youth, are at a higher risk of attempting suicide and 17 percent of gay and lesbian youth, 9 percent of bisexual youth, and 21 percent of transgender youth have been threatened with a weapon on school property⁴; and

WHEREAS, youth violence is an adverse childhood experience (ACE) and can have a long-term impact on health and wellbeing⁵.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities calls upon the United States Congress to direct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), whose primary responsibilities are to monitor public health, detect and investigate health problems, foster safe and healthy environments, and implement prevention strategies, to monitor, detect, and prevent violence in America; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the CDC develop a holistic intervention designed to address the health-related aspects and implications of violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the CDC continue collecting data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity and support prevention strategies that are tailored to impacted communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress and the President increase funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the federal budget to support data and indicators that will inform local strategy in cities and towns across our country as they address the issue of violence in their communities.

¹ Massetti, Greta M., and Corinne David_Ferdon. Preventing Violence Among High-Risk Youth and Communities with Economic, Policy, and Structural Strategies. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, February 12, 2016, Vol. 65, No. 1.

² Centers for Disease Control, "Leading Causes of Death by Age Group, Black Males-United States," 2006.

³ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/guns-and-violence-against-women-americas-uniquely-lethal-intimate-partner-violence-problem/>

⁴ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/remembering-and-honoring-pulse-anti-lgbtq-bias-and-guns-are-taking-lives-of-countless-lgbtq-people/>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/fastfact.html>

NLC RESOLUTION #38**IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM**

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

WHEREAS, when admitted through a well-regulated, timely and efficient 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 simplify immigration procedures, reopen legal ports of entry for asylum seekers to deter illegal entrance, secure the borders, track visa recipients in the interior, or enforce worksite laws allows illegal immigration to thrive, with an estimated 11.3 million residents, 3.5% of the nation's population, living and/or working in the United States without legal authorization or proper documentation⁶; and

WHEREAS, more than 40 million people living in the United States are foreign-born of which 23% are unauthorized immigrants, 27% are lawful permanent residents, and 77% are lawful immigrants⁷; and

WHEREAS, the worksite enforcement program does not adequately protect work visa holders from employer abuse or 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 visa-holders and permanent resident status, 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 results in deleterious effects such as children aging out of parents applications and becoming undocumented, indefinite stagnation of career and life milestones, and inability to move freely across borders; and

WHEREAS, the United States granted more than 900,000 visas in 2019, of which 300,424 were through temporary, unskilled worker programs (the H2-A and H2-B visas); and

WHEREAS, output in the economy is higher and grows faster with more immigrants⁸; and

⁶ Jens Manuel Krogtad and Jeffrey S. Passel, "5 facts about illegal immigration in the U.S.," Pew Research Center (Nov. 2015).

⁷ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>

⁸ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/a-dozen-facts-about-immigration/>

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 two-thirds of undocumented adult immigrants have lived in the United States for ten years or more, 1 million unauthorized immigrants are children, and another 4.5 million U.S.-citizen children have at least one undocumented parent⁹; 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 fiscal impact of both legal and illegal immigrants living in their communities.

WHEREAS, with the signing on the executive order, “Affording Congress an Opportunity to Address Family Separation”, the President called for modification of the 1997 *Flores v. Reno* court settlement to enable Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain families together longer than 20 days, resulting in nearly 2,000 children having been separated from their parents in a six-week time period, many of whom are being sent to cities and facilities across the country¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, with guidance from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) updating policy for the accrual of unlawful presence of those in student (F nonimmigrant), exchange visitor (J nonimmigrant) or vocational student (M nonimmigrant), visa overstay penalties will include harsher penalties impacting students and families¹¹; and

WHEREAS, with a reduced number of visas available through the H-2A program, which allows U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural jobs, many employers struggling to find qualified workers; and

WHEREAS, the federal government is considering expansion of its public charge rule, which would impact the way in which immigrants access means-tested government programs that promote the health and wellbeing of their families and support earnings, employment and homeownership that ultimately impact the economic vitality of cities; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has conducted raids in cities, towns and villages across the country, targeting undocumented immigrants ordered by courts to be removed from the country; and

⁹ Paul Taylor et. al, “Unauthorized Immigrants: Length of Residency, Patterns of Parenthood,” Pew Hispanic Center (Dec. 2011).

