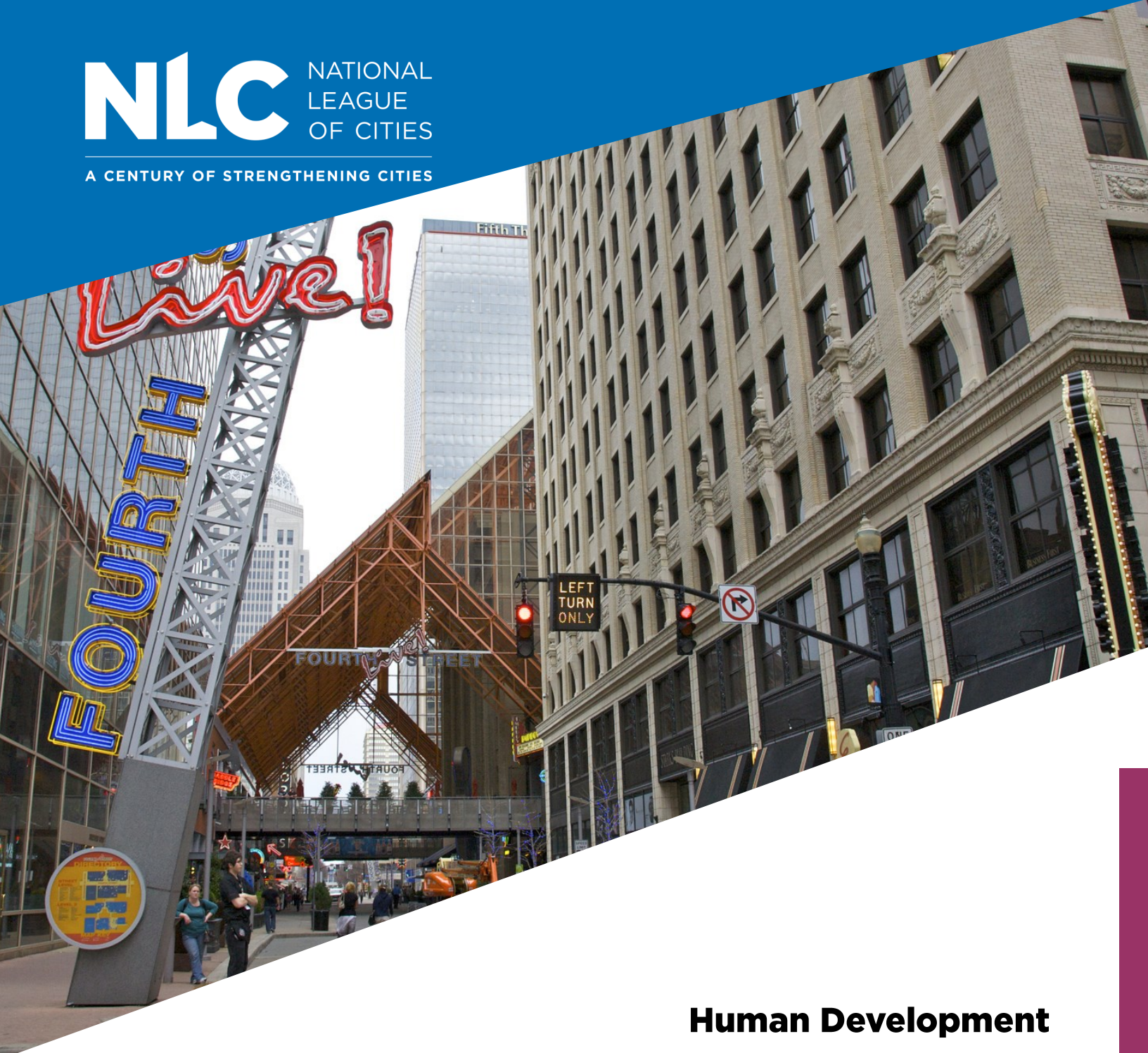




**Human Development
Federal Advocacy Committee**
2026 Summer Board and Leadership Meeting

The Omni Hotel Louisville

400 S 2nd Street

Louisville, Kentucky

July 8-10, 2026

Summer Board & Leadership Meeting

Human Development (HD) Federal Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda Omni Louisville Hotel 400 S 2nd St, Louisville, KY 40202

Wednesday, July 8, 2026	
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	REGISTRATION OPEN <i>2nd Street Pre-Function, 2nd Floor (near Cherokee Triangle/Germantown rooms)</i>
5:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.	JOINT WELCOME RECEPTION <i>Commonwealth Ballroom Pre-Function, 2nd Floor</i> Join us for a welcome reception onsite at the Omni Louisville as we kick-off the 2026 Summer Board and Leadership Meeting!
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	SUNSET CRUISE ON THE MARY M. MILLER <i>Belle of Louisville Riverboats, 401 W. River Road, Louisville, KY 40202</i> <i>Bus loading will begin at the Liberty Street entrance of the hotel at 6:15 PM and departs by 6:30 PM. Boat boarding 6:30–7:00 PM; Sunset cruise 7:00–8:00 PM; Belle of Louisville vessel tour following the cruise.</i> Experience an unforgettable evening on the waterfront with a narrated sunset cruise aboard the Mary M. Miller Riverboat, hosted by CEO Barbara Sexton Smith. Enjoy scenic views, storytelling, and a journey through local history before stepping aboard the Belle of Louisville for an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour featuring the engine room, firebox, and historic details of this iconic vessel. Guests will also enjoy calliope music and photo opportunities throughout the evening.
Thursday, July 9, 2026	
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	REGISTRATION OPEN <i>2nd Street Pre-Function, 2nd Floor</i>
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST <i>Commonwealth 5, 2nd Floor</i>
11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	PRESS CONFERENCE <i>Commonwealth 6/7/8 Pre-Function, 2nd Floor</i>

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	ATTENDEE LUNCH & CIVILITY PRESENTATION <i>Commonwealth 5, 2nd Floor</i> Be part of an important conversation on today's civility challenges. NLC research highlights a growing need for stronger, more respectful civic engagement. Hear from our partner, The Dignity Index, as they share practical tools and strategies to foster productive dialogue and meaningful public connection.
1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AND MOBILE SITE VISIT <i>Goodwill West Louisville Opportunity Center, 2820 West Broadway, Louisville, KY 40211</i> <i>Buses depart at 1:30 p.m. from the Liberty Street entrance of the hotel. Please look for the HD sign to board the correct bus.</i> Louisville has long been a national leader in workforce programs and strategies. Committee members will participate in a site visit hosted by KentuckianaWorks, the Louisville region's Workforce Development Board, at the Goodwill West Louisville Opportunity Center. The center is a \$50 million showcase in the heart of West Louisville and home to KentuckianaWorks' main Career Center in addition to other wraparound programming including on-site child care, a technology lab, business center and health and wellbeing services. The visit will highlight the city's young adult and early childhood strategies.
1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	BUS TO GOODWILL WEST LOUSVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER
2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	WELCOME REMARKS The Honorable Craig Greenberg <i>Mayor, Louisville, Kentucky</i> The Honorable Kevin Kramer <i>Councilmember, Louisville, Kentucky and President, National League of Cities</i>
2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	YOUNG ADULT WORKFORCE STRATEGY PANEL Michael Gritton <i>Executive Director, KentuckianaWorks</i> Nicole McGill <i>Director of Young Adult Services, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky</i> Committee members will hear about Louisville's young adult workforce strategy, which focuses on bridging education, paid experience and wraparound support. One of the key initiatives of this strategy is The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Center, operated by Goodwill as a contractor to KentuckianaWorks, serving 1,000 young adults annually.

