

As the 107th Congress prepares to conclude its work and head home for the fall elections, the nation's mayors have come to Washington to make sure that the priorities of America's cities are addressed.

The tragic and criminal attacks of September 11 and the economic recession have combined to create a serious situation in our cities and the nation. Cities fully support the war against terrorism, and have been expending billions of dollars of our own resources to improve homeland security. But we need Congress to provide the reinforcements that have been promised.

At the same time, we must as a nation develop a domestic agenda which creates economic opportunity, supports metro economies which account for 85% of the gross domestic product, and helps working families who face job losses, skyrocketing housing costs, and other increases in daily living expenses.

At leadership meetings of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, it was agreed Mayors Lobby Day would focus on two priority areas: 1) Homeland Security; and 2) Economic Security.

Included under **Homeland Security** are:

- Homeland Security/Crime Funding
- Aviation Security

Included under **Economic Security** are:

- A National Housing Agenda
- Job/Skills Training
- Welfare Reform
- Amtrak

Over the past year, we have met with President George W. Bush and members of his Cabinet on many of these priorities. We have also met with key members of Congress and testified before numerous Congressional Committees. **It is now time for Washington to act!**

Mayors have not come to Washington alone. We are joined by our police and fire chiefs who know the importance of providing resources to our front-line troops, and by business partners who understand the importance of creating jobs, housing, a strong transportation system, and economic opportunity in the nation's cities and metro areas.

Mayors across this nation will continue to provide leadership to help make sure that America remains the safest and strongest nation on Earth, and we look for a stronger partnership with our federal government as together we move forward on this shared agenda.



A National Housing Agenda

In cities across the country, housing costs have skyrocketed, creating a national crisis that demands national action.

America's housing industry is strong, but our commitment to housing for all remains weak. While our housing market has bolstered a sagging national economy, too many American families are falling behind in their ability to find safe, decent and affordable housing.

Despite an all-time high homeownership rate in America of over 68 percent, the rate in cities is only 50 percent and even lower for minority and low- and moderate-income households. More than 14 million families spend more than half their income on housing.

Housing helps promote neighborhood stability, improved educational opportunity, employment stability, and helps owners save for their futures. Housing serves as an economic stimulus and springboard which creates jobs and fosters solutions for many other national and local priorities.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls for a comprehensive national housing policy that addresses the multitude of housing challenges in our communities, including homeownership, rental housing, public housing, special needs housing and homelessness issues. Specifically, the nation's mayors call for:

- **Passage of the Housing Affordability for America Act of 2002 (HR 3995) with an amendment by Rep. Bernie Sanders (VT) that will create a housing trust fund for the production and preservation of rental housing. HR 3995 would also reauthorize the HOPE VI severely distressed public housing program, the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program, and the McKinney Act's homeless housing programs through 2004.**
- **Funding of the Community Development Block Grant program at \$5 billion, of which \$4.61 billion would go directly to entitlement cities and counties. Funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program should be \$1.95 billion.**
- **Public Housing Operating and Public Housing Capital should each be funded at \$3.5 billion, and Homeless Assistance should be funded at \$1.21 billion. Funding should also be provided for the Supportive Housing Program, Shelter Plus Care renewals, and Section 8.**
- **The Public Housing Drug Elimination Program should also be restored and funded at \$410 million.**

Homeland Security/ Crime Funding

One year since September 11, 2001, Congress has yet to provide any direct funding to America's cities for homeland security prevention or preparedness efforts, despite the fact that cities have been expending billions of dollars of their own resources to help defend the homeland. At the same time, major cuts are being proposed by the Administration for existing public safety programs which help provide homeland protection and fight crime. And, final action is needed on information sharing bills and significant improvements are still needed at the nation's borders. Therefore, the nation's mayors call for:

- **Passage of a Homeland Security Block Grant with direct funding to cities for first responder activities related to planning, training, equipment, communication, and additional deployments through the use of overtime.**
- **Full funding for existing law enforcement resources especially the COPS program and Local Law Enforcement Block Grant.**
- **Final passage of Information Sharing Legislation to remove barriers to greater federal-local intelligence sharing. The full House has passed HR 4598, and the Senate Judiciary Committee has passed S 1615.**

- **A coordinated border/ports-of-entry policy including increases in the staffing of border agencies, improvement in the way inspections are conducted, and rapid and integrated implementation of technology as a critical component of “Smart Borders.”**

