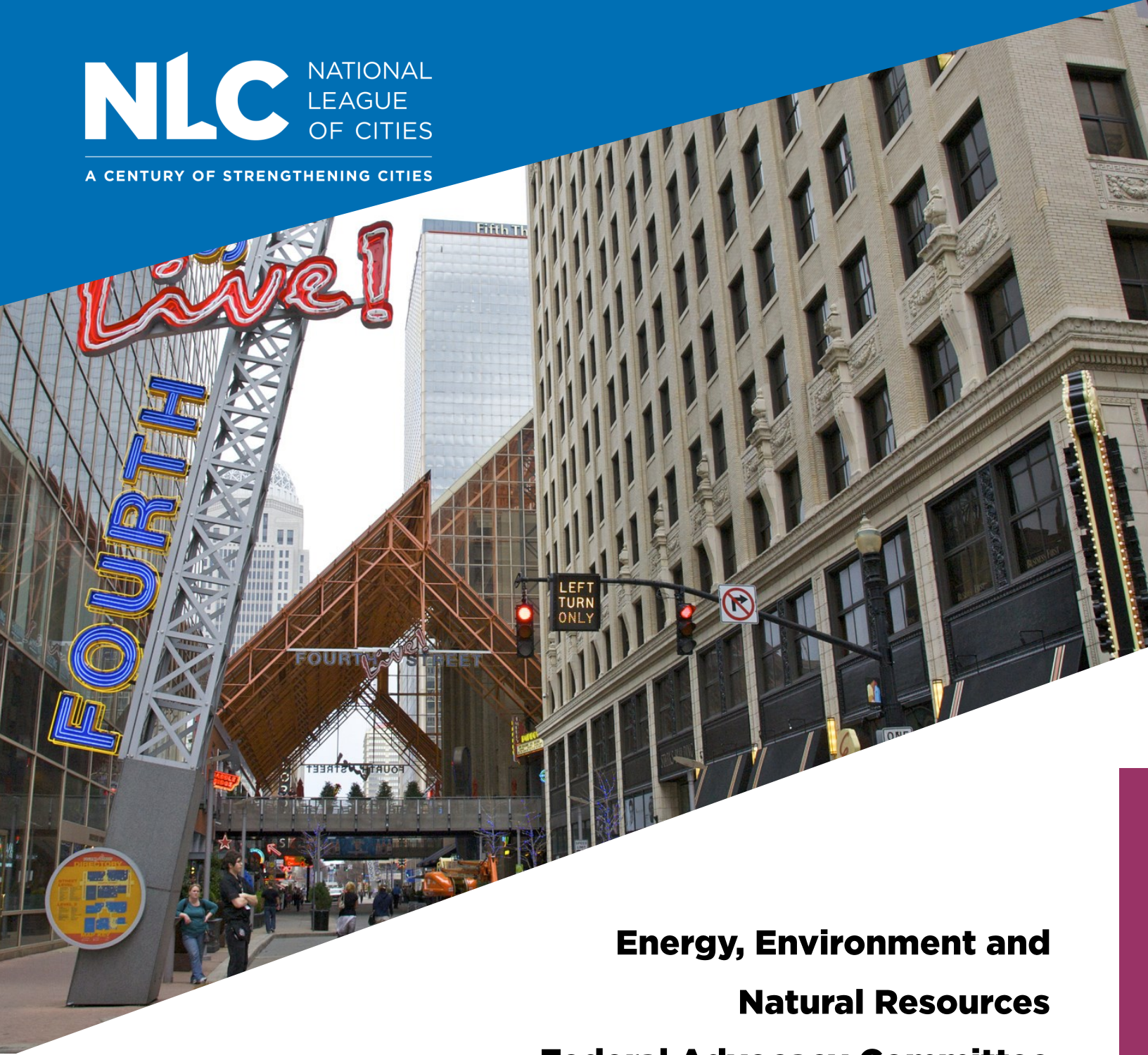




**Energy, Environment and
Natural Resources
Federal Advocacy Committee**

2026 Summer Board and Leadership Meeting

The Omni Hotel Louisville

400 S 2nd Street

Louisville, Kentucky

July 8-10, 2026

Energy, Environment and Natural Resources (EENR) Federal Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, July 8, 2026

5:00 p.m. – **JOINT WELCOME RECEPTION**
6:15 p.m. *Omni Louisville – Commonwealth Ballroom Pre-function*

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. – **SUNSET CRUISE ON MARY M. MILLER (open to all attendees)**
8:30 p.m. *401 W River Rd, Louisville, KY 40202*

First bus loads at 6:15 p.m. and departs by 6:25 p.m.; second bus departs at 6:40 p.m. – Liberty Street entrance of the hotel.

Boat boarding 6:30–7:00 p.m.; sunset cruise 7:00–8:00 p.m.; Belle of Louisville tour following. (For those who wish the walk, please note the Mary M. Miller is walkable from the hotel.)

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. Please note the boat is air-conditioned.

Thursday, July 9, 2026

7:30 a.m. – **BREAKFAST AVAILABLE**
9:00 a.m. *Omni Louisville – Commonwealth 5*

11:45 a.m. – **PRESS CONFERENCE**
12:00 p.m. *Omni Louisville – Commonwealth 6, 7, 8 Pre-function*

12:00 p.m. – **ATTENDEE LUNCH & CIVILITY PRESENTATION**
1:15 p.m. *Omni Louisville – Commonwealth 5*

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. – 5:30 p.m. **EENR COMMITTEE MEETING AND MOBILE SITE VISITS**
Board bus at 1:30 p.m. from the Liberty Street entrance of the hotel. Look for the EENR sign to board the correct bus. Bus will depart by 1:40 p.m.

2:00 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. **EENR Committee Meeting**
Waterfront Botanical Gardens, Graeser Family Education Center, 1435 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206

3:50 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **EENR Committee Mobile Site Visits**
*Waterfront Park
Louisville Water Company*

2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **EENR COMMITTEE MEETING**

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND MEETING OVERVIEW

The Honorable Jan Kulmann, Chair
Mayor, City of Thornton, Colorado

Phil Koester
President and CEO, Waterfront Botanical Gardens

Committee members will review the agenda and the goals for the meeting, as well as learn about the history of the [Waterfront Botanical Gardens](#).

2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: BENEFITS OF URBAN TREE CANOPY FOR HEAT ISLAND MITIGATION**

Cindi Sullivan
President and Executive Director, TreesLouisville

Chris Chandler
President and CEO, Parks Alliance of Louisville

Committee members will learn how local organizations such as [TreesLouisville](#) and [Parks Alliance of Louisville](#) are working to support community-driven parks projects and grow and protect the city's urban tree canopy to provide cooler streets to mitigate heat island impacts and improve health and quality of life. Additionally, initiatives such as [Green Heart Louisville](#) aim to improve public health through nature-based solutions.

3:15 p.m. – **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**
3:30 p.m.

Carolyn Berndt
Legislative Director, Sustainability, NLC

Committee members will hear an update on NLC’s 2026 Federal Action Agenda, as well as energy and environment updates before the Administration, Congress and the Courts.

3:30 p.m. – **BREAK**
3:50 p.m.

Committee members are encouraged to stroll through the Botanical Gardens.

3:50 p.m. – **BOARD BUS AND TRAVEL TO WATERFRONT PARK (Lincoln Memorial)**
4:00 p.m. *Committee members must be on the bus by 3:50 p.m.*

4:00 p.m. – **MOBILE SITE VISIT: WATERFRONT PARK**
4:25 p.m.

Deborah Bilitski
President/Executive Director, Waterfront Development Corporation

For the past 40 years, Waterfront Development Corporation (WDC) has been dedicated to the mission of reclaiming Louisville’s downtown Ohio River riverfront for the community. Established in 1986, WDC has transformed 88.5 acres of property from a blighted, inaccessible, environmentally-contaminated industrial wasteland into a nationally recognized, award-winning public park. Waterfront Park is now one of downtown Louisville’s most visited destinations with over 2.5 million visitors annually who come from throughout the community and beyond to enjoy Waterfront Park’s stunning river views, beautiful green spaces, and hundreds of annual events and programs.

4:25 p.m. – **BOARD BUS AND TRAVEL TO LOUISVILLE WATER COMPANY**
4:35 p.m.

4:35 p.m. – **MOBILE SITE VISIT: LOUISVILLE WATER COMPANY**
5:20 p.m. *Attendees must present their driver’s license to enter.*

Vince Guenther
Senior Utilities Consultant, Louisville Water Company

Kelly Dearing Smith
Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Louisville Water Company

Louisville Water is Kentucky’s first public drinking water provider dating back to 1860. Today, Louisville Water is an anchor for public health and quality of life. Louisville’s water quality consistently ranks among the best in North America—the treatment plants rank as two of the top 19 in North America for exceptional water quality, a distinction from the Partnership for Safe Water, a collaboration with the American Water works Association, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other water organizations.

Attendees will visit the historic Water Tower and WaterWorks Museum, as well as the active pump station to see how water is taken from the Ohio River and view one of the original steam pumping engines.

5:20 p.m. – **BOARD BUS AND TRAVEL TO OMNI LOUISVILLE HOTEL**
5:30 p.m.

6:00 p.m. – **EVENING EVENT HOSTED BY THE CITY OF LOUISVILLE**
8:30 p.m. *Muhammad Ali Center, 144 N 6th St, Louisville, KY 40202*

Buses begin loading at 5:45 p.m. and depart at 5:55 p.m. from the Liberty Street entrance of the hotel. Bus loading to return to the Omni Louisville will begin at 8:30 p.m. (For those who wish the walk, please note the Muhammed Ali Center is walkable from the hotel.)

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.

8:30 p.m. – **LATE NIGHT AT THE LOUISVILLE ZOO**
10:30 p.m. *1100 Trevilian Way, Louisville, KY 40213*
Arrive: Gate 1 - 3917 Illinois Avenue / Depart: Main Entrance

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. The final bus from the Louisville Zoo will depart for the Omni Louisville at 10:15 p.m.

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

7:30 a.m. – **GRAB AND GO BREAKFAST**
9:30 a.m. *Omni Louisville – Commonwealth 5*

8:30 a.m. – **STATE OF THE CITIES REPORT RELEASE**
9:30 a.m. *Omni Louisville – Old Louisville*

The Honorable Kim Norton
Mayor, City of Rochester, Minnesota

The Honorable Bobby Scott, Jr.
Mayor, City of Center Point, Alabama

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. – 11:45 a.m. **EENR COMMITTEE MEETING**
Omni Louisville – Commonwealth 1

9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: UTILIZING GEOTHERMAL AND NUCLEAR ENERGY IN COMMUNITIES**

Dan Mann

Executive Director, Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport

Megan Atkins Thoben

Vice President of Operations and Customer Engagement, Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport

Kenya Stump

Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Energy Policy

Last year's federal tax legislation changed the direct pay clean energy tax credits available to communities. While the requirements and availability of the tax credits for solar and wind projects were scaled back, clean energy projects utilizing geothermal, nuclear, hydrogen and battery storage were extended. Committee members will learn about opportunities and examples to utilize these clean energy sources in their communities.

