

MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council

FROM: John A. Brand, Senior Management Analyst 

DATE: April 5, 2007 (CC Meeting of 4/18/2007)

SUBJECT: Consider 2007 Legislative Program

**BACKGROUND**

The City Council adopts an annual Legislative Program outlining the City's position on key municipal issues. If a measure is consistent with the Legislative Program, the Mayor is authorized to send a letter indicating the City's position. If a measure is not addressed by the Legislative Program, or if a staff recommendation differs from the Legislative Program, then the Finance, Administration and Public Safety Committee will review the measure and recommend a position to the City Council. The Finance, Administration and Public Safety Committee annually reviews the Legislative Program prior to City Council consideration.

**DISCUSSION**

On April 4, the Finance, Administration and Public Safety Committee (Mayor Hunter and Mayor Pro Tem Millhouse) met and discussed the City Legislative Program. The Committee recommended a change to one platform statement to clarify the City's position regarding Proposition 218, "The Right to Vote on Taxes Initiative" approved by the voters in 1996.

As Council may recall, the intent of Proposition 218 was generally to ensure that all taxes and most charges on property owners are subject to voter approval. In addition, Proposition 218 sought to curb some perceived abuses in the use of assessments and property-related fees, specifically the use of these revenue-raising tools to pay for general governmental services rather than property-related services.

The intent of the City's position is to support the ability of the City to recover costs for mandated programs. The Committee observed that a reader could misconstrue the platform statement and recommended that staff reword the platform for Council consideration. Below is the rewording based on the committee recommendation:

1. **Local Government Finance**
  - J. ~~Support efforts to reduce the fiscal impact of Proposition 218 on cities.~~  
**Support legislation that protects the ability of local government to recover the costs of mandated programs through fees that are not subject to Proposition 218.**

Additionally, the City has commented on the following issues in the current legislative session:

**Federal**

- HR 5427:- Weatherization Assistance Program - improving the energy efficiency of low-income housing - (Preserve/Restore Funding)
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program - (Restore Funding)

**State**

- SB 303: doubles the planning period (from 5 to 10 years) for the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) - (Oppose)
- Gas Tax Spillover Funding in 2007-2008 Budget for Public Transit - (Restore Traditional Funding Formula)
- Proposition 84: \$5.4 billion for improving natural resources and sustainable communities – (Support)
- Proposition 1C: \$2.8 billion for housing projects, including \$1.35 billion that helps cities address housing-related infrastructure issues – (Support)

Attached copies of legislative position and platforms from the Ventura Council of Governments, League of California Cities, National League of Cities, as well as a copy of a draft City 2007 Legislative Program.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a 2007 Legislative Program.

**Attachments**

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|---------------|---|
| Attachment 1: | Draft 2007 Legislative Program                |
| Attachment 2: | VCOG Legislative Program                      |
| Attachment 3: | League-Sponsored Bill Package                 |
| Attachment 4: | National League of Cities Legislative Program |

**CITY OF MOORPARK  
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM  
2007**

The following Legislative Program was developed to allow the City to respond to state and federal legislation in a proactive manner. The Mayor (or Mayor Pro Tem in the Mayor's absence) is authorized to sign correspondence expressing the City's position on pending legislation consistent with the Legislative Program and/or other positions approved by the City Council. The Budget and Finance Committee will also periodically review legislation for recommendation to the City Council.

Staff will monitor the League of California Cities' *Priority Focus* and other sources to identify pending legislation that may impact the City. Letters expressing the City's position will be drafted for the Mayor's signature, and copies will be distributed to each Councilmember. Pending legislation not addressed by the Legislative Program, or staff recommendations that deviate from the Legislative Program, will be agendaized for Budget and Finance Committee review and City Council consideration.