3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	BREAK AND CENTER TOUR
3:45 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	THRIVE BY 5 LOUISVILLE PANEL Reylene Medina Robinson <i>Executive Director, Thrive by 5 Louisville</i> Charles Aull, PhD, PhD <i>Vice President, Policy, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce</i> Committee members will hear about Thrive by Five Louisville, a public-private partnership that bridges the gaps between families and high-quality early care and learning opportunities. The program has a local, mixed delivery model that leverages state, city and philanthropic dollars. In 2023, Mayor Greenberg created the Mayor’s Early Learning Action Group, made up of 23 partners from across the city—early learning advocates, experts, directors, parents, local and state policymakers. This group’s mission was to “expand access to affordable, high quality early learning for every three- and four-year old in Louisville”. Their subsequent Implementation Plan called for the city to stand up a separate nonprofit to support existing child care centers and homes across the city. In response, Mayor Greenberg announced Thrive by 5 Louisville and, with the support of the Metro Council and state leaders, secured an initial \$5 million investment.
4:30 p.m.	BUSES DEPART BACK TO HOTEL
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	EVENING EVENT HOSTED BY THE CITY OF LOUISVILLE <i>Muhammad Ali Center, 144 N 6th St, Louisville, KY 40202</i> <i>Bus loading will begin at 5:45 p.m. at the Liberty Street entrance and depart at 5:55 p.m.; Bus loading to return to the Omni Louisville will begin at 8:45 p.m. and depart at 9:00 p.m. (For those who wish the walk, please note the Muhammed Ali Center is walkable from the hotel)</i> Join us for a memorable closing event at the iconic Muhammad Ali Center, where we’ll celebrate the conclusion of the Summer Board and Leadership Meeting. Guests will enjoy an evening of connection, reflection, and celebration while experiencing the Center’s powerful exhibits and the enduring message of Muhammad Ali’s commitment to courage, respect, and service. This event will be buffet style.
8:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.	LATE NIGHT AT THE LOUISVILLE ZOO <i>The Louisville Zoo, 1100 Trevilian Way, Louisville, KY 40213</i> <i>Bus loading will begin from the Muhammed Ali Center at 8:00 p.m.; Second and final bus will depart for the Zoo at 8:15 p.m.; Final bus will depart the Zoo for the Omni Louisville at 10:30 p.m.</i> Experience an unforgettable evening at the Louisville Zoo featuring a special bourbon experience hosted by Suntory, a stroll through the dazzling Wild Lights display, and an exclusive inside presentation highlighting Common KY, the Zoo’s newest exhibit. Enjoy

	a unique blend of Kentucky culture, conservation, and discovery as the Zoo comes alive after dark.
Friday, July 10, 2026	
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	GRAB AND GO BREAKFAST <i>Commonwealth 3/4/5/8 Pre-Function, 2nd Floor</i>
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	STATE OF THE CITIES REPORT RELEASE <i>Old Louisville, 2nd Floor</i> The Honorable Kim Norton <i>Mayor, City of Rochester, Minnesota</i> The Honorable Bobby Scott, Jr. <i>Mayor, City of Center Point, Alabama</i> The 13th annual State of the Cities report focuses on the top priorities identified by mayors and chief elected officials. Hear from local leaders and NLC experts how local communities are addressing their challenges, responding to resident needs and building thriving communities. The State of the Cities report analyzes the social context and economic development of cities, towns and villages; highlights the main priorities for the current year, as stated by their leaders; and examines how these align with their residents' priorities.
9:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING <i>Commonwealth 2, 2nd Floor</i>
9:45 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS The Honorable Danielle Trumble <i>Mayor, Morgantown, West Virginia and Chair, Human Development Federal Advocacy Committee</i>
9:55 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	NATIONAL MUNICIPAL POLICY REVIEW Stephanie Martinez-Ruckman <i>Legislative Director, Human Development, NLC</i> Committee members will review and discuss recommended changes within the HD section of the 2027 NLC National Municipal Policy.
11:00 a.m.	CLOSING AND ADJOURN The Honorable Danielle Trumble <i>Mayor, Morgantown, West Virginia and Chair, Human Development Federal Advocacy Committee</i>

Enclosures:

- Speaker Bios
- NLC Policy Development and Advocacy Process
- HD Standing Policy and Resolutions
- 2026 Human Development Committee Roster

Upcoming HD Committee Meetings

Tuesday, September 15, 1-2 p.m. eastern – Conference Call for NMP Review

Tuesday, October 20, 1-2 p.m. eastern – Conference Call for NMP Review

[City Summit](#), Nashville, Tennessee, November 18-21 (HD Committee meets the afternoon of November 18)

SPEAKER BIOS



Craig Greenberg Mayor, Louisville, Kentucky

Craig Greenberg is the 51st Mayor of Louisville, Kentucky. A proud Louisvillian, Mayor Greenberg brings a lifelong commitment to public service and innovation. He is committed to moving Louisville in a new direction by focusing on key priorities that support the values of local families.

A proud graduate of Jefferson County Public Schools, the University of Michigan, and Harvard Law School, Mayor Greenberg was an attorney before helping launch and lead 21c Museum Hotels, a Louisville-based company that grew into a

nationally acclaimed hospitality brand. He also is a co-owner of Ohio Valley Wrestling and held leadership roles in multiple local organizations focused on education and economic development.

Mayor Greenberg has been married to his wife, Rachel, for over 25 years and they have two sons, Daniel and Benjamin.

From day one, the Greenberg administration has focused on core priorities, moving Louisville in a new direction:

- **Improving Public Safety & Health:** Violent crime is down citywide, with major investments in police, fire, EMS, and mental health response rooted in community partnerships, innovation, transparency, and accountability.
- **Increasing Affordable Housing & Reducing Homelessness:** Over 4,600 affordable homes have been added citywide and unsafe encampments reduced by 93%, with new shelters and services helping more residents find safe, affordable housing
- **Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization:** Mayor Greenberg has helped create thousands of jobs, secured \$1B in state funding for Louisville, and is transforming downtown with bold projects like the Diamond District, Louisville Gardens Studios, and the Reimagination of the Belvedere.
- **Early Learning:** By establishing Thrive by Five and opening new tuition-free preschools, Louisville is expanding access to high quality early learning so every child can start strong.
- **Vibrant Neighborhoods:** From historic investments in new parks, libraries, and pools to record-breaking events and infrastructure upgrades, Louisville is seeing momentum that can be felt in every single neighborhood.



Kevin Kramer
President, National League of Cities
Councilmember, Louisville, Kentucky

Kevin Kramer is the President of the National League of Cities and is a Councilman of Louisville, Kentucky. Kevin Kramer has dedicated over 25 years to education at Mercy Academy of Louisville, with additional teaching roles at St. Gabriel, St. Denis, St. Edward, and St. Xavier, specializing in social studies and religion. Beyond education, he has held several management positions with Wyandot Snack Foods.

Elected to the inaugural Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Council in November 2002, Kramer served as Metro Council President in 2006. He currently chairs the Minority Caucus, is the vice chair of the Budget Committee, and serves on the Government Oversight/Audit & Appointments Committee.