Committee members will learn about an [innovative geothermal technology project](#), including financing mechanisms, at the Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport. By using geothermal energy, the airport reduces its reliance on fossil fuels and significantly decreases greenhouse gas emissions.

Committee members will also learn how the Commonwealth of Kentucky is expanding nuclear energy and some of the unique capabilities that make this possible.

**10:30 a.m. – PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: EXAMING DATA CENTER ENERGY AND
11:15 a.m. WATER USE**

Brian Davis

Director, Office of Planning, Louisville Metro Government

Committee members will learn about the process that the Louisville Metro's Office of Planning is undertaking to create land development guidelines for future data center construction.

**11:15 a.m. – EENR NATIONAL MUNICIPAL POLICY REVIEW
11:45 a.m.**

Carolyn Berndt

Legislative Director, Sustainability, NLC

Committee members will review and discuss recommendations for the resolutions within the EENR section of the NLC National Municipal Policy.

11:45 a.m. CLOSING AND ADJOURN

The Honorable Jan Kulmann, Chair

Mayor, City of Thornton, Colorado

Enclosures:

- Speaker Bios
- Article: Geothermal heat pump systems tax incentives, Plante Moran, Feb. 27, 2026
- EENR Policy and Resolutions
- 2026 Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee Roster

Upcoming EENR Committee Meetings

September TBD – Conference Call(s) for National Municipal Policy Review

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

SPEAKER BIOS

Phil Koester, President and CEO, Waterfront Botanical Gardens

Philip Koester serves as President & CEO of Waterfront Botanical Gardens, where he provides overarching leadership and strategic direction for one of Louisville's most important cultural and environmental projects. Phil, a Louisville native, also spent many years in Chicago and L.A. leading marketing and development initiatives at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Phil returned to Louisville with his family in 2020 and held senior positions with the Kentucky Opera before becoming Executive Director of the Louisville Ballet before joining the Waterfront Botanical Gardens team in January 2024.

Phil's leadership philosophy is rooted in the belief that world-class experiences should exist in every community. After working with acclaimed performing arts institutions, he saw the same opportunity and exceptional qualities at Waterfront Botanical Gardens. Phil is passionate about creating a destination that reflects Louisville's unique identity while transforming a former landfill into a place where nature prospers and people thrive. Phil's impact is driven by a commitment to quality, care, and intentional growth. Much like a performance, every detail in the Gardens matters and the experience stays with you long after you leave.

Now in its seventh growing season, Waterfront Botanical Gardens serves as a living museum offering environmental, ecological, and horticultural education for children and adults alike. The Gardens have completed Phase 1 of their Master Plan and Phase 2A construction is currently underway, including the Graeser Family Bonsai Garden, Joe & Debbie Graviss Bonsai House, Tree Allée, Beargrass Creek Overlook, and completed Beargrass Creek Pathway loop.

Cindi Sullivan, President and Executive Director, TreesLouisville

Cindi Sullivan is the President and Executive Director of TreesLouisville, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of Louisville's current and future generations through a robust, equitable and diverse community tree canopy. She is an ISA-Certified Arborist, TreeRisk Assessment Qualified, and a Certified Urban Forest Professional.

Dan Mann, Executive Director, Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport

Dan Mann, A.A.E., is the Executive Director of Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport, the 5th busiest cargo airport in the world. Dan previously served as the Executive Director for the Columbia Metropolitan Airport in Columbia, SC; Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids, IA; and Natrona County International Airport in Casper, WY.

As a long-time leader in aviation organizations, Dan served on the Board of Examiners for the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), the Board of the Iowa Public Airports Association, and is past President of both the Northwest Chapter of AAAE and the Wyoming Airport Operators Association.

From 1987 to 1992, Dan served in the United States Air Force, where he held the rank of Captain and was a B-52 Navigator. Dan also served in the OH Air National Guard from 1983 to 1987. Dan graduated from Bowling Green State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration.

**Megan Atkins Thoben, Vice President of Operations and Customer Engagement,
Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport**

Megan Atkins Thoben is the Vice President of Operations and Customer Engagement for the Louisville Regional Airport Authority. In her current role, Megan champions the Airport Authority with programs and best-in-class practices that showcase the organization's innovative approach within the industry and community. With a focus on continuing to highlight SDF's success stories, she leads the airport's Airfield Operations, Terminal Operations, & Airport Security Departments, ensuring compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, and serves as a link with key airport tenants and stakeholders.

Kenya Stump, Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Energy Policy

Kenya Stump was appointed as the Executive Director of the Kentucky Office of Energy Policy (OEP) in March of 2020. Prior to that, Kenya served as Assistant Director for the Division of Energy Assistance within the Office of Energy Policy. Before her work in OEP, Kenya managed the environmental assistance programs at the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet, including environmental leadership, brownfields, and compliance assistance with the Division of Compliance Assistance. She also served as an environmental scientist and policy advisor in the director's office at the Division for Air Quality. Prior to her work in state government, she served as an environmental consultant with the Kentucky Business Environmental Assistance Program at the University of Kentucky. Kenya has master's degrees in environmental science from the University of Kentucky and Public Administration from Indiana University. She graduated from Western Kentucky University with a BA in Chemistry and holds a post-graduate certificate in Environmental Systems.

Brian Davis, Director, Office of Planning, Louisville Metro Government, Kentucky

Brian Davis, AICP is a professional planner with over 25 years of experience in the public sector and currently serves as Director of the Louisville Metro Office of Planning in Louisville, Kentucky. Brian is a proud graduate of Western Kentucky University, where he earned both a Bachelor's and Master's in Geography with an emphasis in City and Regional Planning. Brian is an active member of the APA-Kentucky Chapter, having served three years as Chapter President and currently co-chairs the Conference Planning Committee. In his "spare time," Brian is an Adjunct Instructor for the University of Louisville Department of Urban and Public Affairs, a member of the Kentucky League of Cities Board of Directors, and enjoys traveling across the US with his family.

Proposed EENR Policy Changes

National Municipal Policy – Energy, Environment and Natural Resources

Section 2.02 Energy

A. Goals

NLC urges the federal government to work with local governments to develop and implement a sustainable energy policy that is reliable, equitable, environmentally responsible and evidence-based and that will:

- Continue to assess the future of our nation’s energy requirements to ensure that our energy policy adequately addresses the future needs of the country;
- Promote the most efficient and affordable use of renewable and sustainable energy sources to protect the environment, benefit communities, and support the local economy by creating jobs and reducing carbon pollution;
- Improve public health outcomes, particularly for people with disabilities, economically disadvantaged households, the elderly, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), and other vulnerable and underrepresented populations who are most affected by pollution and least able to prepare in advance or recover from climate change and extreme weather events;
- Encourage the transition to a clean energy economy that increases the use of carbon neutral energy and promotes energy efficiency, with a goal of at least 50 percent carbon neutral energy by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050 or sooner;
- Protect the supply of energy by promoting the use of renewable energy sources as an increasing share of a diversified energy portfolio;
- Implement measures to minimize the environmental impact of fossil fuels, while transitioning toward **net-zero emissions** and decarbonization;
- Protect our economic and national security by reducing our dependence on foreign oil, improving the resilience of energy infrastructure, and minimizing the environmental impact of the domestic production of energy sources;
- Ensure a national energy supply that decreases greenhouse gas emissions;
- Encourage conservation and increased energy efficiency across the country and sectors of the economy;
- Encourage the widespread use and deployment of both distributed energy sources and utility scale generation of renewable energy as a component of energy infrastructure to help communities withstand impacts from disruptions in regional supply systems;
- Promote community resilience by strengthening and modernizing energy infrastructure to reduce vulnerability to disruptions and withstand the impacts of climate change;

Proposed EENR Policy Changes

- Support local economies with job training and workforce development as the nation transitions to clean energy; and
- Ensure that households and businesses do not face unaffordable costs related to the transition away from fossil fuels, particularly for low-income or energy-burdened households.

New Section – all new text

Toxic Substance Policies

NLC supports provisions in the 2016 amendments to the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) which mandates review and monitoring of toxic chemicals both before and after they enter the market. This new and improved version of TSCA gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency the authority and responsibility to regulate the most toxic chemicals that cause harm to human health and the environment, including PFAS forever chemicals. Recent rules have banned or restricted cancer-causing chemicals such as trichloroethylene, methylene chloride, and asbestos—protecting millions of workers and families.

Congress and the Administration should ensure that fees to support implementation are reauthorized.

For an overview of Toxic Substances Control Act, visit the [EPA website](#).

Proposed EENR Resolutions

NLC resolutions are annual statements of position that sunset at the end of the calendar year unless action is taken. The committee must review each of the 2026 resolutions that originated in the EENR Committee to determine recommendations for 2027. The committee has the following options:

1. Renew the resolution for the coming year (with or without edits)
2. Incorporate the resolution into permanent policy; or
3. Let the resolution expire.

The EENR resolutions that were approved for 2026 at the City Summit with recommendations for 2027 are:

Resolution	NLC Staff Recommendation
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-11: Supporting Local PACE Programs	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-12: Supporting and Advancing Resilient Communities to Prepare for Changing Climate and Extreme Weather Events	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-13: Supporting Urgent Action to Reduce Carbon Emissions and Mitigate the Effects of Climate Change	
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-14: Addressing Lead Contamination and Calling for Nationwide Federal Support for Water Infrastructure	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-15: Increase Federal Investment in Water Infrastructure	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-16: Support for Integrated Planning and New Affordability Consideration for Water	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-17: Calling on the Federal Government to Take Action to Address PFAS Contamination	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-18: Improve the Benefit-Cost Analysis for Federally Funded Flood Control Projects and Support Beneficial Reuse of Dredged Material	Renew with edits

Proposed EENR Resolutions

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-19: Increase Funding for Border Water Infrastructure Projects	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-20: Support and Advance Cities Impacted by Federal Facilities and Infrastructure through Community Benefit Programs	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION 2026-21: Protecting Federal Scientific Data and Resources to Support Local Preparedness to Extreme Weather Events	Renew

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-11

2
3 SUPPORTING LOCAL PACE PROGRAMS

4
5 [NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

6
7 WHEREAS, ~~utility bills represent a major part of operating high energy~~ costs and affordability
8 ~~concerns are becoming an increasing burden~~ for residents and business owners; and

9
10 WHEREAS, the building sector accounts for nearly 37 percent of the nation's total energy
11 consumption in 2023, 75 percent of all electricity used in the U.S. and 31 percent of the nation's
12 2022 indirect greenhouse gas emissions, which includes electricity end-use, representing one of
13 the largest, most accessible opportunities for deep emission cuts in the United States; and

14
15 WHEREAS, investing in cost-effective energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements
16 to homes and businesses saves energy, cuts utility bills, creates local jobs, reduces reliance on
17 fossil fuels, and dramatically reduces greenhouse gas emissions; and

18
19 WHEREAS, a 2013 study that found default risks are on average 32 percent lower in energy
20 efficient homes and recommends that the lower risks associated with energy efficiency should be
21 taken into consideration when underwriting mortgages; and

