From: Mayor Bryan K. Barnett
To: bbethune@cityofmyrtlebeach.com
Subject: [External]Barnett COVID-19 Update 6/2
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USCM President's Report on COVID-19 Responses and Actions

TO: The Mayor

FROM: Bryan K. Barnett, Mayor of Rochester Hills, MI

The original purpose of my weekly Tuesday emails -- sharing information about COVID-19 and our collective response -- seems almost insignificant now.

The events that occurred in Minneapolis a week ago Monday and the incidents that have taken place since, have left us saddened, outraged, shocked and heartbroken.

This mural, painted on a wall near the corner of 38th Street and Chicago Avenue South, where George Floyd was arrested and murdered, serves as a powerful reminder of his death and what occurred at that place. At the bottom we read the words: “I can breathe now.”

America is asking how many more deaths will it take? How many more men and women of color will utter the words “I can’t breathe?” before taking their last

breath?

As I mentioned in statements released nationally last Wednesday and again on Saturday, what happened in Minneapolis should never occur in this country. We mourn for George Floyd and grieve with the loved ones he left behind. Our society must never grow indifferent to this needless and unacceptable loss of life.

On Saturday, I hosted a call with mayors and police chiefs across our country, joined by the Major Cities Chiefs Association and its president, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo. Chuck Ramsey, the former police chief of Philadelphia and Washington, DC., advisor to the Conference and current contributor to CNN was also on the call. We had a valuable discussion about experiences, culture, training, relationships, and leadership. Participants shared intelligence and spoke about the importance of respecting and facilitating peaceful protests, demonstrating restraint, offering clear and regular communication and the benefits of engaging community leaders in our efforts.

I applaud those who are demonstrating peacefully in George Floyd's honor and who bring attention to systemic inequality and unjust treatment of people of color in America.

Others, as you know, have engaged in violence, hijacking the narrative and taking up destructive, dangerous and irresponsible behavior - behavior that tarnishes the real cause - and that cannot be tolerated.

I have convened a meeting of the USCM Executive Committee tomorrow on this subject and I will discuss additional steps the Conference is taking during our regular Zoom meeting this coming Friday, June 5th, at 3:00pm ET.

Let me now pivot to other matters of the Conference and, more specifically, to an update on matters related to COVID-19.

I do want to remind full Member Mayors that I have appointed the USCM Nominating Committee for 2020. Full Member Mayors who are interested in seeking elected office within our organization should review this memo sent out by Tom Cochran. Please note, the deadline to submit a letter seeking office is Wednesday, June 17 at 5:00pm ET.

Here is a list of COVID-19 related topics and opportunities covered in this Tuesday's message. Corresponding details follow.

1. TESTIMONY: Mayors Press for Emergency Fiscal Assistance/What is Needed to Open Cities
2. NEEDED: Additional Data for USCM Fiscal Pain Tracker
3. NEEDED: 50 State-Wide Letters from Mayors Calling for Fiscal Assistance
4. SAVE THE DATE: All Mayors/Business Council Call - June 5 (Friday) at 3:00pm ET
5. SUBMITTED: 67 Proposed USCM Policy Resolutions - Will be Made Public on June 8
6. POSTPONED: COVID-19: Disparities to Treatment and Care
7. CHANGED: Bloomberg Philanthropies COVID-19 Local Response Initiative City Leaders Virtual Sessions Transition to Monthly
8. WEBINAR RECAP: What's the Latest in COVID-19 Testing?
9. WEBINAR RECAP: Can Summer Sports and Recreation Programs Open Safely?
10. WEBINAR RECAP: White House COVID-19 Coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx and CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield Featured in Friday All Mayors Call
11. RECAP: National Day of Prayer and Lament
12. Connecting with USCM and Exchanging Information with Fellow Mayors

1. TESTIMONY: Mayors Press for Emergency Fiscal Assistance/What is Needed to Open Cities

Last Friday, the bipartisan House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis held a member briefing titled: "Supporting America's Cities: What Mayors Need to Safely Reopen" moderated by Chair James Clyburn (SC).

During this briefing, I stated that even with the resources already provided, "America's cities are being devastated by this pandemic, and it is imperative that Congress and the Administration take swift and decisive action before the beginning of the next fiscal year which for many cities is July 1." I reminded the members that while much of this battle is being fought through local efforts, only 38 cities meeting the 500,000 person population threshold have received direct financial assistance. Without additional direct financial assistance - and

the allowance for even existing funds to be used for budget mitigation - cities are being forced to furlough or lay off employees and cut critical services, as highlighted in our Mayors COVID-19 Fiscal Pain Tracker.