In 2024, Kramer was appointed Chair of the National League of Cities Information Technology and Communications Committee and is a member of the Steering Committee for the Board of Directors. From 2014 to 2017, he was on the Board of Directors of the Family Scholar House and is a graduate of the 2019 Bingham Fellows Class hosted by the Leadership Louisville Center.

A proud graduate of St. Xavier High School, Councilman Kramer holds a Bachelor of Arts in history from Bellarmine University and a Master's in Education from the University of Louisville. Active in the J-town and Hikes Point communities, he has coached for the Hikes Point Optimist Club, Southeast YMCA, and St. Martha, and taught adult education classes for the Louisville Community Foundation and Jefferson County Public Schools.

Kramer and his wife, Julie, have been married for over 40 years and have two adult children: Matthew, a high school English teacher, and Megan, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



Michael Gritton
Executive Director, KentuckianaWorks

Michael Gritton has served as the Executive Director of KentuckianaWorks, the Workforce Development Board for Louisville and its 6 regional counties, for 20 years. KentuckianaWorks leverages federal, state, and local government dollars as well as private philanthropic grants to engage employers, educators and job seekers with resources to build a stronger community through the dignity of work.

Gritton is a Louisville native who spent 20 years living in New York, Boston, and elsewhere before returning to his hometown in 2000. He is a graduate of Pleasure Ridge Park High School, Duke University and Columbia Law School.



Nicole McGill

Director of Young Adult Services, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

Nicole McGill has served as the director of young adult services since 2023. In her role, McGill oversees the team behind The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Center, a collaboration between Goodwill and KentuckianaWorks.

McGill has more than a decade of experience in the nonprofit sector. She began her career serving single-parent and refugee families before moving into youth and young adult services. Her focus in recent years has been developing quality programming and connecting young adults to education, training and employment opportunities in Louisville.

McGill has also served on the Sexual Assault Awareness Planning Committee and as an AmeriCorps Vista member for the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky. She is a graduate of the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work.



Reylene Medina Robinson

Executive Director, Thrive by 5 Louisville

Reylene Medina Robinson is the Executive Director of Thrive By 5 Louisville, a public-private partnership working to expand access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education. She leads the organization's strategy and partnerships to strengthen child care quality, support educators, and help families find and afford care they can trust.

A seasoned nonprofit leader, Reylene brings more than 20 years of experience advancing child and family well-being through equity, behavioral health, and community collaboration. Before joining Thrive By 5 Louisville, she served as Chief Community Officer and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer for Seven Counties Services. She held leadership roles with Family and Children's Place, the Alzheimer's Association, and the Boys and Girls Club of Lorain County.

Reylene holds a Master's in Public Administration from Cleveland State University and a CFRE credential. She was honored with the Frank Penick Founder's Award and named a 2023 Louisville Business First Enterprising Woman.



Charles Aull, PhD

Vice President, Policy, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Charles Aull has served as Vice President of Policy since April 2025. Since joining the Chamber in 2021, Dr. Aull has played a pivotal role in advancing the organization's research and policy work. In 2022, he led the creation of the Kentucky Chamber Center for Policy and Research—a nonpartisan hub for high-quality analysis on critical issues facing the Commonwealth. Under his leadership, the Center has produced influential research on workforce development, tax modernization, substance use disorder, and Kentucky's housing shortage. The Center has also facilitated statewide engagement, gathering input from local community leaders to inform effective, business-driven policy solutions. He has been closely involved in advancing several of the Chamber's key legislative initiatives, including tax reform, child care solutions, and unemployment insurance reform.

Prior to joining the Chamber, Dr. Aull served in various roles at Greater Louisville, Inc, Ballotpedia and Indiana University Bloomington.

Dr. Aull received his PhD in 2013 from Indiana University, where he studied history and government. He has also studied at Georgetown University and the Villanova University School of Law.

NLC POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY PROCESS

As a resource and advocate for more than 19,000 cities, towns and villages, the National League of Cities (NLC) brings municipal officials together to influence federal policy affecting local governments. NLC adopts positions on federal actions, programs and proposals that directly impact municipalities and formalizes those positions in the [National Municipal Policy \(NMP\)](#), which guides NLC's federal advocacy efforts.

NLC divides its advocacy efforts into seven subject areas:

- Community and Economic Development
- Energy, Environment and Natural Resources
- Finance, Administration and Intergovernmental Relations
- Human Development
- Information Technology and Communications
- Public Safety and Crime Prevention
- Transportation and Infrastructure Services

For each of the seven issue areas, a Federal Advocacy Committee advocates in support of NLC's federal policy positions. Members of each committee are appointed by the NLC President and serve for one calendar year.

Federal Advocacy Committees

Federal Advocacy Committee members are responsible for advocating on legislative priorities, providing input on legislative priorities, and reviewing and approving policy proposals and resolutions. Additionally, Committee members engage in networking and sharing of best practices.

Federal Advocacy Committees are comprised of local elected and appointed officials from NLC member cities. NLC members must apply annually for membership to a Federal Advocacy Committee. The NLC President makes appointments for chair, vice chairs, and general membership. In addition to leading the Federal Advocacy Committees, those appointed as committee chairs also serve on NLC's Board of Directors during their leadership year.

At the Congressional City Conference, Federal Advocacy Committee members are called upon to advocate for NLC's legislative priorities on Capitol Hill, as well as develop the committee's agenda and work plan for the year. Committee members meet throughout the year to further the plan, hear from guest presenters, discuss advocacy strategies and develop specific policy amendments and resolutions. At the City Summit, committee members review and approve policy proposals and resolutions. These action items are then forwarded to NLC's Resolutions Committee and are considered at the Annual Business Meeting, also held during the City Summit.

Advocacy

Throughout the year, committee members participate in advocacy efforts to influence the federal decision-making process, focusing on actions concerning local governments and communities. During the Congressional City Conference, committee members have an opportunity, and are encouraged, to meet with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. When NLC members are involved in the legislative process and share their expertise and experiences with Congress, municipalities have a stronger national voice, affecting the outcomes of federal policy debates that impact cities and towns.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (2026)

4.0 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 and well-being of every individual. Through policy recommendations, financial investments, staffing commitments 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 unintended 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 residents 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, build a humane, just and dignified asylum system, and restore the refugee resettlement program to historic norms; and

- Support efforts to ensure that cultural resources are accessible to all residents.

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 seniors, individuals with disabilities, children and youth, immigrants and refugees, and individuals experiencing homelessness.

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.

4.02 Children and Learning

Cities and their elected leaders play a critical role in education and child care. 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, workforce, and civic strength. In addition, local elected officials have significant influence and can mobilize important resources to the benefit of local education 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 long-term prosperity.

NLC believes that the federal government, through funding and program support, should work with 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.

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 includes a focus on social determinants of health including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE);
- Invest in education, including early childhood education as well as comprehensive afterschool and summer enrichment programs to ensure the reduction of dropout rates, increase graduation rates, address the achievement gap, promote postsecondary education, 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;
- Ensure all children obtain nutritious meals while attending child care or school;
- Invest in early child care education programs as a whole and adequately fund Head Start and Early Head Start;
- Fully fund all federally-mandated education acts;

- Provide resources to local communities to help individual students meet performance standards.
- Provide resources for innovative pilot programs to more effectively involve parents, strengthen families, and bring communities into our schools;
- Provide resources for green schoolyards, early childhood outdoor learning environments, and nature play spaces to support outcomes in health, education, sustainability, the environment, community cohesion, and park access;
- Support partnerships between school districts, local nonprofit organizations and public land agencies at every level for conducting learning outdoors, prioritizing communities that disproportionately lack access to quality outdoor spaces.