Aviation Security

America’s cities are spending billions of dollars of their own resources to meet mandated airport security improvements as directed in the Aviation and Transportation Security Act. To date, cities have received \$175 million for the first wave of immediate security improvements. This is \$269 million short of what was actually needed and does not include the cost incurred since local law enforcement officers replaced the National Guard nor the approximate \$3 to \$5 billion cost of acquiring explosive detection machines and airport infrastructure costs to meet the installation requirement. Therefore, the nation’s mayors call for:

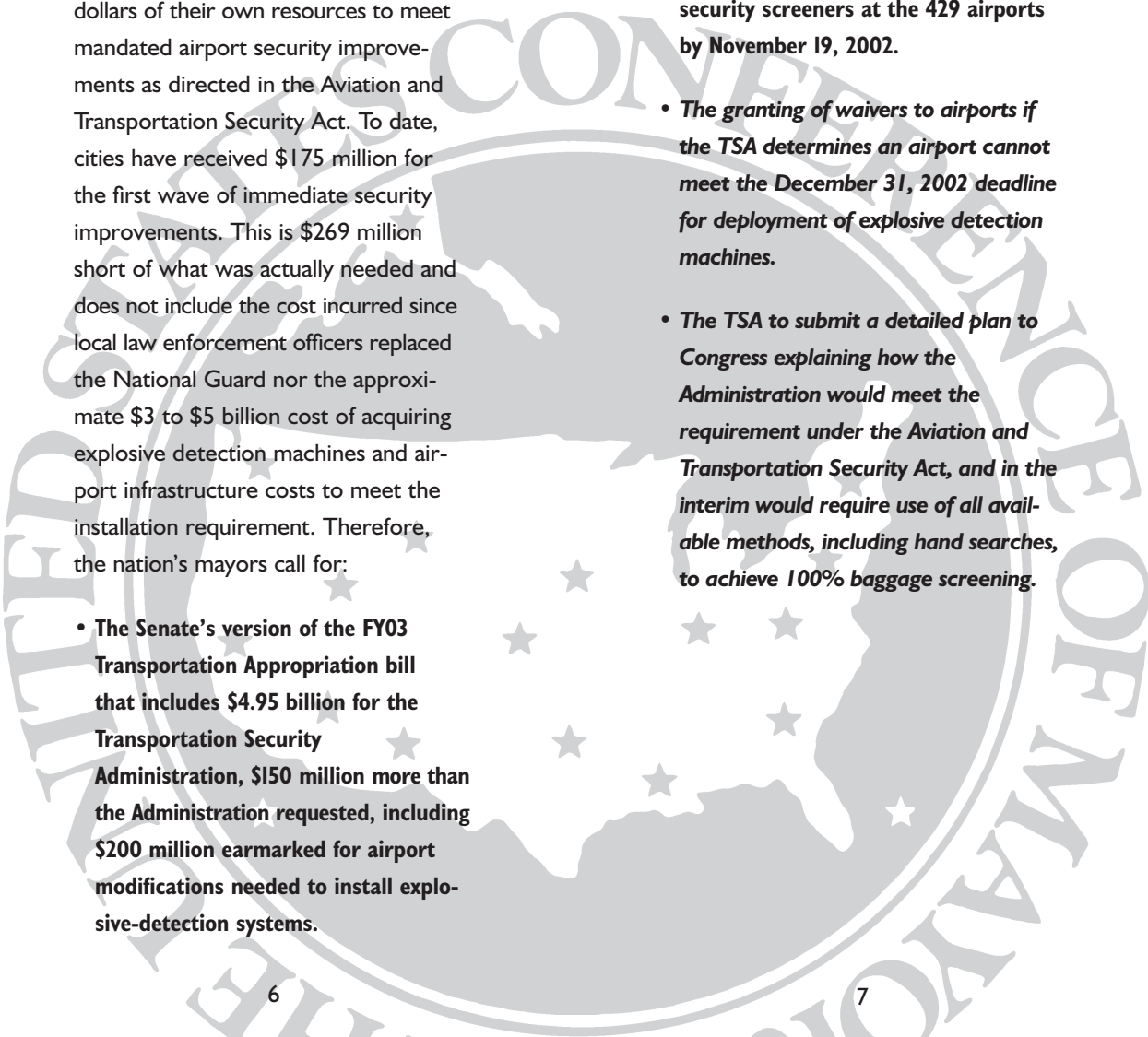
- **The Senate’s version of the FY03 Transportation Appropriation bill that includes \$4.95 billion for the Transportation Security Administration, \$150 million more than the Administration requested, including \$200 million earmarked for airport modifications needed to install explosive-detection systems.**