¹⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/15/us/politics/trump-immigration-separation-border.html>

¹¹ https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Outreach/Draft%20Memorandum%20for%20Comment/AccrualofUnlawfulPresenceFJMNonimmigrantsMEMO_v2.pdf

WHEREAS, there are 511,000 immigrant veterans in the United States of which, 94,000 are waiting to be naturalized and are at risk of deportation; and

WHEREAS, the refugee limit is currently the lowest it has been since the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, with a limit of 18,000¹²; and

WHEREAS, current asylum seekers must first arrive at a U.S. port of entry without advanced approval to be considered as an asylum seekers and risk rejection at the border with no alternative; and

WHEREAS, the global refugee crisis the highest in history, with over 79.5 million people, over half of which are under 18, currently displaced and seeking asylum under international law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the federal government enforce its current immigration laws equitably, consistently and timely to adequately staff ports of entry to reduce unauthorized entry at the borders, track visa overstays, working without proper documentation, and employing undocumented workers; 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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government must increase its capacity and infrastructure, including funding levels and number of judges, to enforce the laws and provide efficient means for foreign nationals to obtain legal authorization for visas or legal permanent residency as well as to be processed when making a border crossing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government must update its policies to provide an appropriate, streamlined legal means of immigration and change status according to life milestones, as is determined to be necessary and effective for the United States, for undocumented immigrants, non-immigrant foreign nationals that want to visit or work here temporarily, or immigrant foreign nationals that want to become legal permanent residents, or gain citizenship, as well as clearly define penalties and consider impacts to students and families for harsh penalty policies for visas overstays; and

¹² <https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-u-s-refugee-resettlement/>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government should reexamine its policies regarding seasonal workers given its impact on local business and the economic vitality of cities and towns across America; 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 the federal government should consider the negative impact of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids on local economies and communities, including public safety and social services resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government should ensure detention policies that do not inflict trauma upon vulnerable children and their families, creating additional financial burdens for mental health, education and family supports in cities across the country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC opposes any further expansion of the public charge definition that would preempt cities from offering services to all residents in their communities; 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; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that legal immigrants who have served honorably in the US Armed Forces should be given the ability to expedite their naturalization process without prejudice and should not be put at risk of being deported; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government should adopt (1) a definition of “stateless person” in line with international human rights standards, and (2) legal protections for those identified as stateless in the United States through a federal-level Stateless Status Determination procedure based on the United Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees Handbook on Protection of Stateless People, to ultimately provide stateless people a designated path to lawful status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government should be trained to provide language services and a clearly defined appeals process to asylum seekers who are denied entry into the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the federal government should restore and increase the refugee resettlement allotments.

NLC RESOLUTION #39**IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT**

WHEREAS, according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men are victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner; 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men are raped in their lifetime; 1 in 5 women report harassment by a boss and 1 in 4 were harassed by a coworker; 1 in 6 women and 1 in 19 men were stalked in their lifetime; 81% of women experienced verbal harassment; and 25% say they have received lewd texts or emails¹; and

WHEREAS, approximately 3 out of every 4 employees who experience harassment never report it, and 75% of employees who spoke out against workplace mistreatment suffered some form of retaliation²; and

WHEREAS, the groundbreaking anti-assault and women's empowerment movement #MeToo upended the public conversation around harassment issues across the world; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has recognized the importance and impact of this movement, evidenced by the introduction of 194 bills related to sexual harassment during the 115th Congress; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Senate passed S. 2952, and the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 4924, both of which call for the amendment of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to establish protections against congressional sexual harassment and discrimination, taking clear action for harassment experienced within the halls of Congress; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Justice Department has recognized the importance and impact of this movement, evidenced by the announcement of the Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Initiative, focusing on workplace sexual harassment in the public sector³; and

WHEREAS, local governments are not immune to the challenges and threats that reports of sexual harassment can pose to workplace safety and culture as well as to the public trust.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls upon the federal government to take meaningful action to prevent sexual harassment for all individuals, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, and to adopt improved reporting practices as an example for cities to follow; and

¹ EEOC and CDC, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey 2011

² EEOC June 2016 Report

³ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-launches-initiative-fight-sexual-harassment-workplace>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC supports the intention and vision of the #MeToo movement and calls on Congress to provide support to programs and initiatives that create pathways to healing as well as direct resources towards training, counseling and other appropriate measures that address both prevention efforts and resources for survivors of sexual violence and harassment.