**PLATFORM STATEMENTS**

**1. Local Government Finance**

- A. Support legislation that limits cities' contributions to the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF) and directs the repayment of past contributions.
- B. Oppose legislation that eliminates or restricts the taxing authority of cities over development; weakens existing Government Code Section 66000 fee authority; and redefines any development tax, condition, or other monetary charge as development fees.
- C. Support legislation requiring the state and federal governments to provide full cost reimbursement to cities for all mandated programs and for all programs resulting in revenue losses.
- D. Support legislation that safeguards existing City revenue sources from preemption or seizure by the state or county.
- E. Oppose any change in revenue allocations that would negatively affect the City of Moorpark, including but not limited to the redistribution of sales tax, property tax, transient occupancy tax, and vehicle in-lieu fee.
- F. Oppose legislation that restricts or limits a city's ability to use tax-exempt debt for the purchase or construction of public purpose improvements.

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- G. Support measures that provide greater fiscal independence to cities and result in greater stability and predictability in local government budgeting.
- H. Support efforts that provide greater accountability on the part of counties for the distribution of funds back to municipalities, including, but not limited to, fines and forfeitures.
- I. Oppose any measure that makes local agencies more dependent on the state for financial stability and policy direction.
- J. ~~Support efforts to reduce the fiscal impact of Proposition 218 on cities.~~  
**Support legislation that protects the ability of local government to recover the costs of mandated programs through fees that are not subject to Proposition 218.**
- K. Support the establishment of a constitutionally-protected funding structure for local government.
- L. Support legislation that closes the loophole that allows companies currently doing business in California to create dot-com subsidiaries to avoid collection of sales taxes on Internet commerce.
- M. Support legislation that authorizes a statewide ballot measure to restore the requirement for a simple majority of voters in a city or county to approve an increase in taxes or issue general obligation bonds.
- N. Join with other Ventura County cities to encourage the Ventura County Treasurer-Tax Collector to shorten the time to collect property tax readjustments.

2. **Labor Relations**

- A. Oppose legislation that would restrict a city's ability to use its own employees on public works projects when such projects have previously been advertised for bid.
- B. Oppose legislation that requires the use of city employees rather than contracting out.
- C. Oppose any legislation that would grant employee benefits that should be decided at the local bargaining table.
- D. Oppose legislation that removes or reduces management rights, such as deciding staffing or service levels, either by direct action or increased liability.

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- E. Support legislation that would reform the Workers' Compensation system to reduce employer cost through the reduction of system abuse.
- F. Support legislation that limits the ability of employees to receive Workers' Compensation benefits for occupational injuries/illnesses that result from stress, disciplinary action, or performance evaluation consultations.
- G. Oppose legislation that expands or extends any presumptions of occupational injury or illness.
- H. Oppose any measure that imposes compulsory and binding interest arbitration.
- I. Oppose efforts that reduce local control over public employee disputes or impose regulations of an outside agency on such disputes.
- J. Oppose a mandatory Social Security tax for public employers and public employees.

**3. Transportation**

- A. Oppose legislation that redirects local transportation funds away from cities.
- B. Support legislation that would provide additional resources to cities to finance local transportation systems, facilities, and improvements.
- C. Support legislation that provides greater flexibility for the use of local transportation funds for both public transit and street maintenance and construction purposes.
- D. Support legislation that will help reduce non-local commercial vehicle traffic on SR-118 through the City.
- E. Oppose legislation that limits and/or decreases the existing amount of retention proceeds withheld from any payment by a public entity to the contractor on a public project.

**4. Environment**

- A. Support legislation that streamlines the state's environmental review process and maintains public participation.
- B. Support legislation that would eliminate unfunded mandates such as the

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water course pollution prevention programs.

- C. Support legislation that reduces or eliminates local government's owner/operator Superfund liability.
- D. Support legislation to either consolidate or streamline the federal and state Clean Air Acts without reducing air quality standards.
- E. Support air quality efforts that emphasize use of advanced technologies and market incentives, including use of alternative fuels and development of an infrastructure for alternative fuel vehicles.
- F. Support legislation that reimburses cities for revenue losses stemming from environmental decisions made without city participation.
- G. Support legislation that provides money to local governments for energy conservation programs.
- H. Support legislation that gives cities authority to meet their National Pollution Elimination Discharge System requirements on a more collective and regional basis.