A. Early Care and Learning

NLC supports early childhood development programs that address the holistic needs of children including their physical, social and emotional health and well-being and prepare them for long-term success in school and life. Such programs should include:

- Support for social and emotional health and well-being, routine health screenings, physical fitness activities, and nutrition for proper development;
- Training and support for families to support their child's development at home and to help them effectively advocate for their child at school;
- Developmentally appropriate early learning experiences grounded in evidence-based curricula that incorporate play-based learning which develops a child's intelligence through experimentation and fosters collaboration with others;

- Learning environments that are safe, academically enriching, culturally appropriate and provide access to nature; and
- Early childhood educators that have the training, skills, and ongoing professional development to provide high-quality teacher/child interactions, including trauma-informed care, and are appropriately compensated according to their education and experience.

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, nutritional assistance, family support services, and education programs so that all children have the skills and support needed to enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

NLC urges the federal government to provide direct funding to cities to support early childhood programs in their communities.

Furthermore, NLC urges the federal government to:

- Continue efforts to modernize and expand the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program;
- Ensure funding for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to ensure centers and home-based providers can provide nutritious meals and snacks to children;
- Support increased funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program, and encourage greater coordination and

alignment between federal, state, and locally funded home visiting models;

- Increase funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to ensure that all families can find high-quality, accessible and affordable child care. Incentivize states to adopt payment and eligibility practices that better meet the needs of families and child care providers such as payout based on enrollment rather than attendance, setting payment rates based on the true cost of care rather than a market rate survey, utilizing contracts to build the supply of care, allowing families to be eligible for subsidy if attending an institute of higher education, and allowing localities to determine eligibility guidelines that can account for regional differences in the cost of living;
- Ensure that early childhood services are comprehensive, incorporating preventive and protective services for child abuse and neglect, ACEs, early and periodic health screenings, nutritional programs, educational enrichment, and appropriate interventions for children with special needs. Effort should be made to promote a diverse early childhood workforce that is trained in trauma-responsive care, culturally appropriate practices and implicit bias;
- Create a local early childhood innovation fund to encourage states, counties, municipal governments and their partners to find new ways to support the expansion and quality of child care and preschool in communities through early childhood workforce preparation programs, facilities enhancements, and strategic partnerships between early childhood programs and city agencies that serve families, so that families have access to nutrition and health services, housing, transportation and employment services;

- Ensure a robust pipeline for the early childcare workforce by supporting and incentivizing recruitment that aligns with the important role these workers play in the economic strength of communities;
- Provide student loan forgiveness for early childcare workers;
- Support & incentivize in-home/community childcare providers; and
- Provide work visas for qualified workers to join the childcare workforce.

NLC also recommends that the federal government:

- Provide tax incentives to businesses to provide child care facilities at worksites and to subsidize the child care costs of their employees;
- Encourage public-private partnerships through matching funds and financial incentives;
- Educate employers on the economic benefits of providing child care;
- Provide support and regulations to ensure child care 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;
- Urge the Small Business Administration (SBA) to view child care as a legitimate business including providing them operational support and make available low-interest loans to those interested in starting child care businesses;
- Support USDA Rural Development and their loan programs to help create jobs and support rural economic development through the financing of essential community facilities, including child care, early childhood learning centers; and

- Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a comprehensive human rights treaty on children's rights.

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

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 funding for preschool expansion and encourage states to adopt a mixed-delivery model that supports children's holistic development;
- Increase funding for Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships programs. Preserve the federal-to-local funding structure and encourage more birth-to-five grants to allow for additional flexibility for local programs to structure their operations to best meet local needs. Also, in addition to further supporting State Collaboration Offices, create local collaboration grants for cities, counties or their partners to help align and coordinate federal, state and local early childhood initiatives;
- Provide support for the inclusion of outdoor learning environments and nature play spaces that promote early learning, healthy development, healthy eating, and positive interactions between families and young children within parks, green spaces, and early childhood centers; and
- Supports transition activities to ensure that children entering kindergarten have the support needed to be successful in school.
- Require all federal grants that support the construction of affordable housing include incentives for the provision of childcare facilities.

B. School-Age Children

NLC supports comprehensive programs to raise student achievement and support positive whole child development. NLC supports Title I of the ESEA, which enables schools serving under-resourced children to meet their unique educational needs. NLC also supports federal efforts around after-school and summer learning through the expansion and full funding of the 21st Century Community Learning Center grants at its authorized levels, summer or year-round youth employment, service-learning programs, financial inclusion through financial education and vocational/career technical education that may include apprenticeship programs that are linked to higher retention rates, lowering truancy rates, improved grades and behavior.

The federal government should increase funding for programs that support opportunity youth, students who have disengaged from school, so they can return to school, receive an alternative education, and easily 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 career and technical education 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 investments in high-quality educator preparation programs, multicultural lessons inside and outside of school, multigenerational programs, and other needed services;
- Continue to implement flexible policies based on different communities' needs;
- Continue to allow states to give some school districts time-limited waivers regarding assessments of students who are new immigrants; and
- Provide support that helps mixed- status immigrant youth and families navigate the postsecondary education application process.

C. 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, food access, family literacy, mentoring, and family counseling programs available at neighborhood schools. Cities play an important role in the success of federal programs like the Summer Food Service Program, and NLC supports continued federal investments in these critical programs that meet students' basic needs.

D. Safe Schools

NLC also believes that bullying and harassment—including bullying based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture, sexual orientation and/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 :

- Adopt comprehensive and effective student conduct policies that include clear prohibitions regarding all bullying and harassment, including bullying and harassment based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture, 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;
- 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;
- Improve access to social emotional learning programs for youth and adults that have links to promoting positive school climate;
- Invest in high-quality educator preparation and training, including peer-to-peer learning, that promotes equitable social and emotional learning models, and create collaborations between school staff and external mental health and wellness providers; and
- Address the impact of structural racism on BIPOC students, including disparities in punishment/enforcement.

E. Green Schoolyards

NLC supports federal funding in support of all-inclusive infrastructure and design to ensure that green schoolyards and outdoor learning are seen as important, cost-effective assets for student learning and become fully integrated into school infrastructure, green infrastructure planning processes funding mechanisms, and state education standards. These installations:

- Support a healthy school environment, both indoors and outdoors, to ensure the health and well-being of children, teachers, and staff;
- Reduce the carbon footprint and urban heat island effects of thousands of school buildings and grounds;
- Ensure buildings and grounds are adaptable and resilient to address climate change impacts such as increasing extreme weather events; and
- Provide locations for wrap-around services and joint uses such as for school-based health clinics, adult and youth education, and civic and recreational centers.