NLC RESOLUTION #40**IN SUPPORT OF REAUTHORIZATION OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT AND INCREASED INVESTMENT IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, in 2014 Congress signed into law the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) with overwhelming bipartisan support, the largest single source of federal funding for workforce development activities; and

WHEREAS, WIOA reauthorizes the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), and established the system of one-stop career centers for access to training and employment services for a full range of workers, including youth, to help them access good jobs of the 21st century in local and regional industries; and

WHEREAS, WIOA allows for the greater use of sector partnerships, career pathway models and higher levels of accountability; and

WHEREAS, WIOA reflects the growing recognition that in order to adequately address the skills needs of workers, jobseekers, and employers, we must do a better job of coordinating across multiple education, training, and supportive service programs; and

WHEREAS, ongoing State and local implementation of WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) provides unprecedented opportunities to develop the skills of workers in the United States through access to effective workforce education and training, including the development and delivery of proven strategies such as sector partnerships, career pathways, integrated education and training, work-based learning and paid internships; and

WHEREAS, during these unprecedented times, it is clearer than ever that workers need skills now to access open positions. Out of the nearly 60 million people who have filed for unemployment since March, [more than 40 percent](#)¹ have been workers who earn less than \$40,000 a year; and

WHEREAS, the global crisis has disproportionately impacted workers without any education past high school, workers who already needed access to skills prior to the pandemic. Workers with a high school degree or less have been displaced at [nearly three times](#)² the rate as those with a bachelor's degree; and

WHEREAS, workers of Color, particularly women of color, have shouldered the greatest job losses due to their concentration in low-wage service industries that [have been hardest hit](#)³ by the economic downturn; and

¹ <https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/files/2019-report-economic-well-being-us-households-202005.pdf>

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/09/hispanic-women-immigrants-young-adults-those-with-less-education-hit-hardest-by-covid-19-job-losses/>

³ <https://www.policylink.org/our-work/economy/national-equity-atlas/COVID-workforce>

WHEREAS, for local small business, the economic disruption from the first months of the pandemic alone could cause 1.4 million to 2.1 million of them to close for good⁴; and

WHEREAS, minority-owned small businesses, which employ more than 8.7 million workers, are most vulnerable because they are disproportionately represented in sectors that are most likely to see permanent closures, such as storefront retail, bars and restaurants, travel and hospitality; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, programs authorized under WIOA:

- (1) Served nearly 6,000,000 young people
- (2) Exceeded employment targets across programs
- (3) Helped more than 1,500,000 individuals, including English language learners, gain skills and credentials to help the individuals succeed in the labor market

WHEREAS, the public workforce system and partner programs provide a pathway into 21st century jobs that support families while ensuring that businesses in the United States find the skilled workforce needed to compete in the global economy; and

WHEREAS, businesses need skilled workers — people trained for jobs in growing industries like healthcare, medical technology, IT and software, and advanced manufacturing – as well as plumbers and electricians, and WIOA allows for greater local control of business outreach and ability to react to business needs; and

WHEREAS, the United States invests less than all other developed countries, except Mexico, in workforce development, and over the past two decades has cut investments by 40%, and does not support local workforce development at the levels necessary to ensure cities across the country can prepare workers for the impact of automation, technology and AI on the workplace; and

WHEREAS, as cities across America work to strengthen their economic standing and competitiveness and respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must build strong workforce development systems; and

WHEREAS, key areas to consider include supporting and scaling pathways to employment, equity and access, and the impact of emerging technologies; and

WHEREAS, registered apprenticeships have an 80-year history which has been marked by a recent increase in funding and expansion. With additional shifts in prioritizing apprenticeships in WIOA and the increased awareness of these potential pipelines to employment, apprenticeships continue to increase in number and expand into new and emerging industries including health, technology (IT), finance and transportation⁵; and

⁴ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/americas/which-small-businesses-are-most-vulnerable-to-covid-19-and-when>