**5. Waste Management**

- A. Support legislation that provides cities with financial assistance for programs designed to provide for the safe disposal of solid, hazardous, and special waste.
- B. Support legislation that strengthens cities' ability to direct municipal solid waste flow to designated solid waste facilities.
- C. Support legislation that streamlines AB 939 tracking and reporting requirements.
- D. Support legislation that would make grants available to local agencies for programs that encourage the recycling/reclaiming of resources.
- E. Support legislation that promotes source reduction measures without creating an unfunded mandate.
- F. Oppose legislation that would restrict or limit local government's ability to franchise refuse and recycling collection services, to direct municipal solid waste flow (flow control), or to contractually require haulers to guarantee achievement of AB 939 goals.

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- G. Support legislation that promotes recycling and expands the market for recycled materials.
- H. Support new resource recovery and conversion technologies, such as bio-diesel from organic waste.
- I. Support legislation that implements the concept of extended manufacturer responsibility for electronic waste and other material types requiring incentives for recycling.

**6. General Government**

- A. Support legislation that ensures cities receive a proportionate share of property taxes upon withdrawal from a county library services district, or any other county service or district for which property taxes are received.
- B. Support legislation that provides financial assistance for local public libraries without the imposition of new taxes.
- C. Support legislation that limits libraries' contributions to the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund.
- D. Oppose legislation that reduces funding for libraries including Public Library Funds.
- E. Support legislation that reinstates effective local regulation of the cable television industry and other deregulated utilities, including financial reimbursement for use of public right-of-ways.
- F. Oppose legislation that restricts or weakens a city's ability to regulate smoking areas, alcoholic beverage licenses, or adult-oriented business establishments.
- G. Support legislation limiting a city's liability associated with hazardous recreational activities, such as skateboarding and in-line skating.
- H. Oppose legislation that increases local government's exposure to litigation.
- I. Support legislation that provides maximum local flexibility in contracting for services.
- J. Oppose efforts to cut funding for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs and other community services and workforce assistance programs to serve low-income and/or other disadvantaged residents.
- K. Support legislation to give non-entitlement cities the same rights as

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entitlement cities in CDBG program administration.

- L. Support legislation that makes funds available to refurbish and improve parks.
- M. Support legislation that promotes low-cost or no-cost spay and neuter programs.
- N. Support legislation that holds animal owners accountable for injuries or property damage caused by animals under their care or control.
- O. Evaluate the benefits of expanding the current boundaries of the Oxnard Harbor District through collaborative legislation with other Ventura County cities and the County of Ventura.
- P. Oppose any legislation that reduces or restricts local authority to regulate public right-of-way.

**7. Public Safety**

- A. Support legislation that would provide cities with a greater share of fines and forfeitures.
- B. Support legislation that would provide additional resources for commercial truck safety inspections and the enforcement of commercial truck vehicle codes.
- C. Oppose legislation that weakens enforcement of, and penalties for, commercial truck violations.
- D. Support legislation that would provide cities with contract law enforcement a proportionate share of Proposition 172 sales tax revenues for public safety.
- E. Support legislation that increases local law enforcement resources without increasing taxes.
- F. Support legislation that would provide a greater share of seized assets to cities.
- G. Support legislation that allows use of state and federal public safety grants for maintenance efforts in addition to service increases.

**8. Land Use Planning**

- A. Support legislation that reforms annexation law by strengthening cities' authority over spheres of influence and ensures that fair property tax

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agreements can be obtained.