F. Post-Secondary Education

Education and training beyond high school is increasingly required to ensure access to the jobs of the future and upward economic mobility. Without high-quality postsecondary education that develops a skilled and trained workforce, the nation's cities, towns and villages will face serious challenges when it comes to attracting and retaining businesses and staying economically competitive. NLC urges Congress to support strategies and investments that improve postsecondary access, completion, and long-term success in the labor market including those that:

- Ensure a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education and work. NLC supports those college preparation programs, authorized by the

Higher Education Act, that help to bridge the transition from high school to college (such as Gear Up, Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, and Educational Opportunity Centers). NLC also supports dual and concurrent enrollment programs, and college-in high school models like P-TECH;

- Promote a culture of postsecondary engagement and support the expansion of dedicated savings vehicles for post-secondary education such as children's savings accounts or other programs operated by towns, cities, and villages;
- Support work-based and career-connected learning, like programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and Registered Apprenticeship Programs and continue to ensure such programs are responsive to local labor market needs;
- Support career readiness programs, including English language and technology literacy programs as well as soft skills training;
- Elevate the central role that community colleges play in providing non-degree credentials, rapid upskilling and job training, and work to align federal support staff and technical assistance for community colleges at the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor;
- Incentivize state re-investment in higher education;
- Provide technical assistance and guidance to postsecondary institutions on strategies to improve career guidance, industry credential attainment, competency-based education, and other evidence-based practices;
- Make it easier for people receiving food assistance or social services to access postsecondary education. Work requirements in programs like TANF & SNAP can prevent youth and adults from

gaining the education and skills they need to access economic opportunity;

- Promote transparency in postsecondary data – including labor market outcome data – to enable local policymakers to make effective decisions that support education attainment and address equity issues; and
- Address the impact that increased student loan payments have on the financial security and economic mobility on the residents of our nation’s cities.

G. Public Libraries

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 to improve:

- Broadband and computer access to low-income households;
- Provide tech-support and digital literacy programs for residents of all ages;
- Collaboration with local elected officials, community-based organizations, schools, and workforce boards to improve access to learning and skills development programs;
- Integration and advancement of financial empowerment services;
- Accessibility for residents of all abilities;
- Access to programs and resources in various languages including American Sign Language;
- Access to afterschool and summer enrichment programs and healthy meals; and
- Needs assessment within communities that are marginalized and under-resourced.

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 consider regional, local differences, and community wants. 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 social services. 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 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 child care; health insurance; substance abuse and rehabilitation 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 with pathways 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, women, veterans, individuals with disabilities and low-income individuals;
- Direct federal investments to address the digital literacy gap facing the 48 million Americans with limited or no digital literacy skills;
- 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. This information can be used to help improve program design and outcomes for participants.

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. The federal government should make permanent the expansions of the EITC for those without children and the Child Tax Credit made possible with the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act. 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 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, keeping permanent the recent increase in service age for Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) to age 24;
- 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, job placement services, access to identification, and connection with financial 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.;
- Focus on and expand programs, services and funding to youth aging out of the foster care system;
- Continue funding services and programs to aid and assist homeless veterans;
- Recognize that there are other highly impacted populations and to support communities in identifying their homelessness needs through their local resources;
- Ensure federal funding supports a prevention first, humane approach by addressing root causes of homelessness and wrap-around services; and
- Increase federal funding for housing stabilization and eviction prevention;
- In the case homelessness isn't able to be prevented, the federal government should support permanent supportive housing models, which includes housing and case management services; and

- Create stronger connections with the local school districts' McKinney-Vento liaisons to ensure that children experiencing homelessness are supported in their educational needs.

See also CED section 3.06 Housing

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. NLC encourages updates that are in line with the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), published by the U.S. Census Bureau since 2011, which extends the official poverty measure by taking into account government programs that assist low-income families that are not included in the official poverty measure.

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;
- 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;

- Continue efforts to expand Short-Time Compensation program adoption by states and employers to avert layoffs; and
- Increase access to critical technology infrastructure such as high-speed broadband necessary for jobs now and in the future, including to support telework opportunities where feasible.

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, in addition:

- 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, formerly incarcerated individuals, and opportunity 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;
- 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 ideally connected to postsecondary skills development opportunities in in-demand career pathways 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;
- More generally promote streamlining of state occupational licensure procedures that reduce economic and geographic mobility for millions of Americans, including veterans, healthcare professionals, and others in in-demand industries;
- 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;

- Ensure access to affordable, high-quality child care and portable benefits system to ensure all those able to engage in the workforce are able, including supporting an intra-DOL taskforce/study group on the gig economy and worker classification; and
- Provide direct assistance to ensure that individuals receive the retraining and job placement assistance they need when the federal government closes military bases or major federal facilities.

B. Job Creation

To reduce poverty, the federal government should provide resources to help local communities address the shortage and maintenance 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 that will promote business growth and entrepreneurship and generate new employment opportunities 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.

See also CED section 3.04 (B4a) Economic Development.

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 the Worker adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act and other federal laws that ensure advance notice in cases of closing and mass layoffs and requires private businesses to:

- Provide 60 days advance notice of relocations, reductions in workforce or business closings for businesses with 100 or more employees;
- Consult with local municipal officials so that the individuals and communities affected can plan for needed adjustments;
- Create incentives for individuals to be re-skilled/re-trained to obtain further employment within the local community;
- Make supplemental financial contributions to support the unemployment insurance fund to assist in worker transition; and
- Support Short-Term Compensation (STC) programs, also known as “work sharing”, as a layoff aversion tactic under a state-approved plan to reduce the hours for a group of workers who in turn also receive a reduced unemployment benefit payment.

D. Wages and Income

NLC urges the federal government to increase the minimum wage and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) 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, sexual

orientation, religion, race 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 one's own illness, 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), after birth, 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, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender/identity expression or any social barriers, disabilities or physical disadvantage;

- Promote and encourage equitable efforts in employment, education, delivery of services, and health care;
- 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 statutory authority for same-sex and interracial marriages; and
- 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;
- Access to healthy foods;
- 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.

NLC believes that the federal government must support local government in enforcing access to these programs and services.

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 seniors to “age in place” and enjoy their elderly years in the comfort, safety, dignity and familiarity of their own homes and/or communities. NLC supports seniors in our communities to have affordable opportunities and support to age in a place of their choice that meets their needs. 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 homecare 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, support home repairs and accessibility renovations, ensure access to healthy foods, 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

NLC believes that the federal government should fund and support Natural Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) in partnership with local communities.

NLC opposes an increase to the federal minimum retirement age. NLC encourages the federal government to protect Social Security and other federal funding that supports seniors.

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 believes that the federal government should update survivor benefits to ensure that surviving spouses are able to retain their own benefits as well as that of their deceased spouse.

NLC also believes that the federal government should initiate programs of enforcement and education for employers and employers 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 and serving the needs of individuals with disabilities including transit and housing options;
- Provide funding to local communities to implement inclusion programs and build local staffing capacity to serve residents with disabilities;
- Increase postsecondary opportunities and success for students and youth with disabilities;
- Allow individuals with disabilities to marry or remain married without penalty or loss to their disability benefits;
- 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 follow 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, public transportation and housing programs, including permanent, affordable supportive housing for persons with disabilities.

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 maternal and infant mortality rates, 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), SNAP, WIC, and promote school health

clinics to expand access and availability of health care;

- Allow cities to apply directly for federal health care funds when a state does not release or apply for available funding opportunities;
- Address disease management and support initiatives such as Food Is Medicine to reduce nutrition-related chronic diseases;
- 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;
- Apply the same laws and rules concerning health care coverage and insurance to cities and town as to any other employer; and
- Support policies and programs that achieve optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.