22
23 WHEREAS, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing programs are an innovative
24 local government solution to help property owners finance energy efficiency and renewable
25 energy improvements – such as energy efficient HVAC systems, upgraded insulation, new
26 windows, solar installations, etc. – to their homes and businesses; and

27
28 WHEREAS, PACE programs can also be used for other types of projects that provide public and
29 community benefits, such as improving community resilience to hurricanes and wildfires and
30 managing stormwater and tidal flooding; and

31
32 WHEREAS, the PACE program removes many of the financial barriers of energy efficiency and
33 renewable energy retrofits that otherwise exist for residential homeowners and businesses,
34 particularly the high upfront cost of making such an investment and the long-term ability to reap
35 the benefits of cost savings; and

36
37 WHEREAS, 40 states plus the District of Columbia have passed laws enabling local
38 governments to develop PACE programs; and

39
40 WHEREAS, locally-administered PACE programs are an exercise of the traditional authority of
41 local governments to utilize the tax code for public benefit; and

42
43 WHEREAS, PACE programs can help local governments meet a core obligation to their citizens
44 to maintain housing stock and improve housing opportunities for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, the PACE program is an example of a successful intergovernmental partnership to realize national policy goals, namely, reducing energy consumption, that will positively impact the fiscal conditions of every level of government; and

WHEREAS, PACE holds the potential to unlock private capital and jumpstart economic growth backed by the marketplace certainty of the federal government; and

WHEREAS, in communities that have enabled PACE, investments have had significant effects on local job creation and economic activity, energy savings and carbon abatement. Over the lifetime of the measures installed to date, [estimates show](#) that those PACE projects will result in \$29 billion in economic impact, 214,000 job-years created, 14 million metric tons CO2 emissions avoided and 53 billion kWh energy saved; and

WHEREAS, despite PACE's great promise, in July 2010 the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), as conservator of the government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) following the 2008 financial crisis, [issued guidance](#) that directed the GSEs not to purchase mortgages with a PACE assessment, which immediately slowed the advancement of PACE residential programs across the country; and

WHEREAS, despite the FHFA directive, many commercial and a few residential PACE programs are operating or are in development in hundreds of municipalities across the country; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 the U.S. Department of Energy dedicated \$150 million to assist in the development of local PACE programs and in 2016 issued [Best Practice Guidelines for Residential PACE Financing Programs](#) to help state and local governments develop and implement programs and recommended protections that PACE programs should put in place for consumers and lenders; and

WHEREAS, in July 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [released guidance](#) allowing the Federal Housing Administration to insure mortgages on properties that include PACE assessments, which has since been withdrawn; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Congress passed the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act banking reform bill that recognizes PACE as a tax assessment and directs the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to develop rules in consultation with state and local governments that ensure consumers have the ability to pay their residential PACE financing obligations; and

WHEREAS, in December 2024, CFPB [finalized the rule](#), which applies existing residential mortgage protections to PACE loans, failing to recognize that locally-administered Residential PACE programs differ from traditional creditor-borrower relationships and should therefore be treated differently.

90 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that locally-administered PACE programs
91 operating in accord with state and federal guidelines are a safe and sound investment of public
92 and private funds; and
93

94 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that locally-administered PACE programs represent an
95 essential contribution of local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote
96 renewable energy; and
97

98 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the National League of Cities (NLC) urges FHFA to
99 reconsider the 2010 guidance that prohibits government-sponsored entities from purchasing
100 mortgages with a PACE assessment and to work with local governments seeking to establish
101 PACE programs that benefit from the same senior lien status of all other projects that are funded
102 through municipal assessments that improve private property and meet public policy objectives;
103 and
104

105 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the CFPB to work with local governments to
106 revise regulations to clearly reaffirm the right of state and local governments to exercise liens or
107 assess special taxes or other property obligations to protect and improve housing stock for the
108 public good, including energy efficiency improvements, and establish underwriting standards that
109 are consistent with guidelines previously issued by the U.S. Department of Energy for PACE
110 financing programs or by implementing any other appropriate measure.

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-12

2
3 SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR
4 CHANGING CLIMATE AND EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

5
6 [NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

7
8 WHEREAS, across the country local governments are experiencing the devastating effects
9 associated with a changing climate and extreme weather events, such as heat waves, droughts,
10 heavy downpours, floods, hurricanes, [wildfires](#) and changes in other storms bring attention to the
11 need for cities, towns and villages to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to these events; and
12

13 WHEREAS, these challenges are larger than individual communities can address on their own,
14 making it beneficial to coordinate regionally and across levels of government; and
15

16 WHEREAS, while all regions of the country are impacted by climate change, [approximately 40](#)
17 [percent](#) of the U.S. population—129 million people—live in coastal communities that are
18 threatened by rising sea levels, which could impact economic development, land availability,
19 property values, insurance rates, beaches and tourism, and critical water, transportation and
20 energy infrastructure; and
21

22 WHEREAS, the [Fifth National Climate Assessment](#) reports that the effects of human-caused
23 climate change are already far-reaching and worsening across every region of the United States,
24 and concludes that without rapid and deep reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions from
25 human activity, the risks of accelerating climate impacts will continue to grow; and
26

27 WHEREAS, the effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with growing impacts
28 to the [U.S. Department of Defense \(DoD\)](#) strategies, plans, capabilities, missions, equipment and
29 installations and the DoD must be able to adapt to current and future operations to address the
30 impacts of a variety of threats and conditions, including those from weather and natural events;
31 and
32

33 WHEREAS, a 2018 report by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) indicates
34 that limiting global warming to 1.5° C is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change,
35 however, the [2023 IPCC](#) finds that there is a more than 50 percent chance that global
36 temperature rise will reach or surpass 1.5° C by 2040 or sooner; and
37

38 WHEREAS, climate change and extreme weather events have severe impacts on local and
39 regional infrastructure, economies and fiscal conditions, public safety, national security, public
40 health, population migration, natural landscapes, water resources and environmental quality; and
41

42 WHEREAS, climate change and extreme weather events pose an especially pressing threat to
43 persons with disabilities, economically disadvantaged households, the elderly, Black, Indigenous
44 and People of Color (BIPOC), and other vulnerable and underrepresented populations because
45 these populations are often most affected by and least able to prepare in advance, respond to or
46 recover from extreme weather events; and

47
48 **WHEREAS**, the capability of maintaining energy availability is a first order priority in
49 maintaining critical infrastructure and building community resilience; and
50

51 **WHEREAS**, there is currently insufficient information, technical coordination and financial
52 assessment of the costs and mechanisms to rapidly retrofit and redesign local energy systems to
53 enable them to be more resilient to a range of potential disruptive events, such as extreme
54 weather, terrorism and energy price escalation; and
55

56 **WHEREAS**, the United States has seen ~~42603~~ [separate billion-dollar-plus weather and climate](#)
57 [disasters](#) from 1980 to 20254, including 238 in 20253 and 27 in 2024, with a cumulative cost
58 ~~of exceeding \$3.12-918~~ trillion (CPI-adjusted) and a total death toll of ~~+6,944~~ 17,194; and
59

Commented [CB1]: Links have been updated to Climate Central as opposed to NOAA

60 **WHEREAS**, [2023 set a new annual record](#) with 28 billion-dollar-plus weather or climate events,
61 shattering the previous record of 22 events in 2020; and
62

63 **WHEREAS**, in [2005 Hurricane Katrina](#) led to 1,833 deaths and more than \$2070 billion (CPI-
64 adjusted) in losses and in [2012 Hurricane Sandy](#) led to 159 deaths and more than \$9188.5 billion
65 in damages (CPI-adjusted); and
66

67 **WHEREAS**, in [2017 three Category 4 hurricanes](#)—Harvey, Irma and Maria—made landfall in
68 Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico, respectively totaling more than \$339 billion (CPI-adjusted) in
69 damages and a death toll of 3,167, including 2,981 from Hurricane Maria alone and in [2024](#)
70 [Hurricane Helene](#) caused ~~\$81.978.7~~ billion (CPI-adjusted) in damages and resulted in 219
71 deaths; and
72

73 **WHEREAS**, in [2022 historic flooding](#) brought devastating damage to eastern Kentucky and
74 eastern Missouri homes, businesses and infrastructure, resulting in 42 deaths and \$1.6 billion (CPI-
75 adjusted) in economic costs and in [2023 drought and heatwave conditions](#) impacted numerous
76 southern and midwestern states, resulting in 247 deaths and ~~\$14.8~~ 15.3 billion (CPI-adjusted) in
77 economic losses; and
78

79 **WHEREAS**, [rising temperatures](#) are lengthening the wildfire season and increasing drought
80 risks, causing more radical fire behavior and increasing wildfire risks throughout the United
81 States due to earlier snow melts and forests that are drier longer, [the costs of putting out wildfires](#)
82 has increased dramatically, from approximately \$673.4 million in 1985 to over \$3.1 billion in
83 2023 ([2023 dollars](#)), and the economic losses associated with wildfire continues to grow, with the
84 [2018 western wildfires costing over \\$310 billion \(CPI-adjusted\)](#), ~~and the 2020 western wildfires,~~
85 [the most active fire season on record, costing over \\$2019.9 billion \(CPI-adjusted\)](#), and the 2025
86 [Los Angeles wildfire costing over \\$61 billion \(CPI-adjusted\)](#); and
87

88 **WHEREAS**, [Congress approved](#) over \$100 billion in disaster supplemental funding in 2005,
89 over \$50 billion in disaster supplemental funding in 2018, 2020 and 2021 each, and ~~a total of~~
90 ~~over approximately \$3044~~ billion in disaster relief in FY ~~2523~~ (FY23 dollars); and
91

WHEREAS, several insurance companies have increased existing premiums, cancelled homeowner policies or stopped offering new policies in some states because of rising costs and losses from extreme weather events such as hurricanes and wildfires, which impacts the ability of residents and local governments to recover and rebuild from disasters and increases insurance costs for residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the [past ten years \(2016-2025\)](#) are the ten warmest years on record, with [2024 being the warmest year on record](#), followed by 2023 (second warmest) 2014 (third warmest), 2020 (fourth warmest), and 2019 (fifth warmest); and

WHEREAS, as extreme weather events become more common, local governments in all geographic and climatic regions require resources to assist them in anticipating, preparing for and adapting to these events; and

WHEREAS, preparedness response programs provide financial assistance to accelerate the development of adaptive success models and provide far-reaching damage prevention initiatives that would help reduce the ultimate financial pressure on the federal government; and

