



**City of Milwaukee  
2013 Federal Legislative Priorities**

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The following document represents the City of Milwaukee’s federal legislative priorities for the 2013 legislative session. For more information, please contact City of Milwaukee Intergovernmental Relations Staff:

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## **Major Federal Priorities**

### **Provide More Direct Appropriations of Federal Funds to Local Governments**

Urban areas are currently shortchanged by many state governments in the distribution of pass-through funds. We would like to see more federal resources targeted directly to local governments, thereby enabling the administration to work more closely with local leaders who share the President's priorities.

### **Continue and Increase Investment in Aging Infrastructure Replacement and Transportation Projects**

Our nation's largest cities are the hubs of US economic activity. We are challenged by the age and replacement needs of our roads, sewers, and other infrastructure which are relied upon by the largest concentration of residents and businesses. Continued funding for programs like ARRA and TIGER grants will improve our ability to support their needs.

### **Continue Funding Current Grant and Direct Appropriation Programs to Cities**

With the goal of deficit and spending reductions by many in Congress, it is important for the City to fight to maintain federal funding of over \$150 million that the City currently receives each year from federal agencies. Milwaukee's residents depend on the vital services that these grants and programs support and it is important that Milwaukee continues to receive its fair share of federal resources.

### **Create a Nationwide Catalytic Economic Development Project Fund**

Urban revitalization requires a targeted, multi-disciplinary approach to be most effective. Federal grant resources from multiple agencies should be pooled together to create a targeted vision for urban revitalization that will have a greater impact on communities. Milwaukee projects that could benefit from this approach include the 30<sup>th</sup> Street Industrial Corridor, the Lakefront Interchange, the Aerotropolis and the Port of Milwaukee's Foreign Trade Zone.

### **Invest in the Fresh Coast Concept to Further Milwaukee's Up and Coming Status as a World Leader in Freshwater Science and Industry**

Milwaukee has become a national leader in freshwater sciences and industry through our location on the Great Lakes, the concentration of freshwater related businesses, and the expansion of the UWM School of Freshwater Sciences. The City should actively pursue federal legislation and opportunities that will capitalize upon and increase our standing as a national hub for freshwater science and industry.

### **Increase Opportunities for International Trade at Milwaukee's Port and Expand International Connections with Urban Centers of Economic Activity**

The International Trade Administration can help international companies connect with urban areas according to their market assets and strategic advantages. With the size and strategic location of the Port of Milwaukee and our freshwater resource capacity, the City is in a unique position to capitalize upon efforts at the federal level to expand international trade and business location in industries that can benefit from our assets.

# Federal Priorities - United States Congress

## **Fiscal Stability**

- Protect the tax exempt status of municipal bonds
- Create a two year window for the return of tax-exempt pension obligation borrowing for state and local government pension plans
- Create a direct revenue sharing program with the 50 largest city governments in the United States

## **Economic Development**

- Remove the Harbor Maintenance Tax to promote and encourage the development of short distance marine transportation services
- Provide additional economic and tax incentives to encourage increased exports
- Reauthorize the New Markets Tax Credits program
- Reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act
- Support additional funding for the direct creation of public and private sector jobs

## **Environmental Sustainability**

- Provide additional funding for the construction of new Compressed Natural Gas fueling stations, vehicles, and maintenance
- Promote a renewable portfolio standard
- Increase funding for municipal Energy Efficiency programs (similar to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block program under ARRA)
- Support states in adopting extended producer responsibility measures to induce manufacturers to assist in the recycling of their products

## **Infrastructure**

- Fund public works programs to put workers back to work while improving the nation's infrastructure
- Make additional funds available for the Safe Drinking Water Loan Fund.