⁵ <https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/>

WHEREAS, WIOA calls for the prioritization of service for all U.S. Department of Labor-funded job training programs for veterans and eligible spouses, including access to Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) and the National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWG) program for transitioning service members and their spouses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls upon the United States Congress to enact a five-year reauthorization of WIOA that will provide certainty needed to deliver programming; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC calls upon the United States Congress to increase funding to WIOA programs across all titles to ensure a robust investment in skills training, business engagement and increased economic development in communities across America; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC calls upon the United States Congress to immediately invest at least \$15 billion in our nation's workforce development system as a supplemental measure to ensure that our nation's workforce development system can respond to the increased demands associated with COVID-19; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC supports clearer guidance on how WIOA can be used locally to support apprenticeship programs, including through the use of industry or sector partnerships and by supporting pre-apprenticeship programs for workers with barriers to employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC supports increasing employment opportunities for veterans, transitioning service members and their families, and urges Congress to provide increased funding to WIOA Title I employment and training programs to provide for adequate investment in job training and adult education for this critical population in our cities, towns and villages.

NLC RESOLUTION #41

ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

WHEREAS, racism is rooted in the foundation of America, beginning with enslavement of Africans in 1619 and attempted genocide of Indigenous people; much of the Black experience in America has been endured under slavery and Jim Crow which allowed preferential opportunities for some while subjecting Black, and Indigenous people to hardships and disadvantages in every area of life and Asian and LatinX people have experienced racism and violence; and

WHEREAS, health disparities have existed in America for more than 400 years - we now are witnessing a coronavirus pandemic which is shining a light upon the stark inequities that result from generations of structural and systemic racism. COVID-19 is killing Black people at 2.1 times the rate of White people, and Indigenous, and LatinX people are contracting cases at 2.8 times the rate of White people, and Asian people are contracting cases at 1.1 times the rate of White people. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are disproportionately impacted because of long standing racism in every system, unaddressed health disparities and other socioeconomic inequities across class lines. Asian and Pacific Islander communities are experiencing racism due to xenophobic rhetoric related to the virus; and

WHEREAS, racism is a system of power and oppression. A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call “race”), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, there is clear data to illustrate that racism results in disproportionate impacts the lives of Black, Indigenous, LatinX, and other people of color - the current COVID-19 crisis has helped to highlight now, more than ever, that racism, not race causes disproportionately higher rates of homelessness, incarceration, and economic hardships for African Americans - racism can be seen across systemic, institutional and interpersonal levels - all operating over the course of time and across generations. An increasing number of local leaders are declaring racism as a public health crisis in cities, towns and villages across the country¹; and

WHEREAS, racism is a driving force of social determinants of health, such as housing, education, neighborhood conditions, environmental conditions, and employment, and is a barrier to health equity² For example, lending practices of the 20th century known as “redlining” and the current limitations and access to healthy, nutritious food, reduced life expectancy, increased rates of lead poisoning, limited access to clean water, and higher rates of infant mortality demonstrate the current impact of racism; and

¹ <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-equity/racism-and-health/racism-declarations>

² <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-equity/racism-and-health>

WHEREAS, Black people in the United States face higher rates of chronic disease than White people³, Black women are nearly four times as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than White women⁴ and Black people are more likely to die at early ages of all causes⁵; and

WHEREAS, the privileges that other Americans experience inhibits them from fully understanding how racism impacts Black people in America - for example the performance of simple tasks like driving while Black, walking in neighborhoods or just going to a park come with certain risk not experienced by others - life events like getting a job, purchasing a home, buying a car, or just raising a family come with barriers that other cultures don't experience; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Emergency Physicians have declared institutional racism as a public health crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities (NLC) recognizes racism as a public health crisis and calls on Congress to appropriate significant resources towards policy, programs and practices (i.e. Housing, Education, Nutritious Food, Transportation, Employment, Legal system, etc.) that work to address social determinants of health and end racism in our country, so race is no longer the strongest predictor of one's success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC calls on Congress to ensure that disaggregated data by race is made available to provide a clear and accurate picture of disparate effects and outcomes to BIPOC communities.

³ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6617e1.htm?s_cid=mm6617e1_w

⁴ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2019/05/02/469186/eliminating-racial-disparities-maternal-infant-mortality/>

⁵

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aahealth/index.html#:~:text=The%20death%20rate%20for%20African%20Americans%20decreased%2025%25%20from%201999,high%20blood%20pressure%20than%20whites.>

NLC RESOLUTION #42**IN SUPPORT OF ACTIONS BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) TO ADDRESS CORONAVIRUS HEALTH DISPARITIES THROUGH RESOURCES AND DATA**

WHEREAS, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has revealed deep-seated inequities in health care for communities of color, including LGBTQ+ people and amplified social and economic factors that contribute to poor health outcome; and

WHEREAS, recent reports indicate that the pandemic disproportionately impacts communities of color, compounding longstanding racial disparities; and

WHEREAS, nationally, African-American deaths from COVID-19 are nearly two times greater than would be expected based on their share of the population¹; and

WHEREAS, women of color are also disproportionately likely to experience many of the chronic health conditions that heighten the risk of serious illness from COVID-19, such as diabetes and asthma, as a result of structural racism²; and

WHEREAS, women are more likely to be on the front lines of coronavirus response and exposure: 52 percent of essential workers are women, and women are the majority of the workers in jobs that the federal government has designated as essential, including the vast majority of hospital workers, home health aides, and grocery store cashiers³; and

WHEREAS, in 42 states plus Washington D.C., Latinos make up a greater share of confirmed cases than their share of the population⁴; and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico, an area with a large Latino population, is at risk for experiencing health disparities due to an already weakened economic and health infrastructure. In addition, territory's population is now older and more prone to health threats, such as the coronavirus. Many younger Puerto Ricans have moved away, and the median age of residents is forty-five, making Puerto Rico's one of the oldest populations in the U.S.⁵; and

WHEREAS, while data for tribal populations is harder to come by, where it exists, it also shows glaring disparities. In New Mexico, Native American communities have accounted for 60% of cases but only 9% of the population. Similarly, in Arizona, at least 136 Native American have

¹ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/30/865413079/what-do-coronavirus-racial-disparities-look-like-state-by-state>

² <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/news/2020/06/08/485589/women-need-response-coronavirus-pandemic/>

³ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/news/2020/06/08/485589/women-need-response-coronavirus-pandemic/>

⁴ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/30/865413079/what-do-coronavirus-racial-disparities-look-like-state-by-state>

⁵ <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/coronavirus-challenge-puerto-rico>

died from COVID-19, a striking 21% of deaths in a state where just 4% of the population are Native American⁶; and

WHEREAS, in several states Asian Americans have seen a disproportionate share of cases. In South Dakota, for example, they account for only 2% of the population but 12% of cases. But beyond these places, data can be spotty. In Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Oklahoma and Wisconsin, Asian Americans and Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders are counted together, making comparison to census data difficult⁷; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ people also experience health disparities that magnify the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the greater risk of health complications as a result of COVID-19, LGBTQ Americans are more likely than the general population to live in poverty and lack access to adequate medical care, paid medical leave, and basic necessities during the pandemic⁸; and

WHEREAS, it is unknown how many of the 1.5 million people who have contracted the coronavirus in the U.S. and the 93,000 who have died are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Just one state, Pennsylvania, has begun tracking information on the LGBTQ identities of COVID-19 patients⁹; and

WHEREAS, major holes in the data remain: 48% of cases and 9% of deaths still have no race tied to them. And that can hamper response to the crisis across the U.S., now and in the future¹⁰.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities (NLC) urges the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to continue collecting data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NLC urges the CDC to support data that sheds light on the intersecting forces of racial disparities, underlying conditions, and poverty that affect how the virus spreads and provide resources that address the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on communities of color.

⁶ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/30/865413079/what-do-coronavirus-racial-disparities-look-like-state-by-state>

⁷ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/30/865413079/what-do-coronavirus-racial-disparities-look-like-state-by-state>

⁸ https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/COVID19-IssueBrief-032020-FINAL.pdf?_ga=2.103849987.2089741639.1586550664-1232805491.1582911566

⁹ <https://www.menendez.senate.gov/news-and-events/in-the-news/lawmakers-urge-trump-administration-to-collect-data-on-lgbtq-covid-19-patients>

¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html>

NLC RESOLUTION #43**IN SUPPORT OF THE ONE HEALTH INITIATIVE**

WHEREAS, cities depend on the health and vitality of their inhabitants, reliable access to sufficient quantities of wholesome food and clean water, clean air, and the ecosystem services that support them; and

WHEREAS, government plays an important role in coordinating efforts to preserve and maintain those resources; and

WHEREAS, policymakers are challenged to make sense of complex inter-relationships among human health, animal health, and ecological health, and pressed to conform with decision-making models that often isolate those critical connections and shorten planning horizons; and

WHEREAS, cities' economic, social, and environmental well-being—the “triple bottom line” whereon environmental stewardship, economic prosperity, and social responsibility intersect—depends on our ability to integrate diverse interests through unified long-range planning, and to engage and inform policymakers and practitioners about critical interdependent needs; and

WHEREAS, the *One Health Initiative*¹ is a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach—working at the local, regional, national, and global levels—to achieve optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment; and

WHEREAS, leaders in local government are ideally suited as partners in that responsibility; and

WHEREAS, successful adoption and implementation of the *One Health Initiative* will be predicated on the leadership, communication skills, and cooperation of its advocates; and

WHEREAS, *One Health* topics that pertain to local government include the costs and organizational structure of public health services; pandemic preparedness; health education; adaptation to climate change; animal control and vaccination requirements; transportation and land use planning affecting public wellness; water quality protection; waste management; energy choices; food safety and regional food systems; ecological protection, restoration, and monitoring; homeland security and bioterrorism; measures of economic trends and workforce preparedness relative to sustainable practices; health, healthcare costs, and absenteeism of personnel; and

WHEREAS, facilitating communication among increasingly specialized experts will improve health outcomes for communities through increased awareness of connections between climate variability, food production, and infectious diseases; cross-species contagion (zoonoses), and human and animal health conditions; and demands on municipal infrastructure and services; and

¹ www.onehealthinitiative.com

WHEREAS, climate change will affect energy costs, the frequency and severity of floods, fires, wind events, heat waves, and other extreme weather conditions; coastal development and building standards; incidence vector-borne illnesses; crop production; habitat loss; endangerment and extinction of species; and human illness; and

WHEREAS, cities can only thrive if they remain attractive and livable, with sufficient quantities of clean water, clean air, efficient, affordable buildings, healthful food choices, healthy food animals, strong public health systems, and leaders who are committed to cooperative long-range planning for a sustainable future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities supports integrated decision-making in the context of the *One Health Initiative* and calls on the federal government to adopt legislation and practices that address human health, animal health, and ecological health in an integrated fashion and support local efforts to monitor and control public health threats.

NLC RESOLUTION #44**IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL HOLIDAY COMMEMORATING THE END OF
SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES**

WHEREAS, the first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619; and

WHEREAS, Black people were bought and sold as slave labor for at least 250 years and suffered unspeakable acts of violence; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation effective January 1, 1863, freeing the enslaved people in the South. However, Southern slave owners ignored that order; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas and enforced the president's order, freeing the enslaved two and a half years after it was first decreed at the end of the Civil War. This day has since come to be known as Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is celebrated as an observance in many cities, towns, and villages on June 19th but is not a federal holiday; and

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishes slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, and was ratified by the required number of states on December 6, 1865; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln's resolution to adopt the Thirteenth Amendment is celebrated as an observance on February 1st but is not a federal holiday; and

WHEREAS, other systems of oppression, such as sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining, human bondage and trafficking, and mass incarceration, and the police violence against Black bodies continued throughout our Country's history and perpetuated the racist legal and social systems that persist to this day; and

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities recognizes the history of racism in our country and how it has led to many current day disparities in education and job attainment, housing, and healthcare, as well as disproportionate incarceration rates for Black people in cities, towns and villages across our country; and

WHEREAS, human freedom is an inalienable right superior to any other and the United States of America has deployed, and continues to deploy, its armed forces to promote and establish freedom around the world. It behooves every responsible society to celebrate human freedom and to commit to ensuring freedom everywhere.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities calls upon the United States Congress to declare a national holiday celebrating the end of slavery in America.

This holiday would celebrate the adoption and enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution as well as Juneteenth, acknowledge the historical significance of the end of slavery, and recommit our country to dismantling institutional racism.