WHEREAS, local governments are first responders – preparing in advance of emergency situations, offering immediate assistance to those impacted, and identifying strategies, solutions, and partnerships to address situations quickly and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, taking action now to adapt to a changing environment and create community resilience will help save lives, strengthen local economies, save taxpayer dollars and build preparedness for future events; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 the President’s Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience comprised of state, local and tribal leaders, including representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC) made recommendations to the President on ways the federal government can assist local efforts to address and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 makes significant progress toward strengthening infrastructure and communities against extreme weather events by investing in pre-disaster mitigation and flood, wildfire and drought mitigation and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 provides additional funding and incentives for climate and clean energy goals, and additional federal policies, funding and resources are needed to support local governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to partner with local governments and to support local action on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC urges Congress and the Administration to take urgent action to help states and local governments conduct vulnerability assessments, develop and implement long-term mitigation, adaptation and resiliency action plans relying on forward-looking climate metrics, and identify innovative financing opportunities to implement these

138 assessments and plans in order to prepare, plan for and more quickly recover from extreme
139 weather events; and
140
141 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to
142 recognize the unique risks and opportunities communities face and to offer customized tools and
143 incentives to local governments to encourage communities to plan for and rapidly respond to the
144 effects of climate change and extreme weather; and
145
146 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop a national
147 strategy to assist communities in integrating the risks of climate change and extreme weather
148 events into emergency management planning and responses to identify and quantify the
149 economic value of regional infrastructure at risk under different scenarios; and
150
151 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to work with state and
152 local governments, the insurance industry, and other stakeholders to develop an incentive-based
153 disaster insurance and mitigation system that would encourage property owners to retrofit
154 existing structures to reduce future losses from natural disasters; and
155
156 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to provide incentives
157 for rebuilding infrastructure and buildings following natural disaster in a manner that will protect
158 communities against future natural disasters; and
159
160 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to outline strategies
161 and actions to reduce the vulnerability of federal programs to the impacts of climate change and
162 extreme weather; and
163
164 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to better align
165 federal funding with local preparedness and resilience-building efforts; and
166
167 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to fully fund grant programs that
168 help local governments prepare, respond and recover from climate change and extreme weather
169 events, including preparedness and response programs to support local governments that are at
170 the forefront of developing adaptive solutions; and
171
172 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop grant and
173 technical assistance programs to enable communities to develop community energy transition
174 plans that ensure the capability of cities to maintain critical energy and infrastructure during
175 disruptions to local, regional or national energy infrastructure; and
176
177 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that federal investments in communities must prioritize those
178 communities that have been historically neglected or are economically constrained, which are
179 disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change; and
180
181 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports federal incentives for all generators and
182 owners and operators of transmission systems to develop and expand grid infrastructure,
183 consistent with current environmental regulations and laws and including a short- and long-term

Commented [CB2]: From Deb Calvert: Is it federal programs or municipalities or both?

Commented [CB2R2]: Carolyn - I think the original intent of the language was to call on the Fed. Gov. to include climate resilience strategies and actions as key components or eligible uses of all federal programs.

184 assessment of greenhouse gas emissions, so the nation's national transmission grid remains
185 reliable and resilient; and

186
187 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop a national
188 pilot project initiative to conduct detailed assessments and designs for resilient city energy
189 system retrofit and redesign across a range of different regions and city sizes.

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-13

2
3 SUPPORTING URGENT ACTION TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS AND
4 MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

5
6 [NLC Staff Recommendation: X]

7
8 WHEREAS, climate change mitigation is a global problem that demands a global solution; and

9
10 WHEREAS, the [Fifth National Climate Assessment](#) reports that the effects of human-caused
11 climate change are already far-reaching and worsening across every region of the United States,
12 and concludes that without rapid and deep reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions from
13 human activity, the risks of accelerating climate impacts will continue to grow; and

14
15 WHEREAS, a [2018 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) indicates
16 that limiting global warming to 1.5° C is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change,
17 however, the [2023 IPCC](#) finds that there is a more than 50 percent chance that global
18 temperature rise will reach or surpass 1.5° C by 2040 or sooner; and

19
20 WHEREAS, extreme heat will have more serious health consequences on outdoor workers and
21 those in unairconditioned spaces and people living in low-income communities, communities of
22 color, and tribal communities, and people in these communities are often disproportionately
23 impacted by high rates of underlying health conditions, which can be exacerbated by extreme
24 heat; and

25
26 WHEREAS, these same vulnerable populations also face dramatically [higher energy burdens](#)—
27 spending a greater portion of their income on energy bills—than the average household; and

28
29 WHEREAS, according to the [American Lung Association's 2025 State of the Air report](#), nearly
30 46 percent or 156.1 million people live in communities with unhealthy levels of ozone or particle
31 pollution; and

32
33 WHEREAS, while some impacts of climate change are inevitable, sharp reductions in
34 greenhouse gas emissions will reduce the severity of the impacts and limit the rate of climate
35 change; and

36
37 WHEREAS, in order to meet the carbon emissions reductions goals necessary to help mitigate
38 the effects of climate change on communities, improving energy efficiency, increasing energy
39 conservation and deploying carbon-free and renewable energy systems will be essential at the
40 local, state and federal levels; and

41
42 WHEREAS, nuclear power will be a necessary component of the carbon-neutral energy
43 portfolio for the coming decades; and

44
45 WHEREAS, improving energy efficiency, increasing energy conservation and deploying
46 renewable energy systems will save taxpayer dollars, boost the national and local economy,

Commented [CB3]: From Deb Calvert - will it be necessary?

enhance national security, increase our nation’s energy independence and improve environmental quality; and

WHEREAS, technology exists and continues to be developed that will help families, businesses and communities reduce energy use, such as through the Energy Star program, but without standards or incentives to encourage domestic manufacturing or adoption of new technology, many of these options will be unavailable or unaffordable; and

WHEREAS, the [transportation sector](#) generates the largest share of direct greenhouse gas emissions, 28 percent of 2022 greenhouse gas emissions, in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the building sector accounts for nearly 37 percent of the nation’s [total energy consumption](#) in 2023, 75 percent of all [electricity used](#) in the U.S. and 31 percent of the nation’s 2022 [indirect greenhouse gas emissions](#), which includes electricity end-use; and

WHEREAS, [indoor and outdoor lighting](#) account for 6 percent of electricity consumed in the nation, and rapid conversion to efficient lighting would result in significant greenhouse gas reductions as well as a decrease in base load energy needs; and

WHEREAS, communities large and small nationwide are laboratories of innovation and are taking action on climate mitigation, including adopting greenhouse gas reduction goals, successfully pioneering and demonstrating cost-effective clean energy solutions, and pursuing local strategies that create jobs, save energy and taxpayer dollars, and promote renewable sources; and

WHEREAS, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) helps local governments undertake projects to reduce energy use, diversify energy supplies and improve air quality and the environment; and

WHEREAS, all levels of government must work to become more resilient by achieving greater energy independence based on a multi-pronged strategy of aggressively expanding renewable energy, significantly increasing energy efficiency portfolio standards and creating new financing mechanisms; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 the President’s Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, comprised of state, local and tribal leaders, including representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC), made recommendations to the President on ways the federal government can assist local efforts to address and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 makes significant progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout the transportation sector and investing in clean energy and energy efficiency and conservation and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 provides additional funding, tax credits and incentives for climate and clean energy goals, and additional federal policies, funding and resources are needed to support local governments; and

93 **WHEREAS**, because of these investments and the decline in capital costs, [renewable energy](#)
94 accounted for approximately 90 percent of new installed generation capacity in the U.S. in 2024,
95 bringing the total renewable energy capacity up to 358.9 gigawatts—representing 30 percent of
96 the country’s large-scale power generating capacity and 25 percent of power supply; and
97
98 **WHEREAS**, while [renewable electricity](#) generation capacity in the U.S. is projected to grow
99 continuously in the coming decades, the rate is variable depending on market developments; and
100
101 **WHEREAS**, [U.S. data center power demand](#) is forecasted to more than double by 2035, rising
102 from almost 35 gigawatts in 2024 to 78 gigawatts and energy consumption growth is project to
103 rise at an even steeper rate, with average hourly electricity demand nearly tripling from 16
104 gigawatt-hours in 2024 to 49 gigawatt hours by 2035.
105
106 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration
107 to partner with local governments, to support local action on climate change mitigation, and to
108 provide essential tools, research, technology development, data and funding, as well as workforce
109 development, job training and community assistance, to help local governments achieve their
110 greenhouse gas reduction targets and transition to a clean energy economy; and
111
112 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that federal investments in communities must prioritize those
113 communities that have been historically neglected or are economically constrained, which are
114 disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change; and
115
116 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges Congress and the Administration to take urgent
117 action to reduce carbon emissions across a broad sector of the economy and become carbon
118 neutral to mitigate the effects of climate change; and
119
120 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports the U.S.’s engagement in the Paris Climate
121 Agreement and calls on Congress to position the U.S. as a climate leader and adopt nationwide
122 greenhouse gas emission goals and policies that exceed the IPCC 1.5°C targets of 45 percent
123 emissions reduction from 2010 levels by 2030 and **net zero** by 2050, and to encourage other
124 countries to adopt these same goals; and
125
126 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports efforts to increase the CAFE standards or
127 fuel efficiency for all types of vehicles; and
128
129 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to protect and promote
130 other energy efficient consumer products, such as appliances, through incentives and labeling
131 programs, such as Energy Star; and
132
133 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to pass a national renewable
134 portfolio standard that increases the use of carbon neutral energy and promotes energy efficiency,
135 with the goal of at least 50 percent carbon neutral energy by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050 or
136 sooner; and
137

138 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC encourages the federal government to develop
139 policies that facilitate the necessary deployment of electric infrastructure in an expedited manner
140 to support clean energy goals; and
141

142 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that these federal policies should ensure that the benefits of
143 renewable energy and energy efficiency are shared equitably, with special attention on low-
144 income, disadvantaged and other vulnerable and underrepresented populations, and that the
145 siting of such electric infrastructure should not inequitably burden these populations; and
146

147 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the federal government should provide tools, resources,
148 technical assistance and funding to local governments to support streamlining local permitting
149 processes that reduce soft costs and barriers to support local deployment of renewable energy
150 and public and private electric vehicle infrastructure; and
151

152 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NLC recognizes the need for an effective network of
153 energy grid infrastructure to help the nation achieve a clean energy future and urges the federal
154 government to partner and consult with local governments to encourage policies that address
155 barriers to electric infrastructure development and support an efficient process for infrastructure
156 interconnection, siting and permitting, including a short- and long-term assessment of
157 greenhouse gas emissions; and
158

159 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to reauthorize and fully fund the
160 EECBG or other funding structure at the U.S. Department of Energy to further incentivize clean
161 energy at the local level; and
162

163 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports long-term extensions of the investment tax
164 credit and the production tax credit for clean energy as an incentive for their development and
165 deployment and urges Congress and the Administration to reinstate the clean energy tax credits
166 available to local governments through the Elective Pay provision of the Inflation Reduction Act.

