

March 24, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Enzi
379-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Chairman Kennedy,
Minority Leader McConnell and Ranking Member Enzi:

We, the undersigned Mayors, support expanding community and national service opportunities for Americans of all ages. In this difficult time for our country, service remains an enduring American value that brings people together and reminds us of the strength of our common bond.

As mayors, we have seen first hand how important community and national service can be to help us address pressing challenges in our cities and towns. Service members are helping schoolchildren build greater academic skills. They are mentoring young people, improving our public parks, assisting the elderly, strengthening access to community health projects, fighting poverty, and acting as role models for us all.

Service also strengthens our democracy. Americans of all ages, from youth to baby-boomers, are volunteering to serve in record numbers. As mayors, we want to capitalize on this new undercurrent of civic engagement, and inspire Americans to stay involved by serving their communities. Strengthening community and national service during this economic crisis makes great sense. With unemployment soaring among young and older Americans alike, these efforts can put people in productive work and provide skills relevant to re-entering the workforce at low cost to governments and with no new bureaucracy.

We strongly embrace the effort to expand national and community service opportunities as proposed by President Obama and a bi-partisan group of congressional leaders led by Senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). Cities—home to the some of the nation's most vexing problems—will be partners with states in the promotion of service and the recruitment and deployment of America's volunteers. We urge the Congress to promptly pass and fully fund S. 277, the bi-partisan Serve America Act.

The time is now to come together through service.

Sincerely,

Manuel A. Diaz
City of Miami, Florida

Michael R. Bloomberg
City of New York, New York

Jerry E. Abramson
City of Louisville, Kentucky

Tom Bates
City of Berkeley, California

Juan Carlos Bermudez
City of Doral, Florida

Peter J.M. Bober
City of Hollywood, Florida

Bill Bogaard
City of Buffalo, New York

Byron W. Brown
City of Pasadena, California

Roy Buol
City of Dubuque, Iowa

David N. Cicilline
City of Providence, Rhode Island

Marilee Chinnici-Zuercher
City of Dublin, Ohio

Dr. Robert Cluck
City of Arlington, Texas

Robert D. Coble
City of Columbia, South Carolina

Kenneth V. Cockrel, Jr.
City of Detroit, Michigan

Christopher B. Coleman
City of Saint Paul, Minnesota

Michael B. Coleman
City of Columbus, Ohio

Joy F. Cooper
City of Hallandale Beach, Florida

T.M. Franklin Cownie
City of Des Moines, Iowa

Richard M. Daley
City of Chicago, Illinois

Karl F. Dean
City of Nashville, Tennessee

Ron Dellums
City of Oakland, California

Sheila Dixon
City of Baltimore, Maryland

Wayne H. Dougherty
City of Havre de Grace, Maryland

Robert J. Duffy
City of Rochester, New York

Johnny Dupree
City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Adrian M. Fenty
District of Columbia

Thomas G. Ferrini
City of Portsmouth, California

Kevin C. Foy
City of Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Lois J. Frankel
City of West Palm Beach, Florida

Shirley Franklin
City of Atlanta, Georgia

James B. Gibson Jr.
City of Henderson, Nevada

Phil Gordon
City of Phoenix, Arizona

Jerramiah T. Healy
City of Jersey City, New Jersey

John W. Hickenlooper
City of Denver, Colorado

Frank G. Jackson
City of Cleveland, Ohio

Samuel L. Jones
City of Mobile, Alabama

Larry P. Langford
City of Birmingham, Alabama

Laurence Leyens
City of Vicksburg, Mississippi

Stephen J. Luecke
City of South Bend, Indiana

Mark Mallory
City of Cincinnati, Ohio

Joseph T. McElveen Jr.
City of Sumter, South Carolina

Morgan McPherson
City of Key West, Florida

Thomas M. Menino
City of Boston, Massachusetts

C. Ray Nagin Jr..
City of New Orleans, Louisiana

Gavin Newsom
City of San Francisco, California

Greg Nickels
City of Seattle, Washington

Michael Nutter
City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Douglas H. Palmer
City of Trenton, New Jersey

Miguel Pulido
City of Santa Ana, California

John Peyton
City of Jacksonville, Florida

Donald L. Plusquellic
City of Akron, Ohio

Luke Ravenstahl
City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Chuck Reed
City of San Jose, California

R.T. Rybak
City of Minneapolis, Minnesota

Raul G. Salinas
City of Laredo, Texas

Jerry Sanders
City of San Diego, California

Francis G. Slay
City of Saint Louis, Missouri

Scott Smith
City of Mesa, Arizona

R. Keith Summey
City of North Charleston, South Carolina

Antonio R. Villaraigosa
City of Los Angeles, California

Will Wynn
City of Austin, Texas

cc:

Senator Thad Cochran
Senator Daniel Inouye
Senator Orrin Hatch
Senator Tom Harkin
Senator Arlen Specter