In addition, NLC urges the federal government to:

- Combat misinformation on the importance of vaccination to local public health;
- Enhance access to health care by expanding telemedicine and virtual health options, particularly in rural areas;

- Provide funding for outreach and application assistance to uninsured individuals;
- 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. School-Based Health Clinics

NLC supports the use, growth and access 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. The federal government should ensure funding to support school-based clinics and evidence-based programs to support the health and well-being of school communities.

C. 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.

D. 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.

E. 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, monkeypox 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).

F. 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, towns and villages. 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, such as COVID-19, which are transmitted from animals to humans and that researchers now believe contributes to no fewer than 2.7 million deaths each year worldwide, on average. As we have experienced with COVID-19, which has resulted in 7.067

million deaths worldwide as of September 2024, these diseases are an increasingly serious problem resulting from environmental change and increased travel within and between nations.

NLC urges the federal government to put in place effective methods for controlling the spread of diseases and to invest in education, training and infrastructure so that city public health officials are prepared to address such outbreaks with a focus on equitable coordination with state and local governments and best practice sharing among communities. NLC also calls on the federal government to continue to recognize the financial impact of these diseases on local economies and to work with local leaders to understand revenue loss and impacts.

NLC urges the federal government to continue collecting data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and gender identity and to support data that sheds light on the intersecting forces of racial disparities, underlying conditions, and poverty that affect how an infectious disease spreads and provide resources that address the disproportionate effect on impacted communities.

G. 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, 2023), 48.5 million people aged 12 or older (or 17.1%) had a substance use disorder (SUD) in the

past year. Among people aged 12 or older in 2023 who were classified as needing substance use treatment in the past year, about 1 in 4 (23.6% or 12.8 million people) received substance use treatment in the past year.¹ The federal government should take steps to improve access to substance use treatment, including medication-assisted treatment and ensure that Naloxone and Suboxone dosage guidelines keep pace with the changing needs on the ground, especially the increasing prevalence of fentanyl and other synthetic substances that are driving the increase in overdose rates. Harm reduction efforts such as syringe exchange programs the use a fentanyl test strips should be scaled in coordination with state and local partners.

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 and access to trauma-informed modalities of treatment; and
- 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.

H. Protecting the Nation's Blood Supply

¹
<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSD>

UH%202023%20Annual%20Release/2023-nsduh-main-highlights.pdf

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.

I. 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 discrimination based on race, gender, religion, 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;

- Coordinate with state, county, and local officials on the implementation of the 988 mental health line, to ensure coordinated access to service providers;
- 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; and
- 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 childcare and preschool. These programs allow service providers to identify environmental risks that can lead to substance use disorders and mental health conditions; and
- Ensure that trauma-informed modalities are included in treatment that is covered.

J. Tobacco and Vaping

Any revenues raised by increasing federal excise taxes should be earmarked for health services, tobacco and/or vaping control activities and public education campaigns on the health effects of tobacco and/or vaping. Any federal legislation on tobacco and/or vaping should not preempt stronger state and local tobacco control laws or remedies.

K. Nutrition

Federal nutrition programs play a critical role in helping low-income families improve their overall nutrition, health, and development.

The federal government should:

- Publish and disseminate annually a report on the food security of households;
 - Support state participation in SNAP and reverse SNAP administrative costs to previous levels;
 - Support state innovation and provide technical assistance to address SNAP error rates;
 - Support and strengthen innovative ways for school districts and states to capture direct certification of students for school meals, given recent SNAP and Medicaid changes;
 - Allow the Thrifty Food Plan benefit levels to be updated based on changes to nutritional guidelines and food costs;
 - Restore the ability of residents to qualify for the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) if they receive Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) payments and include internet expenses for the calculation of deductions;
 - Support the restoration of the SNAP-Ed program;
 - Allow nonprofits and local governments to provide meals year-round seamlessly through the Summer Food Service Program;
 - Develop a nationwide implementation plan for universal school breakfasts and lunches in partnership with relevant organizations including the National School Boards Association, National Association of School Superintendents and the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
 - Increase school breakfast and school lunch reimbursement rates to address the funding gaps noted in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study;
 - Expand WIC research in under-resourced communities;
 - Extend certification periods to two years for infants, children, breastfeeding women, and postpartum women for those in the WIC program;
 - Provide flexibility for SNAP, including the ability to streamline administration and application processes with other social service programs and waiving work requirements to meet the individual needs of residents and ensuring local flexibility to provide access to all residents, including returning citizens between the ages of 55- 65 and those with dependents ages 14 and up;
 - Streamline the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) operations to increase the ability of individuals to pre-register for benefits online as soon as possible after a disaster strikes, support the streamlining of easy-to-administer SNAP waivers that would allow for automatic replacement of benefits for SNAP households, expand funding to ensure application assistance for individuals to receive D-SNAP quickly and inclusion of local municipalities in advance planning; and
 - Support state participation in the Summer EBT (SUN Bucks) program and provide clearer guidance on data management and program operations and facilitate data sharing across agencies and databases.
- L. Sexual Harassment and Assault**
- The federal government should take meaningful action to prevent sexual harassment for all individuals, regardless of gender or sexual orientation including:
- Adopting improved reporting practices as an example for cities to follow; and
 - 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.
- M. Racism**

Racism results in disproportionate impacts on the lives of Black, Indigenous, LatinX, Asian and other People of Color and 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 equity.

The federal government should:

- Recognize racism as a public health crisis;
- Provide funding and technical assistance for municipalities for disparity studies;
- Recognize and support deradicalization programs to help local communities move individuals away from violent extremism;
- 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;
- Continue to invest in federal research and programs that address the health outcomes of racism, such as stress and other mental health challenges;
- Support trauma-informed modalities in grant funding across federal agencies;
- Recognize the essential role of building community power to eliminate inequities;
- Provide funding opportunities to localities with a focus on building trust between cities and residents; and
- Ensure that disaggregated data by race is made available to provide a clear and accurate picture of disparate effects and outcomes to BIPOC communities.

N. One Health Initiative

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 support integrated decision-making in the context of the One Health Initiative.

The federal government should 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.

O. Violence

As communities across the country continue to address the impact of violence, including homicide, suicide, intimate partner violence, youth violence and other acts of violence against oneself and other, NLC calls on the federal government to:

- Continue to direct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor, detect and prevent violence in America;
- Support the CDC to invest in holistic interventions designed to address the health-related aspects and implications of violence;
- Continue to direct the CDC to collect data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and gender identity and support prevention strategies that are tailored to impacted communities; and
- Invest in intergenerational approaches to addressing trauma;
- Support the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to continue to invest in early intervention models, including trauma-informed care and violence interrupter groups, and in studying and addressing the intersection between community violence/mental

health/substance use in local communities; and

- Increase funding for the CDC 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.

4.09 Immigration and Refugees

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 arrival 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:

- Strengthen federal-state-local coordination and communication;
- Provide a 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 provide efficient means for foreign nationals to obtain legal authorization for affordable, temporary visas or legal permanent residency;
- Establish an efficient process whereby undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States may earn legalized status;
- Protect people seeking asylum at the border and through other means and create a humane reception system for migrants and refugees;
- 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 create a pathway to U.S. citizenship and an improved process to eliminate case backlogs that prevent and slow the process;
- 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 and provide support for the refugee resettlement program and provide equivalent supports and opportunities for people who came to the U.S. seeking safety through alternative related means, such as humanitarian parole;
- Reopen ports of entry to process asylum seekers in accordance with international law;
- 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.
- Increase capacity and infrastructure, including the speed of processing, 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;

- Establish 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 civics requirement;
- 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;
- Provide access to expedited naturalization to immigrants who have served honorably in the US Armed Forces without prejudice and risk of deportation;
- Ensure all those detained by the Department of Homeland Security are issued an A-Number, a unique seven-, eight- or nine-digit number assigned to ensure all within the system can be tracked;
- Provide language services and a clearly defined appeals process to asylum seekers who are denied entry into the United States; and
- Increase legal immigration by raising the employment-based visa program caps to expand the pool of qualified individuals for hard-to-fill jobs across our nation’s communities.

