



The United States Conference of Mayors

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**STATEMENT BY THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
PRESIDENT MIAMI MAYOR MANNY DIAZ
ON
SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION ON
ENERGY EFFICIENCY BLOCK GRANT FOR CITIES**

Washington, DC – “The nation’s mayors are shocked and dismayed over the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee action to cast aside the fully authorized and nationally-accepted delivery system to provide energy efficiency block grants to cities, towns, counties and states that would have provided essential funds to move our nation forward toward energy independence and climate protection.

“While Washington was asleep on this issue, I along with my mayoral colleagues have led the way to confront this national problem. Today, more than 870 Mayors have signed the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, committing to take city actions to reduce energy consumption and curb carbon emissions below 1990 levels by 2012.

“We are allocating local funds to cope with this national problem, absent a national investment from Washington. We have the American people with us. The nation’s mayors have been working on a daily basis, providing leadership on this issue through partnerships with nonprofits, civic and religious groups, and the academic and business sectors to secure funding for our energy block grant delivery system, established by Congress and signed into law last year by President Bush.

“We stand poised and ready to take action. This is a national problem that demands a national investment from Washington *now*, not later. The Senate Subcommittee has chosen to ignore and act against last year’s approved delivery system. Instead of funding this critical block grant program for cities, counties, and states, the panel approved a mere \$50 million in discretionary funds that ultimately will result in precious earmarks for a precious few.

“If the Senate allows this action to stand, it will be another glaring example of how Washington is out of touch with the American people, and ignores the dire need for national investment that

is required *now*. This is not the time to delay; it is the time to act. The clock on global warming is ticking away on all of us, and for generations that come after.

“Today, we send billions of dollars to Washington to invest in solutions to America's problems and challenges, and to do so in an equitable manner. We call upon the full Senate Appropriations Committee to correct this misstep, and affirm the established block grant system, as approved last year.

“We commend House Speaker Nancy Pelosi who worked with us to establish the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program; and encouraged and supported funding for the program through a delivery system to cities, counties and states to help us act on this critical national challenge. Mayors hailed her leadership on this landmark legislation.

We also commend House Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Pete Visclosky, Representative Chaka Fattah, and Members of the entire House Appropriations Committee who found the resources in the budget and voted \$295 million to be distributed throughout the nation under this energy block grant delivery system.

“Our *Mayors Ten-Point Plan* for cities called for a \$4 billion annual commitment to this program structure, a funding level that will be effectively utilized by communities throughout the country.

“Today, I am calling upon city, county and state leaders to stand with us and the American people to direct our political energy to persuade the Senate to respond and send our taxpayers’ money back to us to help us fight the economic and environmental threats of climate change and energy dependence.”

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