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-14

2
3 ADDRESSING LEAD CONTAMINATION AND CALLING FOR NATIONWIDE
4 FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

5
6 [NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

7
8 WHEREAS, access to clean drinking water is fundamental to the health and well-being of
9 America's communities and families; and

10
11 WHEREAS, the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) estimates there are ~~9.2~~ 4 million
12 lead service lines across the country, ~~not including lead connectors or goosenecks~~; and

13
14 WHEREAS, lead has negative and long-term neurological effects, particularly in infants and
15 children; and

16
17 WHEREAS, corrosion control and testing are essential to prevent lead from leaching into
18 drinking water and endangering public health; and

19
20 WHEREAS, a recent analysis by the [American Water Works Association](#) estimates the average
21 cost for a full replacement of a lead service line is \$12,500, which is significantly higher than
22 EPA's cost estimate of \$6,154 in the Final Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, indicating that the
23 total cost of replacing the nation's ~~9.2~~ 4 million lead service lines to be ~~upward of~~
24 ~~\$100~~ ~~approximately~~ \$50 billion under the requirements from EPA's Lead and Copper Rule
25 Improvements (LCRI); and

26
27 WHEREAS, local governments are already taking action to address lead service lines in their
28 communities and to comply with [EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions](#), finalized in 2021,
29 which required all community water systems and non-transient non-community water systems,
30 such as schools, to complete an inventory of lead pipes by October 16, 2024; and

31
32 WHEREAS, the [LCRI](#), finalized in 2024, requires public water systems to replace all lead
33 service lines by 2037 with limited exceptions, among other requirements; and

34
35 WHEREAS, there is a need to invest in our aging water infrastructure nationwide and a failure to
36 do so can have negative public health consequences; and

37
38 WHEREAS, EPA estimates the nation's [clean water](#) and [drinking water](#) infrastructure capital
39 needs over the next 20 years to be approximately \$1.255 trillion in total, the [American Society](#)
40 [for Civil Engineers](#) estimates that over the next 10 years, \$1 trillion of additional investments are
41 needed to reach a state of good repair for drinking water, wastewater and stormwater
42 infrastructure, and ~~other~~ ~~Value of Water Campaign~~ estimates ~~put~~ the cost at more than \$3.44
43 trillion ~~over the next 20 years~~ to ~~maintain repair~~ and build a 21st century water system; and
44

45 **WHEREAS**, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, which expires on
46 Sept. 30, 2026, provided federal funding for lead service line replacement projects, and additional
47 federal funding is needed to fully replace all lead service lines in the country.
48

49 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls on
50 Congress and the Administration to reauthorize and support robust funding for all water
51 infrastructure financing mechanisms, including the Clean Water and Drinking Water State
52 Revolving Loan Fund programs and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act
53 (WIFIA); and
54

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to support
56 other mechanisms of infrastructure financing, including protecting the tax-exempt status of
57 municipal bonds and reinstating the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds; and
58

59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to provide
60 direct grants to local governments, as well as school systems and daycare centers, for the
61 replacement of lead service lines, testing, inventories, planning, corrosion control and public
62 education campaigns, and to assist small and disadvantaged communities in complying with the
63 Safe Drinking Water Act; and
64

65 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges EPA to provide communities with a longer
66 compliance schedule for meeting the requirements of the LCRI, particularly in cases where system
67 operators employ proper corrosion control to prevent direct human exposure, and to provide
68 additional flexibility for communities to maintain water affordability for residents.

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-15

2
3 INCREASE FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

4
5 [NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

6
7 WHEREAS, the nation's water infrastructure systems, both built and natural, are significant
8 assets that protect public health and the nation's water resources, and well-maintained systems
9 are essential to the general welfare of communities and residents and the nation's prosperity; and

10
11 WHEREAS, with much of our nation's physical water infrastructure built in the post-World War
12 II period – and some of it more than 100 years old – there are an [estimated](#) 240,000 water main
13 breaks each year; and

14
15 WHEREAS, many urban and rural communities have underserved or unserved areas, with no
16 community water system or private system; and

17
18 WHEREAS, cities, towns and villages nationwide are finding that [decentralized water solutions](#)
19 such as water use efficiency measures and green stormwater installations can effectively and
20 affordably serve many of the same functions as conventional water infrastructure and can
21 supplement and extend their existing centralized systems; and

22
23 WHEREAS, local governments fund over 98 percent of all capital, operations and maintenance
24 investment in drinking water, wastewater and sewer infrastructure, investing over \$2.38 trillion
25 between 1993-2019 (not adjusted for inflation) and [approximately \\$171 billion in 2023 alone;](#)
26 and

27
28 WHEREAS, tax-exempt municipal bonds are the primary funding mechanism for state and local
29 government infrastructure projects with [three-quarters](#) of the total United States investment in
30 infrastructure being accomplished with tax-exempt financing; and

31
32 WHEREAS, an economic analysis by the [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) shows a water-
33 related infrastructure investment gap of \$1 trillion over 10 years for drinking water, wastewater
34 and stormwater combined [and the Value of Water Campaign estimates that at current spending](#)
35 [levels, the country will face a capital investment gap of \\$1.8 trillion by 2044—an annual](#)
36 [shortfall of \\$88 billion;](#) and

37
38 WHEREAS, this funding gap does not include anticipated expenditures to comply with new
39 Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act mandates, consent decrees, new responsibilities
40 and costs relating to water security and source water protection, additional needs for re-use of
41 treated effluent, or impacts due to climate change; and

42
43 WHEREAS, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), [which expires](#)
44 [on Sept. 30, 2026,](#) provided a significant boost in federal funding for drinking water and
45 wastewater infrastructure, but not enough to close the needs gap; and

WHEREAS, aside from the IJA, federal spending on loan and grant assistance to local governments to assist in maintaining and upgrading water infrastructure systems has [continued to decline](#) in real dollars over the past decades; and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of municipal water infrastructure financial resources are spent to comply with new complex federal mandates, leaving many critical ~~maintenance, repair and rehabilitation~~[long-term capital project](#) needs unmet; and

WHEREAS, public-private partnerships can provide options for communities to access sources of private capital to meet water infrastructure needs, but are not viable for all communities or all types of projects; and

WHEREAS, private activity bonds or tax-exempt facility bonds are a form of tax-exempt financing that can be used for water infrastructure projects that utilize private capital instead of public debt and shift the risk and long-term obligation from the municipality to the private equity partner; and

WHEREAS, Congress provides to states a capped annual allocation (“volume cap”) of tax-exempt bonds private activity bonds, based on population, but historically, most of the tax-exempt private activity bonds are [issued to short-term projects](#) such as housing and education loans; and

WHEREAS, Congress has previously enacted legislation eliminating the state volume cap for ~~such~~ municipal infrastructure projects such as airports, landfills, and ports; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the state volume cap for water is [estimated](#) to make available ~~up to~~ [\\$5.6](#) billion in private capital for water projects, while the cost in foregone revenue to the federal government is nominal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) continues to urge Congress and the Administration to reverse the decline in federal financial participation in funding municipal water infrastructure needs, particularly in disadvantaged communities that have historically been under-invested in, by developing a financial option that strikes the right balance between local responsibility and federal assistance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to ~~reauthorize and~~ support robust funding for water infrastructure financing through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should provide full appropriation to the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development programs for loans and loan guarantees for water infrastructure projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should provide direct funding to local governments through grant programs such as for sewer overflow and stormwater management, lead service line replacement, water infrastructure resilience/sustainability to protect and reduce

93 risk to extreme weather events, water recycling and desalinization, new/emerging technologies for
94 cybersecurity improvements and water efficiency, workforce development in the water sector,
95 emerging contaminants and other programs; and
96

97 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Congress should exempt from federal taxation rebates
98 issued to consumers by local governments to pay for consumer-installed decentralized water
99 infrastructure that benefits their communities; and
100

101 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports legislation removing the federal volume cap
102 on tax-exempt private activity bonds for water and wastewater infrastructure projects; and
103

104 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to support
105 other mechanisms of infrastructure financing, including protecting the tax-exempt status of
106 municipal bonds and reinstating the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds; and
107

108 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Congressionally Directed Spending for water
109 infrastructure projects through the State Revolving Funds should be in addition to the baseline
110 amount, rather than off the top; and
111

112 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Congress and the Administration should enact new
113 legislation which provides adequate and reliable long-term funding for municipal water
114 infrastructure needs to help close the funding gap.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-16

SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATED PLANNING AND NEW AFFORDABILITY
CONSIDERATION FOR WATER

[NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

WHEREAS, in 2012 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued its [Integrated Municipal Stormwater and Wastewater Planning Approach Framework](#) (“Integrated Planning Framework”), which was intended to help local governments seek more efficient and affordable solutions to stormwater and wastewater issues and meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in a more flexible, affordable and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 EPA issued its [Financial Capability Assessment Framework for Municipal Clean Water Act Requirements](#) (“Financial Capability Framework”), which allows the consideration of additional information, such as socio-economic factors, in determining the financial capability of residents and a community when developing compliance schedules for municipal projects necessary to meet CWA obligations; and

WHEREAS, these two policy frameworks demonstrate an awareness by EPA of the challenges local governments face in meeting CWA requirements, as well as the conflicts they face in balancing environmental protection with economic feasibility; and

WHEREAS, a 2017 report from the [National Academy of Public Administration](#) found that EPA’s reliance on two percent of Median Household Income to determine a community’s financial capability puts an unfair and oppressive financial burden on low and middle-income residents, and recommend changes to EPA’s procedure for evaluating ratepayer affordability and utility financial capability; and

WHEREAS, ~~in 2023 EPA’s issued~~ revised [Financial Capability Assessment Guidance \(finalized in 2023 and revised in 2024\)](#) ~~to~~ replaces the “Combined Sewer Overflows—Guidance for Financial Capability Assessment and Schedule Development” (Feb. 1997), ~~but which leaves~~ the two percent Median Household Income metric in place; and

WHEREAS, taking a [One Water](#) approach to water resource management means that “all water has value and should be managed in a sustainable, inclusive, integrated way” and requires balancing water equity, water access and water affordability; and

WHEREAS, at a time where local financial resources are increasingly limited and the ability of local governments to raise revenue is also limited, local governments are facing costly unfunded federal and state regulatory requirements forcing them to make tough decisions about the services and ~~long-term~~ maintenance ~~and capital projects~~ that they can afford; and

WHEREAS, local water and sewer rates and stormwater fees are rapidly becoming unaffordable for many fixed- and low-income citizens, placing a disproportionate financial burden on these vulnerable populations who live at or below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, the current reliance on two percent of median household income for wastewater and combined sewer overflows controls is a misleading indicator of a community's ability to pay, and often places a particularly high burden on residents at the lower end of the economic scale; and

WHEREAS, green infrastructure, such as constructed swales, wetlands, green roofs, infiltration planters, rain gardens, cisterns, and enhanced floodplains and riparian buffers through nature-based solutions, augmented by permeable pavers, rain barrels and trees, is a valuable part of water infrastructure systems and provides a multitude of community benefits such as helping local governments manage runoff, extending the life of local infrastructure, saving the city and taxpayers money, providing outdoor recreation opportunities through parks and green spaces and promoting the joint use of city and school facilities, and serve as an economic development tool; and

WHEREAS, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits are increasingly stringent, the treatment technologies and approaches necessary to meet permit limits have become exceedingly expensive and time-intensive to implement, and project construction timelines for clean water infrastructure projects can extend more than a decade.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls on EPA to work with local governments to develop local integrated plans through the permit process to comprehensively and collectively manage wastewater and stormwater needs, prioritize investments in wet weather overflows and flooding, incorporate green infrastructure components, and to ease the burden of unfunded mandates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on EPA to share integrated planning best management practices, including those that take a regional watershed approach, from across the country with all communities that are interested in pursuing an integrated planning approach; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress to modernize the NPDES permitting process and pass legislation to allow states with delegated authority to administer the NPDES permitting program to issue permits of up to ten years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on EPA to work with local governments to revise the ~~February 2024~~²⁰²³ Financial Capability Assessment Guidance to eliminate reliance on median household income as the critical metric for determining investment level and to allow for the consideration of additional information, such as socio-economic factors, consistent with the Agency's 2014 Financial Capability Framework; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on the federal government to assess the effectiveness and consider extending the Low Income Home Water Assistance program, which provides ratepayer assistance to offset water bills and arrearages of qualifying customers, as a means of addressing water affordability.