- B. Support legislation that provides for shared land use determinations between counties and cities when the General Plan of the city establishes a planning area consistent with Government Code provisions.
- C. Support legislation that enhances local control and diminishes litigation surrounding adult entertainment facilities.
- D. Support legislation that strengthens local control to prepare, adopt, and implement fiscal plans for orderly growth, development, beautification, and conservation of local planning areas, including, but not limited to, regulatory authority over zoning, subdivisions, annexations, and redevelopment areas.
- E. Support efforts that are consistent with the doctrine of "home rule" and the local exercise of police powers, through planning and zoning processes, over local land use.
- F. Oppose county development projects for undeveloped areas in the city's area of interest that do not conform to city standards.
- G. Support legislation that allows local control over the establishment of medical marijuana establishments.
- H. Oppose legislation that limits city use of eminent domain.

**9. Housing**

- A. Support legislation that addresses occupancy levels and strengthens cities' ability to reduce overcrowding in residential housing.
- B. Support efforts to develop federal, state, and county participation, financial support, and incentives for programs that provide adequate, affordable housing for the elderly, handicapped, and low-income persons throughout the community.
- C. Oppose legislation that expands the state Department of Housing and Community Development's review role for local Housing Elements.
- D. Support Housing Element reform legislation that provides greater local control and flexibility, simplifies the process, and improves its effectiveness.
- E. Support legislation that eliminates the current Regional Housing Needs Allocation process and defines an equitable process to determine a "fair

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share” of new housing needed to respond to growth trends in the region.

- F. Oppose legislation that expands the state exemption for second dwelling units in single family zones.

**10. Redevelopment/Economic Development**

- A. Oppose legislation that further weakens a city redevelopment agency’s authority to use eminent domain.
- B. Oppose legislation that would prohibit or limit the establishment of new redevelopment project areas and/or the expansion of existing project areas.
- C. Oppose legislation that reduces the amount of gross tax increment allocable to redevelopment agencies.
- D. Support legislation that reforms reporting requirements for redevelopment agencies by simplifying the process and eliminating reporting confusion.
- E. Oppose legislation that adds restrictions and procedural requirements regarding closed session discussions on land acquisition, use of eminent domain, and disposal of property.
- F. Oppose measures that would diminish the current authority or financing capabilities of redevelopment agencies.
- G. Support legislation that gives cities resources to finance economic development efforts, such as business attraction, retention, and growth, as well as marketing and tourism.
- H. Support legislation that simplifies and streamlines the process for foreign trade.
- I. Oppose legislation that limits redevelopment agency use of eminent domain.



**VENTURA COUNCIL  
OF GOVERNMENTS**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Wally Bobkiewicz, Interim Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Consideration of 2007 Legislative Agenda  
**DATE:** February 27, 2007

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**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Board of Directors consider adopting the 2007 Legislative Agenda.

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**Discussion:** VCOG has adopted a Legislative Agenda in recent years since 2005. The Administrative Committee discussed this issue at their February 14, 2007 meeting and proposed to adopt the 2006 agenda without change.

**Attachment:**  
Draft 2007 Legislative Agenda

# VCOG ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 2007

## DRAFT

### Purpose

The goal and intent of VCOG is one of voluntary cooperation among cities and the county of Ventura for their collective benefit. In this regard, VCOG serves as an advocate in representing the members of VCOG at the regional, state and federal levels on issues of mutual importance to the Ventura County area. It also can serve as a forum for the review, consideration, study, development and recommendation of public policies and plans with regional significance.

### Overriding Principles

VCOG believes that cities and counties must be able to control matters within their own jurisdictions. Therefore, VCOG will take positions on proposed legislation, rules and/or regulations that affect local control. Additionally, VCOG will take positions on issues that directly affect the county area. And, when local decisions affect neighboring communities, VCOG supports local governments working collaboratively and regionally to address regional issues.

### Process

Staff will monitor the League of California Cities' *Priority Focus*, California State Association of Counties' positions as well as other sources to identify pending legislation that may impact the member entities.

A Legislative Subcommittee of the VCOG Administrative Committee shall be created composed of the following three members: Chair, Chair Elect and Immediate Past Chair. The Chair (or Chair Elect in the Chair's absence) is authorized to sign correspondence expressing VCOG's position on pending legislation consistent with the Legislative Program and/or other positions approved by the Governing Board provided that such correspondence has been sent to the Legislative Subcommittee for their review with a deadline for their comments but not less than 24 hours before it is finalized.