- **The Byrd-Stevens Amendment that proposes \$937 million for homeland security, including \$150 million for the direct costs of new security requirements for the nation’s airports, which is drawn from the \$5.1 billion emergency supplemental package that the President rejected in August.**

- **The Transportation Security Administration must hire and have trained nearly 30,000 federal airport security screeners at the 429 airports by November 19, 2002.**

- ***The granting of waivers to airports if the TSA determines an airport cannot meet the December 31, 2002 deadline for deployment of explosive detection machines.***

- ***The TSA to submit a detailed plan to Congress explaining how the Administration would meet the requirement under the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, and in the interim would require use of all available methods, including hand searches, to achieve 100% baggage screening.***



Job/Skills Training

With record numbers of layoffs, more severe long-term unemployment than in the past four recessions, a national unemployment rate of 5.7 percent, as high as 14 percent in some metropolitan areas and the lowest summer employment rate for the nation’s young people since 1965 (38.9%), now is not the time for Congress to balance the budget on the back of the American workers. The Administration cut job training funding in the proposed FY03 Budget and overnight, top appropriators cut \$400 million in job training funds for laid-off workers from the FY02 Supplemental Appropriations agreement, funds that were wisely proposed by the Administration and supported by the House and the Senate. Further, American businesses consistently indicate that a lack of skilled workers is one of their largest impediments to overall economic growth. Therefore the nation’s mayors call for:

- **Significant funding investment directly to local areas for skills training for the nation’s workers to address the growing skills gap crisis. This should include a jobs creation initiative for youth and a transitional jobs program for hard to place workers.**
- **Passage of bipartisan S 2766, which funds job training at FY02 levels including \$225 million for Youth Opportunity Grants, \$1.128 billion for youth training, \$950 million**

for adult training and \$1.54 billion for laid off workers.

- **Restoration of the proposed \$400 million in supplemental funds for dislocated workers in addition to the FY02 funding level in S 2766.**

Amtrak

The events of the past year have demonstrated how vital Amtrak is to our nation’s transportation system and our economy. A Washington Post poll (August 5, 2002) found that 71 percent of Americans, from across the country and of various ages and political persuasions, favor continuing federal subsidies to Amtrak or increasing federal funding for Amtrak service expansion. Amtrak has requested \$1.2 billion in FY03, which the Administration has rejected protecting its budget request of \$521 million—even though the Department of Transportation’s own Inspector General has said that Amtrak needs at least \$1 billion a year to prevent its deterioration. At levels below \$1.2 billion, passengers and millions of commuters will again face the prospect of significant service disruptions over the next year. Therefore, the nation’s mayors call for:

- **Congress to follow the Senate Appropriations Committee lead by passing a \$1.2 billion appropriation for Amtrak in FY03 that does not include reauthorization language.**

- **Maintaining the current national passenger rail system with Amtrak as the operator.**
- **Congress to support the \$1.2 billion rail security authorization amendment in the Department of Homeland Security legislation that would authorize Amtrak security upgrades.**
- **Congress to support the National Rail Defense Act (S 1991) that authorizes \$4.6 billion annually for the development of passenger rail and \$1.3 billion in one-time security improvements, and fully funds the existing long-distance Amtrak trains.**
- **A dedicated funding source for passenger and high-speed rail in the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).**

Welfare Reform

We need Congress' help to keep working families "working." The 1996 welfare reform legislation replaced the federal guarantee of cash welfare to all qualified families with a block grant that provides a fixed and guaranteed level of funding to states. In the years since its passage, record numbers of people have moved from welfare to work. However, the majority of those who remain on the welfare are concentrated increasingly in cities. And these cities are home to the hardest to serve recipients—those facing multiple barriers to employment

such as substance abuse and mental illness, learning disabilities, and little or no work history or skills. On September 30, this program expires and Congress must reauthorize it to avoid disruption to an already fragile system. Therefore, the nation's mayors call for:

- **Passage of a TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) reauthorization bill that continues to provide the necessary resources for working families as they take the next step towards independent living.**
- **Support of the Senate Finance Committee's TANF reauthorization bill which increases funding for child care, and includes education and training as allowable work activities while maintaining the current work requirements.**

LOBBY DAY 2002