1 NLC RESOLUTION 2026-17

2
3 CALLING ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS
4 PFAS CONTAMINATION

5
6 [NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

7
8 WHEREAS, Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of nearly 5,000 man-made
9 chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, PFBS and GenX manufactured and used in a variety of
10 industries; and

11
12 WHEREAS, PFAS chemicals are known as “forever” chemicals because they are persistent in
13 the environment and in the human body; and

14
15 WHEREAS, PFAS chemicals have been known to cause [adverse health outcomes](#) in humans
16 including effects on prenatal development, low infant birth weights, early onset of puberty,
17 negative effects on the immune system, cancer, liver damage and thyroid disruption; and

18
19 WHEREAS, while science predicts that the entire class of PFAS chemical may be associated
20 with adverse health effects and many such chemicals are in industrial and commercial use, only a
21 small fraction of these chemicals have been investigated sufficiently to establish quantitative
22 measures of toxicity; and

23
24 WHEREAS, in 2021 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a [PFAS](#)
25 [Strategic Roadmap](#) that outlines a comprehensive nationwide action plan for addressing PFAS,
26 including identifying both short-term solutions for addressing these chemicals and long-term
27 strategies that will help states, tribes and local communities provide clean and safe drinking water
28 to residents and address PFAS at the source—before it gets into the water; and

29
30 WHEREAS, in April 2024, EPA finalized a [National Drinking Water Regulation](#) and set an
31 enforceable Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for PFOA and PFOS of 4 parts per trillion, set
32 a MCL of 10 parts per trillion for three other PFAS chemicals and established a hazard index for
33 four additional PFAS chemicals under the Safe Drinking Water Act; and

34
35 WHEREAS, PFAS contamination is found in local water supplies obtained from both rivers and
36 groundwater and in soil at and around military bases, airports, manufacturing sites, landfills and
37 farmland; and

38
39 WHEREAS, the [Environmental Working Group](#) maintains an interactive map of known
40 contamination of communities from PFAS, which as of ~~June 2025~~ [March 2026](#) shows ~~9,323~~ [9,728](#)
41 locations in 50 states, DC and four territories with known contamination; and

42
43 WHEREAS, in October 2024, the [United States Geological Survey](#) published results on analysis
44 for 24 PFAS compounds from 1,238 groundwater samples across the continental U.S. that
45 detected PFAS in 37 percent of groundwater samples, indicating that more than 20 percent of the

country's population may rely on groundwater that contains detectable amounts of PFAS for their drinking water supplies; and

WHEREAS, PFAS chemicals were widely used in firefighting foams, particularly for airports, and were used in frequent training exercises at military air bases, and [firefighter turnout gear](#) has been found to contain PFAS chemicals; and

WHEREAS, PFAS chemicals were required in firefighting foams used at airports to meet federal performance standards for extinguishing agents, but in September 2023 the [Federal Aviation Administration](#) announced that fluorine-free foam products had become available that met Military Specification, providing an option for airports to discontinue their use of PFAS-containing aqueous film-forming foam; and

WHEREAS, the [2020 National Defense Authorization Act](#) requires the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to phase out its use of the foam by October 2024, but ~~the DOD~~ [has exercised a one-year waiver to](#) extended the [deadline](#) to October 2026~~5~~; and

WHEREAS, local governments are responsible for protecting the health, safety and welfare of residents, including providing clean and safe water; and

WHEREAS, there are significant technical challenges in detecting, measuring and removing PFAS in water and other environmental media at the levels set by EPA, and analytical methodologies are still under development or are not yet generally available; and

WHEREAS, while treatment technology for removing PFAS from water is not well-developed, the more effective methods use technologies that are not conventionally available in existing water treatment plants, so removing these PFAS chemicals from water ~~will~~[could](#) require costly investments by local governments and other local water suppliers, which would be passed onto ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, in April 2024 EPA [finalized a rulemaking](#) to designate PFOS and PFOA as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), which will have huge cost and liability implications for local governments, and is undergoing a [separate rulemaking](#) to designate additional PFAS chemicals under CERCLA; and

WHEREAS, PFAS contamination not only poses health risks, but also economic impacts on communities, including in the agriculture and fishing industries by contamination of food sources; and

WHEREAS, a number of states have adopted PFAS policies pertaining to prohibiting use, monitoring, notification and reporting, cleanup, health studies, testing, liability provisions and contamination limits; and

~~WHEREAS, a number of bills have been introduced in both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to address PFAS contamination by providing new resources at the federal, state and local levels for the detection, reduction, destruction and remediation of PFAS chemicals; and~~

WHEREAS, local governments are owners and operators of airports, landfills and water utilities and employ firefighters, some of whom may have been exposed to PFAS chemicals on the job through inhalation or skin absorption, and therefore present a pension and liability concern for local budgets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls on Congress and the Administration to holistically examine PFAS contamination and to take comprehensive action to address the problem and reduce public health risk, by providing new resources for federal, state and local governments for the detection, reduction, destruction and remediation of PFAS chemicals, including through nationwide testing, monitoring, mapping, public education and water supply treatment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on the federal government to ensure that the parties responsible for PFAS contamination, including the federal government but excluding local governments, are held fully liable for costs of cleanup and mitigation and to ensure that sites are cleaned up in a timely manner and to standards sufficiently stringent to permit reuse of the site and to obviate the need for additional cleanup and mitigation costs by affected local governments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on Congress to pass legislation that provides local governments that did not cause or contribute to PFAS contamination with liability protection under CERCLA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government should incentivize and support research and development for extended producer responsibility programs to prevent pollution of waterways, drinking and source water, and soil contamination and to address the life cycle environmental impacts of PFAS chemicals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local governments, including municipal airports and fire departments, were required by federal law to use firefighting foam containing PFAS chemicals, and therefore should not be held liable for PFAS contamination or cleanup costs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that local governments, including drinking water and wastewater utilities and municipal landfills, serve as passive receivers of PFAS chemicals and did not cause or contribute to contamination, and therefore should not be held liable for PFAS contamination or cleanup costs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLC calls on the federal government to accelerate research and technology development to advance the science needed to understand the health consequences of exposure to PFAS chemicals, detect and measure PFAS chemicals in water and other environmental media, treat water supplies to remove these substances, and find safe substitutes for PFAS chemicals; and

136
137 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls for the federal government to avoid passing
138 costs onto local ratepayers and to provide direct grants and technical assistance to communities
139 for testing, monitoring, treatment, infrastructure improvements, mapping, public education and
140 pursuit of alternative water supplies if necessary; and
141

142 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to provide funding
143 to farms and farmers for PFAS testing and remediation of property, wells, surface water,
144 livestock and crops, as well as liability protection, related to application of biosolids from
145 wastewater treatment operations; and
146

147 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to aggressively
148 prevent further pollution, contamination and exposure to PFAS through multiple means, including
149 promoting and funding the development and use of non-toxic fire retardant alternatives, banning
150 PFAS-containing aqueous film-forming foam and the phasing out the use of PFAS and other
151 long-chain chemicals in products as soon as possible; and
152

153 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the federal government should thoroughly study and test
154 current and future alternative PFAS and other long-chain chemicals before they are put into
155 circulation to make sure they are safe; and
156

157 ~~**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC should update the “Assessing the State Firefighter~~
158 ~~Cancer Presumption Laws and Current Cancer Firefighter Cancer Research” that it conducted in~~
159 ~~2009 to determine what linkages there are between firefighting and an elevated incidence of~~
160 ~~cancer.~~

Commented [CB4]: From Deb Calvert - And biosolids should be tested prior to application on farmland at all.

Commented [CB4R2]: Carolyn - see Policy Section 2.05 Water Quality and Supply, F. Water Pollution Control, 2. Conservation and Reuse for language on beneficial use of municipal sewage sludge: <https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/2026-National-Municipal-Policy-3.31.2026.pdf>

Commented [CB4R3]: Carolyn - if we want to add “testing” before application, perhaps add it to the policy section.

1 **NLC RESOLUTION 2026-18**

2
3 **IMPROVE THE BENEFIT-COST ANALYSIS FOR FEDERALLY FUNDED FLOOD**
4 **CONTROL PROJECTS AND SUPPORT BENEFICIAL REUSE OF DREDGED**
5 **MATERIAL**

6
7 **[NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]**
8

9 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) at the U.S. Department of
10 Defense has responsibilities for development and maintenance of waterways and harbors and for
11 other water resource projects across the nation, and is the primary federal agency associated with
12 the design and construction of flood risk reduction projects across the country; and
13

14 **WHEREAS**, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) works with the Army
15 Corps to determine what water resource projects are funded with the budget allocation for the
16 Army Corps enacted by Congress each year; and
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the Army Corps and OMB rely heavily on a benefit-cost analysis to determine
19 which projects receive federal funding each year; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, since Congress traditionally provides the Army Corps with far fewer resources than
22 are necessary to fund the significant backlog of projects under their jurisdiction, the benefit-cost
23 analysis has become a de facto filter for the Army Corps and OMB; and
24

25 **WHEREAS**, as a result, projects that have a benefit-cost ratio below a certain level are often not
26 considered for funding at all; and
27

28 **WHEREAS**, the current system used by the Army Corps for determining benefit-cost ratios is
29 narrowly focused on traditional economic and financial costs and benefits, largely overlooking
30 environmental costs and benefits, social equity and potential for secondary benefits of interest to
31 local communities; and
32

33 **WHEREAS**, the current system used by the Army Corps for determining benefit-cost ratios does
34 not effectively reflect the potential value of projects for low-income communities, including the
35 benefits of replacement of structures that protect low-income, low-cost of living communities;
36 and
37

38 **WHEREAS**, the current system used by the Army Corps for determining benefit-cost ratios does
39 not adequately consider the impacts of the loss of a community's livelihood associated with
40 agricultural land; and
41

42 **WHEREAS**, the current system used by the Army Corps for determining benefit-cost ratio at the
43 ~~U.S. Army Corps of Engineers~~ does not consider the value of federal lands; and
44

