



# The United States Conference of Mayors

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 24, 2007

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## Mayors Praise Congressman Wynn for Introducing Energy and Environment Block Grant to Reduce Global Warming in Cities

Washington, DC – The United States Conference of Mayors, led by President and Trenton, (NJ) Mayor Douglas H. Palmer, praised Congressman Albert R. Wynn (MD) for introducing legislation that will help cities and states accelerate their energy efficiency efforts to reduce greenhouse gases in communities nationwide. The measure called *the Energy and Environment Block Grant Act of 2007* (H.R. 2447), would establish a new block grant program, similar to the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, that supplies formula-based grants to cities, counties, and states to help address the problem of global warming and energy dependence at the local and neighborhood level.

“Representative Wynn's bill will result in actions by communities in Maryland and throughout the country that will seriously begin to address the global warming crises before this nation and the world,” said U.S. Conference of Mayors President Palmer.

These funds will help reduce energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions by funding local initiatives, including: building and home energy conservation programs, fuel conservation programs, support of alternative fuels, building retrofits to increase energy efficiency, "Smart Growth" planning and zoning, and alternative energy programs. The legislation, H.R. 2447, is based on the Conference's recommendation in the Mayors' 10-Point Plan *Strong Cities, Strong Families, for a Strong America*.

“This is a pivotal time for our nation given the scale of our energy and climate challenges,” said Conference Executive Director Tom Cochran. “This legislation will enable mayors to do for energy and climate what CDBG has done for community development.”

Specifically, the measure authorizes \$4 billion for Fiscal Year 2008, rising to an annual level of \$6 billion by 2012. The program delivers a one-time grant to Mayors, County Executives and Governors to support development of an energy efficiency and climate protection strategy. The Secretary of Energy is directed to allocate seventy percent of all funds to cities of 50,000 or more in population and counties of 200,000 or more in population, with the remaining 30 percent allocated to the states, principally for redirecting grant funds to local governments that don't meet the population thresholds.

Congressman Wynn said, "I am proud to spearhead an effort that tackles global warming at the local level. This block grant legislation is a critical part of a broader national strategy to increase our energy efficiency and curb greenhouse gas emissions. I am committed to working alongside Mayors, County leaders and Governors nationwide to combat global climate change challenges that we face today. Local leaders know that these block grants will benefit our nation and will ensure progress on our energy and climate protection objectives."

Earlier this month, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, approved a broad energy package which included its own version of an energy and environment block grant that also reflects key elements of the Conference's plan.

In the absence of current federal legislation to support climate protection activities in cities, mayors have taken individual action to greenhouse gas emissions. For example, more than 500 mayors have signed The U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. Under the Agreement, mayors who sign commit to reduce carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels. This spring, the Conference launched a full-time Mayors Climate Protection Center to provide resources and tools for mayors.

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