4.10 Arts and Culture

NLC urges the federal government to:

- Increase direct federal funding for cultural resources;
- Make funding opportunities available for cultural workers through every federal agency;

- Support cross-sector workforce development initiatives for artists and cultural workers;
- Provide resources to support artists and local governments of all sizes in complying with federal funding requirements; 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 for arts and cultural uses;
- Provide employment in cultural services at the local level;
- Promote the use and practice of arts and culture as a means of improving individual and community health and well-being;
- Promote workforce development opportunities for artists and cultural workers across sectors and industries;
- Employ artists and cultural workers as designers and facilitators of community engagement initiatives;
- Expand the municipal workforce through artist-in-residence-in-government programs; 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 members of the armed services who 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:

- Increase funding for the Veterans Administration;
- Provide access to effective veterans' health care by strengthening partnerships

with non-federal healthcare providers and the continuum of care;

- Support partnership to provide comprehensive services that support our veterans;
- Support and honor Gold Star families;
- Honor the unique experiences of veterans that served and acknowledge their sacrifice;
- Learn from past wars and ensure that we honor the service of those who serve our country including prisoners of war (POWs) and those missing in action (MIAs);
- Formally acknowledge the historic wrongs experienced by veterans of foreign wars including discrimination and exclusion from communities and federal policies;
- Formally acknowledge discriminatory practices of the armed services particularly towards women, people of color and the LGBTQ+ community;
- Support trauma-informed modalities in grant funding across federal agencies;
- Support programs that provide veterans experiencing homelessness 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 including adequate resources to veterans who are considering suicide, struggle with PTSD or are experiencing traumatic brain injury, etc.;
- 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 opportunity youth and young adults, seniors, and veterans;
- Ensure leadership opportunities for city and town elected officials on national Days of Service; and
- 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 2026-27**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 provides a return on investment of \\$15 for every \\$1 spent](#), yet funding for WIOA has steadily eroded over the last decade, and inflation has increased the cost of WIOA programs and services; 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, WIOA has been successful in leveraging funds for activities like apprenticeships, summer youth programs, adult and youth career exploration and piloting innovative opportunities for new businesses; and

WHEREAS, the one stop career system is a stable and critical partner to economic development and is recognized as one of the most impactful and remunerative investments Congress has made, and can continue to make, in the years ahead to provide a pathway into new, emerging and in-demand 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 to meet the needs of the changing economy and WIOA allows for greater local control of business outreach and ability to react to business needs; and

WHEREAS, [federal funding for workforce development has been cut by nearly 40% over the last two decades - the U.S. invests just .1 percent of GDP on active labor market policies, less than any other industrialized country except for Mexico](#); and

WHEREAS, in the 118th Congress, WIOA reauthorization was nearly enacted in the form of the [A Stronger Workforce for America Act \(ASWA\)](#); and

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 incorporates

the elements of ASWA that would help modernize our nation's public workforce development system and further refines language to better support employers, workers, learners, and local communities including:

- Fully and adequately funding the public workforce system and increasing available funding for workforce development activities during the authorization period for a new law so that the system can play an active role in turning unemployed workers into taxpayers;
- Maximizing the availability of training services provided through the public workforce system including 1) internships (or other paid work experience) in the definition of training; 2) the cost of case management and support services while individuals are in training in the definition of training; and 3) allowing Governors to provide waivers to a local area for a given period of time due to economic conditions;
- Preserving locally-driven workforce infrastructure to reflect the communities they were created to serve and provide locally developed solutions;
- [Maintaining the current allocation of state and local WIOA funding which has resulted in \\$61.6 billion in additional participant earnings in the most recent program year](#); and
- Support the expansion of key definitions in future WIOA legislation, like foundational skills and basic skills deficient, to explicitly include digital literacy skills in recognition of these new realities;
- Providing dedicated funding for the physical infrastructure costs of one-stop centers mandated by WIOA as well as greater flexibility for local boards to expand access to services through using a network of affiliated locations, such as libraries and community colleges, and by allowing for the use of virtual services where appropriate for one-stop service delivery; and
- Flexibility for local governments and workforce boards is crucial as it allows them to tailor workforce development strategies to meet specific needs and respond swiftly to evolving economic conditions and employment challenges.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-28**IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL HOLIDAY COMMEMORATING THE
ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LEGACY OF CÉSAR ESTRADA CHÁVEZ AND
DOLORES HUERTA**

WHEREAS, César Estrada Chávez was born on March 31, 1927, near Yuma, Arizona on a family farm and Dolores Huerta was born on April 10, 1930 in Dawson, New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 10, César Estrada Chávez joined the thousands of migrant farm workers laboring in fields and vineyards throughout the Southwest after a bank foreclosure resulted in the loss of the family farm and ultimately left school to work full-time as a farm worker to help support his family; and

WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta received an associate teaching degree from the University of the Pacific's Delta College in Stockton, CA; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 17, César Estrada Chávez entered the United States Navy and served the United States with distinction for 2 years; and

WHEREAS, in 1952, César Estrada Chávez joined the Community Service Organization, a prominent Latino civil rights group, and worked with the organization to coordinate voter registration drives and conduct campaigns against discrimination in east Los Angeles. He later served as their national director; and

WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta began her career as an activist when she co-founded the Stockton chapter of the Community Service Organization and later founded the Agricultural Workers Association; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, César Estrada Chávez and Dolores Huerta founded the National Farm Workers Association, which eventually became the United Farm Workers of America; and

WHEREAS, under their leadership, the United Farm Workers of America organized thousands of migrant farm workers to fight for fair wages, health care coverage, pension benefits, livable housing, and respect; and

WHEREAS, the union's efforts brought about the passage of the landmark 1975 California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which sought justice and guaranteed certain protections for farm workers; and

WHEREAS, the influence of César Estrada Chávez and Dolores Huerta extends far beyond agriculture and provides inspiration for those working to better human rights, empower workers, and advance the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, 10 States and dozens of communities across the United States honor the life and legacy of César Estrada Chávez and Dolores Huerta on March 31st of each year; and

WHEREAS, during his lifetime, César Estrada Chávez was a recipient of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Prize and posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta received the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award and the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama proclaimed “César Chávez Day” on March 31 of every year as a United States commemorative holiday to support public observance of the contributions of Cesar Chavez to the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the National League of Cities calls upon the United States Congress to declare a national holiday celebrating the life and legacy of César Estrada Chávez and Dolores Huerta.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-29**IN SUPPORT OF THE EQUALITY ACT**

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities (NLC) opposes discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex; and

WHEREAS, the member cities of NLC respect the fundamental dignity of all people and want to see all members of our communities able to participate fully in society; and