45 **WHEREAS**, dredged materials produced from Army Corps waterway and harbor maintenance
46 activities may be suitable for beneficial reuse, but often are disposed as waste; and

47
48 **WHEREAS**, there is a lack of sediment available for ~~the~~ habitat restoration and flood protection
49 needed along our coasts and waterways, and the restoration of seasonal and tidal wetlands are
50 considered “engineering with nature” approaches to reductions of local and coastal flooding; and
51

52 **WHEREAS**, the [Water Resources and Development Act of 2024](#) codified the Army Corps’ goal
53 of increasing the quantity of dredged materials put to environmentally beneficial use to 70
54 percent by 2030 and established the Beneficial Use of Dredge Material as a permanent program.
55

56 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls on
57 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the White House Office of Management and Budget to
58 revise the benefit-cost analysis system used for projects ~~to reflect the values of the nation~~ to
59 protect communities from flooding in ways that are environmentally protective and foster social
60 equity; and
61

62 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the Army Corps and OMB to add a
63 quantitative indexed value to life and safety to determine the benefit of federal investments in
64 flood control projects; and
65

66 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the Army Corps and OMB to add a
67 quantitative indexed value to agricultural land value and the impacts of crop flooding to
68 determine the benefit of federal investments in flood control projects; and
69

70 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the Army Corps and OMB to add a
71 quantitative indexed value to protection of low-income communities and environmental benefits
72 to determine the benefit of federal investments in water resources projects, including projects for
73 flood control; and
74

75 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the Army Corps and OMB to add a
76 quantitative indexed value to potential benefits of projects on federal properties, as well as
77 benefits to military readiness when developing coastal storm risk reduction projects in the
78 adjacent community; and
79

80 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports the Army Corps effort to increase the
81 quantity of dredged materials put to environmentally beneficial uses, especially related to marsh
82 restoration and sea level rise protection, to 70 percent by 2030 by establishing a national
83 beneficial reuse policy that allows dredged materials to function as a resource (instead of a waste
84 product) and establishes a realistic economic value of environmentally-suitable dredged material
85 that takes into account its use for [storm or flood risk reduction and habitat restoration](#); and
86

87 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC encourages the Army Corps to seek partnerships,
88 including with local governments, to beneficially reuse dredge materials; and
89

90 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the cost of offshore disposal of dredged materials should
91 include the full future economic value of that sediment that would be lost if it is deposited
92 offshore; ~~and~~

93
94 ~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED~~ that federal investments in communities must prioritize those
95 communities that have been historically neglected or are economically constrained, which are
96 disproportionately impacted by flood risk.

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INCREASE FUNDING FOR BORDER WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

[NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

WHEREAS, international transboundary rivers on the southern border of the United States are a major source of sewage, trash, chemicals, heavy metals and toxins; and

WHEREAS, [transboundary flows](#) threaten the health of 18 million residents in the United States and Mexico, harm important estuarine land and water of international significance, force closure of beaches, damage farmland, compromise border security, and directly affect U.S. military readiness; and

WHEREAS, a significant amount of untreated sewage, sediment, hazardous chemicals and trash have entered United States waters via the Tijuana and New Rivers in southern California, the Santa Cruz and San Pedro Rivers in Arizona and the Rio Grande in Texas, eventually draining into coastal waterways, waterbodies and inland waters, such as the Salton Sea; and

WHEREAS, the presence of pollution on state and federal public lands is creating unsafe conditions for visitors and residents—these lands are taxpayer supported and intended to be managed for recreation, resource conservation and the enjoyment by the public; and

WHEREAS, the current insufficient and degrading infrastructure in the border zone poses a significant risk to the public health and safety of residents and the environment on both sides of the border, and places economic stress on communities struggling to mitigate the negative impacts of pollution; and

WHEREAS, the 1944 treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding *Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande* allocates flows on transborder rivers between Mexico and the United States, and provides that the nations, through their respective sections of the International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC) shall give control of sanitation in cross border flows the highest priority; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, the United States and Mexico entered into the *Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States Concerning the Establishment of a North American Development Bank* which created the North American Development Bank (NADB) to certify and fund environmental infrastructure projects in border-area communities; and

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2018 the United States, Mexico and Canada entered into the *Agreement Between The United States of America, The United Mexican States, And Canada* to replace the *North American Free Trade Agreement*, and on December 10, 2019 the United States, Mexico and Canada agreed to a protocol of amendment to the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which became effective in the United States on January 29, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the implementing language of USMCA authorizes and allocates funding for grants under the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP), the Trade Enforcement Trust Fund and recapitalization of the NADB, including \$300 million to address the problem of toxic sewage flowing from the Tijuana River watershed; and

WHEREAS, border communities need modernized and innovative water infrastructure to provide clean and sanitary drinking water to improve the quality of living and support the expanding communities; and

WHEREAS, the adverse environmental impact will worsen existing environmental issues and strain aging infrastructure, while also creating new environmental issues in the future; and

WHEREAS, the widespread threat to public health and safety, damage to fish and wildlife resources and degradation to the environment caused by transboundary pollution in the border states requires urgent action by the federal and state governments; and

WHEREAS, Congress authorized funding under the Safe Drinking Water Act and established the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) program for the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program in 1996 to provide grants for high-priority water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure projects within 100 kilometers of the southern border; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the STAG and BWIP, and coordinates with the NADB to allocate BWIP grant funds to projects in the border zone; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the BWIP has provided funding for projects in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas that would not have been constructed without the grant program; and

WHEREAS, the BWIP program was initially funded at \$100 million per year, but the program has been significantly [reduced](#) to \$35 million in FY2~~4~~⁵ and FY2~~5~~⁶; and

WHEREAS, EPA and the U.S. section of the IWBC [identified](#) high-priority wastewater collection and treatment facilities needed in the border area; and

WHEREAS, [Mexico](#) has identified multiple priority projects and pledged \$144 million in short-term capital contributions; and

WHEREAS, a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) signed by the United States and Mexico in July 2025 sets a timeframe for Mexico to complete all projects by Dec. 31, 2027 and the United States, which has withheld additional funding to projects until Mexico fulfilled their obligations toward other projects, agreed to release BWIP funding to complete the rehabilitation of Pump Station 1 and the Tijuana River collection pipes; and

~~WHEREAS, the pollution from transboundary sewage flows were spread even farther north in the Pacific Ocean by Hurricane Hilary on August 19-20, 2023 because the infrastructure has not been maintained and new needed facilities have not been built; and~~

~~WHEREAS, transboundary sewage flows release toxic gases causing unhealthy air quality in South San Diego County where “concentration of hydrogen sulfide...peaked at 4,500 ppb [parts per billion] for at least a minute and up to an average of 2,100 ppb for one hour—the latter exceeding the California Air Resources Board’s one hour standard [of 30 ppb] by nearly 70 times;” and~~

~~WHEREAS, without federal partnership through the BWIP and state support to address pollution, cities that are impacted by transboundary sewage and toxic waste flows are left with limited resources to address a critical pollution and public health issue and limited legal remedies to address the problem;~~~~and~~

~~WHEREAS, Mexico benefits from the bi-national funding program and relies on the NADB to assist in funding projects on the Mexico side of the border, which have an immediate and long-term environmental impact along the border in the U.S. due to the upstream, transboundary flows of the major rivers; and~~

~~WHEREAS, local governments and the public support the State’s primary objectives in complying with environmental laws including the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act, and their state law analogues, and are supported by substantial public investments at all levels of government to maintain a healthy and sustainable environment for the future.~~

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities urges the Federal government to continue to fund the Border Water Infrastructure Program, and to ~~recommit~~ tecontinue working bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, resulting in significant health, environmental, and safety concerns of affected communities.

NLC RESOLUTION 2026-20

**SUPPORT AND ADVANCE CITIES IMPACTED BY FEDERAL FACILITIES ~~AND~~
~~INFRASTRUCTURE~~ THROUGH DIRECT FUNDING AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT
PROGRAMS**

[NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew with edits]

WHEREAS, across the country local governments experience special impacts to their infrastructure, services and workforce as a result of the location of a large national security laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) facility or transmission infrastructure in the region; and

WHEREAS, these special impacts include land use and transportation impediments associated with high-security facilities, as well as local responsibility for providing transportation infrastructure, law enforcement and related public services for complexes that are tax-exempt in many instances; and

WHEREAS, in most cases there is no accompanying financial offsets from DOE or transmission developers to help mitigate these special impacts on local communities; and

WHEREAS, the impacts that communities face also affects the ability of DOE to attain their missions; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has recognized the special impacts their facilities place on communities, which have a negative impact on their mission, by establishing a Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) grant program; and

WHEREAS, the DCIP has [provided communities](#) with over \$300 million in grants to alleviate the impacts of its facilities on local infrastructure, services and workforce; and

WHEREAS, [DOE](#) and other federal agencies have previously recognized the potential positive and negative impacts that facility operations have on ~~host and~~ adjacent communities and have incorporated requirements in federal grant programs to prepare and implement a Community Benefits Plan that includes community stakeholders to ensure local interests are heard, issues are identified, and concerns are addressed to both optimize benefits and minimize negative impacts on the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National League of Cities (NLC) calls on Congress and the Administration to authorize and fund a ~~grant~~ program similar to the DoD DCIP ~~to for communities that~~ support DOE ~~host and adjacent communities' facilities or transmission infrastructure, services and workforce~~ to help alleviate the special impacts ~~on local infrastructure, services and workforce borne by these communities~~, such as through the Energizing Our Communities Act of 202~~5~~4; and

46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to require
47 DOE facilities to prepare a Community Benefits Plan that meets the agency's previous standards
48 and expectations for community engagement, workforce development, diversity, and issues
49 relating to the environment of impacted communities.

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PROTECTING FEDERAL SCIENTIFIC DATA AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT LOCAL PREPAREDNESS TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

[NLC Staff Recommendation: Renew]

WHEREAS, protecting the health, safety and well-being of residents is the most important task of all levels of government, with [Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution](#) stating that “Congress shall provide...for the general welfare of the United States;” and

WHEREAS, promoting and protecting public safety, especially during emergencies such as extreme weather events and natural disasters, is essential to providing for the general welfare; and

WHEREAS, while local leaders serve as first responders during extreme weather events and natural disasters, the federal government has the scale and reach to address extreme weather and natural disasters in a comprehensive way; and

WHEREAS, the research, monitoring, reporting and other scientific data, resources and tools are too expensive for any single local government or state to develop individually; and .