Copies of all correspondence will be distributed to each Governing Board member and their jurisdiction and a Legislative Report will be provided at Board meetings.

Pending legislation not addressed by the Legislative Agenda, member requests or staff recommendations that deviate from the Legislative Agenda, will be agendized for VCOG Governing Board consideration.

This policy will be reviewed each year with the adoption of the Legislative Agenda.

## Issues Of Common Concern and Areas of VCOG Commitment

### I. Fiscal Impact - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Maintain the protections that are provided in Proposition 1A to protect local revenues from seizure by the state.
- B. Oppose preemption of local authority.
- C. Support measures that result in greater stability and predictability in local government budgeting.
- D. Support legislation requiring the state and federal governments to provide full cost reimbursement to cities and counties for all unfunded or underfunded mandated programs and for all programs resulting in revenue losses.
- E. Encourage the use of state incentives for local government action rather than mandates and penalties.

### II. Transportation & Transit - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support legislation that would provide additional resources to cities and counties to finance local transportation systems, facilities, and improvements.
- B. Protect and enhance current funding levels and local authority for existing State and Federal transportation revenues and programs
- C. Support the immediate halt to transfers to the State General Fund of dedicated State Transportation funds and the timely return of all previous loans
- D. Support the authority of cities and county to manage the public right-of-way and receive compensation for its use.

### III. Economic Development - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support legislation that gives cities and counties resources to finance economic development efforts, such as business attraction, retention, and growth, as well as marketing and tourism.
- B. Support the retention of the Naval Base Ventura County.
- C. Support legislation to ensure sufficient funding to operate one-stop employment and training centers.
- D. Oppose efforts to cut funding for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs and other publicly funded community services and workforce assistance programs to serve low-income and/or other disadvantaged residents.

- E. Support legislation that reforms reporting requirements for redevelopment agencies by simplifying the process and eliminating reporting confusion.

IV. Land Use - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support efforts that are consistent with the doctrine of "home rule" and the local exercise of police powers, through planning and zoning processes, over local land use.
- B. Support legislation that strengthens local control to prepare, adopt, and implement plans for orderly growth, development, beautification, and conservation of local planning areas, including, but not limited to, regulatory authority over zoning, subdivisions, annexations, and redevelopment areas.

V. Housing - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support efforts to develop multi-jurisdictional (federal, state, county, city) participation, financial support, and incentives for programs that provide adequate, affordable housing for the elderly, handicapped, and low-income persons throughout the community as well as required infrastructure construction.
- B. Support Housing Element reform legislation that provides greater local control and flexibility, simplifies the process, and improves its effectiveness.
- C. Support legislation that eliminates the current Regional Housing Needs Allocation process and defines a more equitable process to respond to growth trends in the region.
- D. Support legislation that streamlines the environmental review process for mixed-use infill development without compromising environmental quality standards.
- E. Support legislation that promotes and provides incentives for environmentally responsible design and construction.

VI. Environment - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support legislation that streamlines the state's environmental review process and maintains public participation without compromising environmental quality standards.
- B. Air Quality Protection
  - 1. Support mobile source emission reduction activities to improve the environment without adverse impact on local economy.
  - 2. Support air quality efforts that emphasize use of advanced technologies and market incentives, including use of alternative fuels and development of an infrastructure for alternative fuel vehicles.

3. Support port air emission reductions.
4. Support the development of a federal action plan for reducing air pollution from those sources solely under federal control such as ships and planes which are increasingly affecting the ability to reach local air quality attainment.