WHEREAS, there are 27 states where [LGBTQ+ Americans are not fully protected from discrimination](#), including in credit, education, employment, housing, government funded programs, jury service and public accommodations such as stores, restaurants, and transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the current state and local patchwork of laws about non-discrimination creates uncertainty and unpredictability for businesses operating across multiple states; and

WHEREAS, the member cities of NLC agree that as Americans, everyone should have the freedom and opportunity to work hard, earn a living, provide for their families, and contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, 75% of Americans [support a policy of non-discrimination against their LGBTQ+ neighbors](#); and

WHEREAS, [The Equality Act](#) requires our nation's civil rights laws to work in support of prohibiting discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system and defines and includes sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity among the prohibited categories of discrimination or segregation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress and the President to pass The Equality Act and provide full protections for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals regardless of where they live in the United States.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-30**IN SUPPORT OF PARENTS IN THE WORKFORCE**

WHEREAS, according to the [U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), in 2024, the labor force participation rate for mothers with children under 18 was 74.0% and the participation rate for fathers with children under 18 was 93.5%; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau, 40.5% of all mothers with children under 18 are equal, primary or sole income earners for their family. While 36.4% of White, non-Hispanic mothers and 39.3% of Hispanic mothers are equal, primary or sole breadwinners, the percentage of Black mothers is a staggering 65.9%; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau analysis of the American Time Use Survey, employed mothers aged 18-64 today are spending over 40% more time actively caring for their children than their mothers and grandmothers did almost 50 years ago; and

WHEREAS, according to the [U.S. Department of Labor's National Database on Childcare Prices](#), childcare expenses are untenable for families throughout the country with price ranges equivalent to between 8.9% and 16% of median family income per child in paid care, highlighting the urgent need for greater federal investments; and

WHEREAS, local governments are leveraging returnships, full-time, paid internships designed to help professionals who have been out of the workforce for a year or more return to work; and

WHEREAS, the unprecedented burdens of balancing childcare and work have strained the mental and emotional health of parents and caregivers; and

WHEREAS, except for the United States, [OECD countries offer a minimum of 6 weeks paid maternity leave](#) and the average time off (regardless of pay equivalent) of approximately 18 weeks; and

WHEREAS, [a Surgeon General report highlights the stressors that impact the mental health and well-being of parents and caregivers, the critical link between parental mental health and children's long-term well-being, and the urgent need to better support parents, caregivers, guardians and families.](#)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the National League of Cities calls on Congress to:

- Support paid family leave. NLC recommends 12 weeks.
- Invest in programs and policies to support parental mental health;
- Expand tax credits and other supports for all families including advance monthly payments of the Child Tax Credit and childcare supports;
- Invest in training and support for the childcare workforce, as well as facility enhancements to increase childcare supply, specifically for infants and toddlers;

- Continue support for Affordable Care Act programs so that families can continue to provide coverage for themselves and their dependents; and
- Expanded support to childcare providers to increase capacity for working families.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-31**IN SUPPORT OF THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT**

WHEREAS, in 2024, women of all ethnicities who were working full-time, year-round are paid [84 percent of what a man is paid](#); and

WHEREAS, the disparities are even greater for Black, Native American, and Hispanic women, who are paid [69 percent, 59 percent, and 58 percent of white men's wages, respectively](#); and

WHEREAS, while Asian American women make 83 percent of what white men make, [the gap for Asian women varies significantly depending on subpopulation, with some Asian women](#) – for example, Bhutanese, Burmese and Native Hawaiian women – earning among the lowest wages; and

WHEREAS, while the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was signed into law in 2009, which amends Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and states that the 180-day statute of limitations for filing an equal-pay lawsuit regarding pay discrimination resets with each new paycheck affected by that discriminatory action, we must go farther.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the National League of Cities calls on Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act which works to address ending pay discrimination.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-32**ADVANCING FEDERAL IMMIGRATION POLICY TO EMPOWER ECONOMIC GROWTH ACROSS KEY LOCAL INDUSTRIES INCLUDING AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION, HOSPITALITY, HEALTH CARE, TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

WHEREAS, excluding those who are Indigenous or whose ancestors were brought to this country as slaves, the United States has, from its very beginning, been a nation of immigrants and their descendants; and

WHEREAS, according to the [American Immigration Council](#), immigrant households made significant contributions to the U.S. economy in 2023:

- Paid \$577.4 billion in taxes (\$373.1 billion federal, \$204.3 billion state and local).
- Held \$1.5 trillion in spending power that supports local businesses and services.
- Paid \$167 billion in rent and held \$6.6 trillion in housing wealth.
- Nearly one in four U.S. entrepreneurs are immigrants, and 46% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children; and

WHEREAS, between 2000 and 2022, immigrants drove [three-quarters of prime-age labor force](#) growth, and in 2023, they made up [19% of the U.S. workforce](#) across healthcare, construction, agriculture, and technology; and

WHEREAS, from 2018 to 2023, immigration stabilized metro areas with shrinking U.S.-born populations, with [85% seeing immigrant growth](#); and

WHEREAS, the [Congressional Budget Office in 2024](#) estimated immigration could reduce the federal deficit by \$900 billion over the next decade; and

WHEREAS, in 2025, increased immigration enforcement harmed local economies and labor markets across multiple industries, including the agriculture sector, which [lost 155,000](#) workers between March and July 2025; and

WHEREAS, increased federal immigration enforcement has negatively affected local economies by disrupting industries that rely heavily on immigrant labor, including:

- Agriculture, where case studies on cities such as [Oxnard, California](#), show that raids reducing the agricultural workforce by 20–40 percent could cause \$3–7 billion in crop losses and raise produce prices by 5–12 percent;
- Construction, where states with high concentrations of undocumented workers experienced a [0.1 percent decline in employment](#) between June 2024 and June 2025, compounding a national shortage of 200,000–400,000 workers;
- Hospitality, which counts immigrants as [31 percent of their workforce](#), with a 17 percent growth in immigrant hospitality workers since 2010;
- Healthcare and long-term care, where immigrants account for [28 percent](#) of the workforce, making federal enforcement actions a direct risk to staffing levels, bed availability, and wait times, particularly in home- and residential-care settings;

- Meatpacking and food processing, where nearly [45 percent](#) of workers are foreign-born, leaving critical food supply chains vulnerable to labor disruptions; and

WHEREAS, [Brookings](#) and [Wharton](#) models project that mass deportations could cut U.S. GDP by up to \$130 billion in 2025, raising labor costs and slowing growth; and

WHEREAS, the inconsistent and disruptive immigration enforcement by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) undermines public safety by fostering fear, discouraging crime reporting and use of essential services, and eroding trust in law enforcement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities (NLC) urges Congress and the Administration to:

- **Ensure Lawful Deportation Processes** so that detainments and deportations are done within the rule of law and uphold the rights of citizens and legal immigrants.
- **Strengthen Workforce Participation** by granting work authorization to asylees awaiting adjudication and expanding employment-based visa caps to fill critical workforce gaps.
- **Advance Legal Pathways to Citizenship** for long-term undocumented residents and provide DACA recipients with a permanent pathway to citizenship.
- **Protect Families and Communities** by ending detention practices that traumatize children, ensuring enforcement actions do not undermine public safety or individual rights.
- **Support Military Service Members** by expediting citizenship for immigrants who have served honorably in or assisted the U.S. Armed Forces.
- **Improve Federal–Local Coordination** by working with local governments to mitigate the economic and public safety impacts of the increased federal immigration enforcement.



Human Development (HD)

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