WHEREAS, because extreme weather and natural disasters do not respect city or state boundaries and their impacts are often regional, a federal approach is required; and

WHEREAS, the federal government is *the* trusted source of information for extreme weather events and natural disasters, and the availability of trusted information to protect lives, property and infrastructure requires specialized expertise, especially at the federal level; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to keep residents, emergency personnel and news organizations informed of impending disasters because accurate warnings help facilitate disaster preparations, evacuations and pre-positioning of personnel and response assets; and

WHEREAS, agencies such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA, including the National Weather Service), U.S. Geological Survey and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have mandates to protect public safety, not to sell products and services or generate profit, and decades of consistent service during emergencies have built public trust in these institutions and information; and

WHEREAS, the federal government operates large networks of sensors, satellites, stream gauges and radar systems all focused exclusively on disaster prevention and response, which provide real-time, scientifically validated data; and

WHEREAS, although private sources do some of this as well, their reach is not as comprehensive, their data may not be as well trusted, and they lack an underlying mandate to

protect public safety; and

WHEREAS, the percentage of the federal budget dedicated to the agencies involved in extreme weather and natural disaster prediction, prevention, response and mitigation is miniscule. For example, the [annual budget for NOAA](#) represents 0.1% of the federal budget in FY2025, but helps save countless lives and protect billions in property, infrastructure, and crops – thus providing an outsize return on investment; and

WHEREAS, accurate weather and climate data is also essential for food security and our economy. For example, according to a survey by the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#), in 2023, agriculture, food, and related industries contributed approximately \$1.53 trillion to the US economy and in 2022, [U.S. fisheries](#) generated about \$321 billion in sales; and

WHEREAS, every dollar invested in disaster preparedness and early warning systems saves many more in damages. A study by the [National Institute of Building Sciences](#) found each \$1 invested by FEMA and similar agencies saved \$6 saved in damages from all types of emergencies. A [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) study found an even higher cost-benefit ratio, with each \$1 invested in resilience and disaster preparedness saving \$13 in economic impact, damage, and cleanup costs after the event; and

WHEREAS, the more warning people have before extreme events occur, the lower the probability of death, personal injury and damage to property and infrastructure. For example, a [2024 review of 66 studies](#) found expert estimates that roughly 20% of damages can be avoided with a 1-hour warning, rising to approximately 60% with a 12-hour warning; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the critical importance of information during extreme weather events and disasters, federal scientific data and resources provide value every day to communities, local governments and industry. The ability to predict and monitor weather conditions, climate patterns and changes over time is crucial for operations in industries such as agriculture, fishing and aquaculture, aviation, transportation and logistics, tourism, and resource extraction. These services are equally important for public agencies, from transportation planning to public health to utility management; and

WHEREAS, the federal apparatus for researching, modeling, preventing, planning and responding to extreme weather events and natural disasters now faces unprecedented challenges, such as workforce reductions, staff reallocation, budget cuts, reallocation of existing funding and withdrawal of key research and advisory programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that to meet its obligation to protect the general welfare as described in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, Congress must approve investments to protect and enhance the corps of federal experts and technology to further scientific progress in meteorology, climate science, geological science and disaster prediction, response and mitigation programs; and

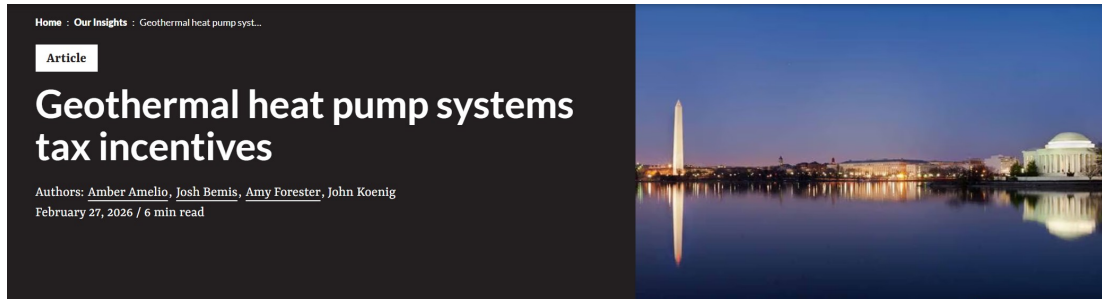
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED to protect the general welfare, Congress must restore and maintain funding to pre-DOGE levels for all federal agencies providing weather and other

93 scientific data to support extreme weather and natural disaster research and monitoring in a
94 timely and accurate manner, as well as to support other industries and sectors related to
95 agriculture, fishing and aquaculture, aviation, transportation and logistics, tourism, and resource
96 extraction; and
97
98 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** to protect the general welfare, federal agencies must restore
99 full staffing to pre-DOGE levels of federal personnel with the knowledge, expertise and
100 experience to respond to extreme weather and natural disaster.

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Wondering how you can maximize benefits from geothermal HVAC investments? The Inflation Reduction Act introduced new energy credits, while the One, Big, Beautiful Bill modified those credits. Make sure you're up to date with the latest on geothermal energy credits.

Geothermal heat pump (GHP) technology is rapidly gaining momentum across commercial, institutional, and public-sector real estate projects as organizations look for reliable, energy-efficient pathways to lower their carbon footprint and control energy costs. Recent policy developments, particularly the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), have contributed to the growth of geothermal heating systems by introducing robust tax incentives and long-term certainty for organizations planning geothermal heating infrastructure projects. Both taxable entities and exempt organizations — including schools, universities, municipal governments, and other public institutions — can benefit from the GHP energy credit through elective pay. This article outlines what geothermal property is credit eligible, how Section 48 credits work, what costs qualify, and what steps organizations should take to maximize incentives.

Understanding geothermal technologies

To avoid confusion, it's helpful to distinguish between the two types of geothermal technologies eligible for federal energy credits:

- **Electricity producing geothermal systems (geothermal power plants).** These systems extract heat from deep underground reservoirs to generate electricity. Geothermal power plants (GPP) rely on high temperature geothermal resources capable of producing steam or heated fluids that drive a turbine. Eligibility for the Section 48E clean electricity ITC applies only to geothermal technologies that generate electricity. Electricity producing geothermal projects are utility scale renewable energy infrastructure and are distinct from building level heating and cooling systems. GPP systems that began construction before Jan. 1, 2025, qualify for an ITC under Section 48, while Section 48E requires that the property be placed in service after Dec. 31, 2024.
- **Geothermal heat pump (GHP) systems.** GHPs don't produce electricity. Instead, they use the stable temperature of the ground below the surface to provide heating and cooling for buildings. Due to their lack of energy generation, they fall exclusively under Section 48, not Section 48E. GHP systems are unique in their eligibility for Section 48 through 2032, while credits for most other renewable technologies transition to Section 48E or sunset. Most commercial, institutional, and public sector geothermal installations, including those in schools, campuses, and municipal buildings, use GHP technology. Unlike geothermal power plants, GHP systems are designed to replace or supplement traditional HVAC equipment rather than generate power.

This distinction is important because credit types, phaseouts, and applicable rates differ between the two technologies. The below explores how organizations making investments in GHP technologies can maximize tax credits.

Stability among change: Geothermal heating and the Inflation Reduction Act

The passage of the One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) curtailed the renewable energy credit landscape originally broadened by the IRA. The looming Dec. 31, 2027, phaseout date for solar and wind investment tax credits (ITCs) and production tax credits (PTCs) has left taxpayers and organizations racing to complete large-scale projects. However, a critical exception remains related to credits for geothermal heat pumps (GHP) under Section 48. Backed by strong bipartisan support, these credits provide long-term certainty for developers, taxpayers, and exempt organizations, reinforcing the role of geothermal energy as a long-term, predictable incentive for energy-efficient building heating and cooling.

Investment tax credit calculation for geothermal heating projects

The ITC allows organizations to claim a credit when qualified property is placed in service. Geothermal heating and cooling systems are qualified property under the ITC. The credit is calculated as a percentage of the cost basis in the property, starting with a base rate of 6% until 2032, then drops to 5.2% in 2033, 4.4% in 2034, and phases out entirely for projects beginning construction in 2035.

Projects meeting additional criteria, such as having a maximum net output of less than one megawatt or satisfying **prevailing wage and apprenticeship (PWA) requirements**, may qualify for an enhanced rate of 30%. Additional 10% increases apply to credits for GHP property that begins construction before 2035 if the project uses domestic materials and is located in a designated energy community.

Notably, complexities introduced with the OBBA related to Foreign Entities of Concern (FEOC) rules that can impact eligibility for the 48E credit, don't impact credits for GHP technologies.

Eligible costs of geothermal heat pump projects

Many mistakenly believe that only components unique to geothermal energy systems, such as wells, pumps, and circulation piping, qualify for the credit. In reality, IRS regulations broaden eligibility to include both integral and functionally interdependent property.

- **Integral property** refers to components essential to the energy system's operation and directly used in its intended function.
- **Functionally interdependent property** includes components that rely on other parts of the system to perform their intended function.

Applied to GHP systems, this means that inverters, converters, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems such as blowers and furnaces, may also qualify because they're necessary for the overall functionality of the property. These expanded definitions significantly increase the costs eligible for the credit, delivering a more substantial benefit. For example, a university replacing aging boilers with a GHP system may find that not

only the wells and heat pumps qualify, but also the distribution equipment and a portion of the construction-related soft costs.

A university upgrading to a GHP system may find that the wells and heat pumps qualify, along with distribution equipment and some construction-related soft costs.

Although a wide range of components may qualify for the credit due to their integral or interdependent nature, eligibility ultimately depends on the specific details of each system. Components that are essential to the system's functionality are eligible, while unrelated HVAC equipment and building structures are not.

Strategic planning and risk mitigation for geothermal heat pump projects

Cost segregation studies are crucial when navigating this complexity. These studies analyze project costs, identify property eligible for energy credits, and determine the correct basis for the ITC. An ITC-targeted cost segregation study can also ensure that all eligible costs, including allocable portions of certain construction-related soft costs, are included in credit-eligible basis.

Maximizing available credits also requires meeting PWA requirements and domestic content standards. To substantiate that such requirements are met demands meticulous documentation.

For PWA compliance, property owners must confirm, among other things, that:

- All laborers and mechanics employed by the property owner, contractors, and subcontractors are paid federal prevailing wages for the construction type and location.

- Registered apprentices are paid prevailing wages, are adequately supervised, and perform the required percentage of total labor hours, or employers document a good-faith effort to comply.
- Worker classifications and hours align with Department of Labor determinations.



While contractors typically manage construction and installation, project owners can't rely solely on their assurances of compliance when it comes to satisfying the PWA requirements. Contracts should mandate comprehensive documentation throughout the project. Although IRS rules offer corrective measures to address the lack of adequate records, these come with strict deadlines and interest charges, making proactive oversight essential for securing enhanced credits.

Domestic content standards present additional challenges, as contractors and suppliers may hesitate to disclose cost details. Entities claiming geothermal tax credits should develop procedures to collect domestic content data using methodologies that minimize risk while acknowledging the challenges of obtaining vendor cost data. Engaging experts at the outset and setting clear expectations with project suppliers ensures smooth collection of support for credit eligibility.

Key takeaways for geothermal heat pump projects

In a time of shifting energy policy, GHP systems remain a reliable, resilient, and cost-effective cornerstone of sustainable building strategy. Unlike solar and wind, which are subject to accelerated phaseouts under recent legislation, GHP remains eligible for the ITC, offering certainty when planning long-term building and infrastructure projects. By engaging tax advisors early and leveraging cost segregation studies, organizations can maximize credits while minimizing compliance risk.

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