#### C. Solid Waste

1. Support legislation that provides cities and counties with financial assistance for programs designed to provide for the safe disposal of solid, hazardous, and special waste.
2. Support legislation that promotes source reduction measures without creating an unfunded mandate.
3. Support legislation that promotes recycling and expands the market for recycled materials as well as making grants available to local agencies for programs that encourage the recycling/reclaiming of resources.
4. Support new resource recovery and conversion technologies, such as bio-diesel from organic waste, including removing impediments to the adoption of transformation or conversion technologies to help municipalities and the county meet and exceed their requirement to divert 50% of their solid waste away from landfills.
5. Oppose legislation that would restrict or limit local government's ability to franchise refuse and recycling collection services, to direct municipal or county solid waste flow (flow control), or to contractually require haulers to guarantee achievement of AB 939 goals
6. Initiate legislation that streamlines AB 939 tracking and reporting requirements.

#### D. Water Protection

1. Support legislation and cooperative efforts to ensure adequate water supplies for Southern California and to protect and enhance regional groundwater resources and watersheds.
2. Support state and federal funding legislation for local storm water and NPDES programs as well as incentives for the re-use of reclaimed water.
3. Support regulations for local agencies to carry out the NPDES mission that are practical and capable of being implemented including taking into account economic considerations
4. Support scientific investigation and implementation, as funding permits, of reasonable, cost-effective, and proven best management practices (BMP) and best

available technologies (BAT) to mitigate storm water pollution to the maximum extent practicable

E. Natural Resources

1. Support funding and legislation for the designation and preservation of open space and preservation, restoration and enhancement of natural resources.
2. Support legislation and/or programs that provide money to local governments for energy efficiency and conservation programs.

VIII. Public Safety and Homeland Security - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support legislation that increases local law enforcement resources including providing cities and counties with a greater share of fines and forfeitures.
- B. Support funding for improved public safety programs, specifically the State Grants that have provided police departments with the funds necessary to support technology improvements increasing efficiency. This includes grants that support homeland security, grants through the Office of Traffic Safety, as well as other grants that support the hiring of law enforcement personnel.
- C. Support legislation that would provide additional resources for commercial truck safety inspections and the enforcement of commercial truck vehicle codes.
- D. Support legislation that allows use of state and federal public safety grants for maintenance efforts in addition to service increases.
- E. Support maintenance of existing health care facilities within the county for emergency response with adequate funding and staffing.
- F. Support funding for all hazards, not just terrorism and encourage comprehensive All Hazards planning.
- G. Oppose a relaxation of TSA safety standards enacted after 9/11.

IX. Labor Relations - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Oppose legislation that would restrict a local government's ability to use its own employees on public works projects when such projects have previously been advertised for bid.
- B. Oppose legislation that requires the use of city or county employees rather than contracting out.
- C. Oppose any legislation that would grant employee benefits that should be decided at the local bargaining table.

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- D. Support legislation that would reform the Workers' Compensation system to reduce employer cost through the reduction of system abuse.
- E. Oppose any measure that imposes compulsory and binding interest arbitration.
- F. Oppose efforts that reduce local control over public employee disputes or impose regulations of an outside agency on such disputes.

IX. General Government - VCOG is committed to:

- A. Support legislation limiting the county and a city's liability associated with hazardous recreational activities, such as skateboarding and in-line skating.
- B. Support legislation that makes funds available to refurbish and improve parks.
- C. Oppose legislation that increases local government's exposure to litigation.

## League Board Adopts Strategic Goals for 2007

The League of California Cities set the course of the organization for the coming year, when the League Board of Directors met with the leaders of the League's departments, divisions, policy committees and caucuses at the board of directors meeting on November 17-18, 2006, in Anaheim.

After participating with other League leaders in eight separate discussion groups, the Board considered a list of proposed strategic goals formulated by the discussion groups. The following goals were adopted by the League Board and will be the focus of work programs for the League and its divisions, departments, caucuses and policy committees for 2007:

- **Infrastructure:** Ensure fair and effective implementation of the 2006 infrastructure bonds, consistent with the needs of California cities.
- **Eminent Domain:** Adopt statutory and constitutional reforms of the laws governing the use of eminent domain for private economic development purposes.
- **Affordable Housing:** Expand the supply of affordable housing by adopting reforms that reduce the barriers to improved planning and expand the financial resources available.