## **Community Investment**

- Preserve and expand the Community Reinvestment Act
- Exempt non-profit community development corporations from the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008
- Re-establish the Renewal Communities tax credit program

## **Public Safety**

- Support legislation to close loopholes concerning firearms background checks and support President Obama's plan to reduce gun violence
- Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act

## **Community Health**

- Oppose any repeal of the Affordable Health Care Act

## **Other**

- Support immigration reforms that include a path toward citizenship

- Support legislation limiting student loan interest rates, creating new loan forgiveness provisions, and converting of certain private student loans to federal loans
- Support legislation promoting transparency in spending on elections
- Support continued funding of public, educational, and government (PEG) access channels

## **Federal Priorities - By Agency**

### **Department of Transportation**

- Provide direct funding for large urban transportation projects, such as the reconstruction of Milwaukee's Lake Interchange
- Continue to fund new urban rail projects through programs like TIGER, including Milwaukee's application for a Streetcar extension
- Adopt a "fix-it-first" policy for future transportation infrastructure improvements
- Continue, sustain, and direct federal investment into local mass transit to provide access to jobs throughout the region
- Include sewer lateral repairs as part of future federally funded infrastructure programs
- Eliminate the restriction on using US DOT funds for local street (non-collector/arterial) projects
- Provide increased funds for STP for local street needs in urbanized areas
- Adjust transportation project oversight to speed up and simplify the design process, and to move more funds away from engineering and into construction
- Support additional funding for local harbor equipment and improvements
- Support expanded funding for federal highway aid
- Prevent the expansion of Interstate 94 between 25th Street and 70th Street in Milwaukee

### **Department of Housing and Urban Development**

- Restore additional funding for Community Development programs including CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA
- Fund an additional round of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Support funding for the National Housing Trust Fund
- Expand the use of the HOME Investment Partnership Act to allow funds to be used for public housing units

### **Department of the Interior**

- Prevent the authorization of a new off-reservation casino in southeastern Wisconsin

### **Environmental Protection Agency**

- Concentrate federal freshwater research and investment in Milwaukee
- Continue funding the Lake Michigan Czar
- Increase funding for Brownfield Remediation programs
- Protect the Great Lakes from invasive species
- Fund climate adaptation programs
- Loosen the eligibility criteria for the Safe Drinking Water Loan Fund to allow large utilities to have greater access to the fund
- Continue enforcement of the Clean Air Act and focus on the reduction of greenhouse gas pollution

### **Department of Labor**

- Increase funding for youth training and summer youth employment programs
- Reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act with a focus on local control

### **Department of Commerce**

- Continue to fund the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program

- Provide funding for Milwaukee's 30<sup>th</sup> Street Industrial Corridor including infrastructure improvements, workforce training, business incentives, investment in multi-family housing, and alternative energy resources
- Support and fund the Aerotropolis concept (re-investment around General Mitchell International Airport after the 440<sup>th</sup> air refueling wing was closed by DOD)
- Support programs that increase manufacturing jobs

### **Department of Agriculture**

- Invest in urban farming and the promotion of fresh foods in impoverished areas
- Provide federal assistance for Emerald Ash Borer inoculation and control
- Continue funding the Federal Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program

### **Department of Energy**

- Provide support for municipal-led Energy Efficiency financing programs

### **Centers for Disease Control**

- Provide additional funding for HIV prevention
- Fund our CDC approved bioterrorism preparedness laboratory which covers SE WI and provides back-up for Chicago and Madison

### **Homeland Security/FEMA**

- Increase funding for Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grants
- Sustain funding for local UASI grants. Provide minimal annual funding for the 34 urban areas, including Milwaukee, that are no longer funded

### **Department of Health and Human Services**

- Continue support for employer wellness programs in the Affordable Care Act
- Support continued funding for the WIC, home visiting, and lead reduction programs

### **Army Corps of Army Engineers**

- Increase dredging of Great Lakes harbors
- Support efforts to prevent invasive species, specifically Asian Carp, from entering the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence ecosystem

### **Department of Education**

- Increase direct support to public libraries including the Library Services Technology Act funds
- Continue to support the Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Continue to support the E-rate program.
- Provide additional support for new early childhood literacy programs

### **Department of Justice**

- Increase funding for the Community Oriented Policing Services grants(COPS)
- Increase funding for the Byrne Justice Assistance grants (JAG)