## **Nation's Municipal Leaders to Promote Targeted Agenda to Congress**

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Telecommunications reform, immigration, and efforts to secure continued federal funding to support local initiatives including housing, transportation, and public safety are among the top issues that the National League of Cities (NLC) will bring to the 110th Congress in the coming months. Working on behalf of the nation's cities and towns, NLC also will draw focused federal attention to critical housing issues such as predatory lending, foreclosure prevention, and revamping the country's mortgage finance system.

Concluding a three-day leadership meeting in San Diego, Calif., this past weekend, NLC officials also said it was critically important to take a proactive approach with the new Congress in addressing major challenges affecting the quality of life in their communities that demand joint problem-solving – the surge in violent crime, developing strategies for future transportation funding, and promoting sustainable communities and energy efficiency.

"This is a period of transition in our country," said NLC President Bart Peterson, mayor of Indianapolis, Ind. "We want to help shape the issues. In the 70s and 80s, the federal government led the way; in the 90s the states were the stars in innovation. But it is pretty clear that in this decade, cities are where the action is. We are the centers of innovation and creative problem-solving. While the federal government remains gridlocked, we are moving our communities forward and can shape the policy discussions at the federal level."

Meeting with 31 mayors and council members from across the nation, NLC developed its 2007 federal lobbying agenda and strategies for working with Congress. The group included the leaders of NLC's committees, councils, panels and constituency groups.

"We had the best, the brightest and the most involved participating," said NLC 1st Vice President Cynthia McCollum, council member from Madison, Ala. "And we went further than simply looking at what's going on in Washington. We also want to shape policy at the local, federal and state levels on other critical issues, including transportation funding, the full range of public safety issues, and efforts to promote sustainable resources and energy efficiency."

NLC 2nd Vice President Kathleen Novak, mayor of Northglenn, Colo., said, "We want to make our cities better places in which to live. We can only do that if the federal government does its job, the states do their jobs and we do our jobs. NLC wants to help municipal officials get things done."

Specifically NLC's federal lobbying agenda for 2007 includes:

- Protecting local authority in any reform of the Telecommunications Act, in Congress or by the Federal Communications Commission, stressing the need to provide access to all services for all constituents while protecting the public rights of way, as well as insuring that new technologies such as providing telephone service over the Internet provides adequate linkages to 911 and protects the public's safety.
- Ensuring that sufficient funding is included in any appropriations measures involving federal support for local activities such as the Community Development Block Grant program and other housing programs, crime programs, and transportation funding.
- Ensuring that comprehensive immigration reform takes into account the impact on cities and towns and includes the local government perspective.
- Targeting federal attention on critical local housing issues, including predatory lending, foreclosure prevention, and the country's mortgage finance system.

NLC officials also recognized that many issues are not wholly federal but require shared responsibilities and attention. These ongoing issues include:

- Developing a more holistic approach to addressing public safety issues, including federal, state and local strategies to address the current surge in violent crime.
- Participating as an equal partner in developing strategies for the next generation of transportation funding to ensure they meet the multiple demands facing municipalities of congestion, rehabilitation and multi-modal

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systems.

- Identifying and sharing promising practices to promote sustainable resources and energy efficiency, while seeking a responsible federal energy policy.

In addition, the leadership team began discussions on the growing effect of media violence on America's quality of life. Mayor Peterson will work this year to increase municipal awareness of the growing amount of violence found in interactive video games, films, television and other media and its effect on young people. A summit on media violence is tentatively scheduled for mid-April in Indianapolis.

"It is important to promote intelligent discussion of this issue – an inclusive discussion from all perspectives so we can learn more about its effect on our society," Peterson said. "In my community, I am seeing a direct correlation between growing violence in media and increasing violence among young people. I want to engage the NLC membership on this issue."

The National League of Cities is the nation's oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 U.S. cities, towns and villages, which collectively serve 218 million people.

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**National League of Cities**  
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