To personalize these cuts for Committee Members, I told them how in Rochester Hills, “Youth soccer didn’t take place this spring in my community. That one cancellation of a soccer field rental fee resulted in a $200,000 cut - revenue lost that cannot be made up.” I am sure that there are literally thousands of examples like this across the country that can help illustrate for leaders in Washington the very real economic impact of the pandemic. “The need to take action is pressing, and no less than public safety is at stake,” I reminded the Committee adding that,” without federal support, cities will likely become a drag on the very economic recovery that they would otherwise be leading.”

Other mayors echoed the need for financial assistance during the crisis. USCM Past President Columbia, SC Mayor Steve Benjamin stated, “I as well as almost every other mayor in the nation are clear and adamant that the next bill must include clear, targeted, and flexible fiscal assistance to all cities…” Mayor Benjamin echoed support for the House-passed HEROES Act, which would provide $187 billion in flexible emergency assistance that would reach EVERY municipality.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti discussed California’s record high unemployment surpassing the levels of the Great Depression, and noted the biggest sector facing job loss is local government employees. He discussed the need for immediate federal support including “an infrastructure package and a CARES Act Core that could bring as many as a hundred thousand jobs to out of work Americans to help with things such as contact tracing.”

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan spoke about the importance of addressing the unforgivable crisis in our nation’s senior living facilities, how the federal government needs to lead on data standards and strategies for COVID-19 and on reopening and contact tracing, as well as the need for sustained significant direct relief for all cities.

A number of other mayors shared just some of the many challenges their cities have faced during the crisis. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms discussed how

Atlanta supported local businesses hit especially hard during the pandemic through the city wide initiative ATL Strong. Businesses such as barbers and cosmetologists have received benefits of $1,000 a month to help offset the loss of revenue, which has helped more local businesses stay open. Mayor Jane Scott noted the hardships in her city of Mangum, Oklahoma - a town with less than 3,000 people - encountered when they became the highest infected community per capita in Oklahoma at 10.9 percent. She advocated for technological and healthcare investment into rural communities, as rural populations have less access to remote education and healthcare due to hospital closures in their areas. And, Mayor Lenny Curry remarked on the unintended impact safety measures have had on some Jacksonville residents such as a significant and consistent increase in opioid overdose emergency calls.

Click here to watch a recording of this hearing.

2. NEEDED: Additional Data for USCM Fiscal Pain Tracker

170 cities have responded to our Mayors COVID-19 Fiscal Pain Tracker - a way for mayors to share public information regarding budget shortfalls and related furlows, layoffs, or other actions that have resulted from COVID-19. If you have not already submitted information, or have updates to content already submitted, please send them to fiscalpain@usmayors.org. This is a living, breathing USCM initiative that will be key to our success in building support in the Senate for emergency fiscal assistance.

3. NEEDED: 50 Statewide Letters from Mayors Calling for Fiscal Assistance

A number of mayors have already organized state-wide efforts calling for emergency fiscal assistance:

- Texas mayors, organized by Arlington Mayor Jeff Williams, sent this letter on April 15.
- Eleven Illinois mayors of cities with a population between 75,000 and 500,000, organized by Rockford Mayor Thomas McNamara, sent a letter April 20 to the State's delegation urging them to support, “flexible direct funding to municipalities to help limit the crippling economic damage to our cities as a result of this global pandemic.”
- Seven Iowa Mayors co-authored on May 6 this op-ed, “Congress: stand

up for cities," that appeared in the *Quad-City Times.*

- Pennsylvania mayors, organized by Scranton Mayor Paige Cognetti, sent this letter on May 13.
- Forty Michigan mayors signed on to a letter of support for direct local assistance for all cities that I distributed. The May 28 letter urges our Michigan Congressional delegation in Washington to help us.
- And, there could be other letters or efforts out there.

I strongly encourage all mayors to act - statewide. 50 letters or op-eds from mayors in all 50 states! Imagine what impact that would have as we push to get the Senate to act on fiscal assistance.

4. SAVE THE DATE: All Mayors/Business Council Call - June 5 (Friday) at 3:00pm ET

The agenda and registration will be sent out soon for our weekly Friday 3:00 to 4:00pm ET call.

5. SUBMITTED: 67 Proposed USCM Policy Resolutions - Will be Made Public on June 8

Sixty-seven proposed resolutions were submitted by full Member Mayors by the deadline of Wednesday, May 27. Many of the resolutions do relate to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19, as requested when we issued the call for resolutions. The resolutions are now being formatted by USCM staff, and will then - under our rules - be assigned to the appropriate standing committee(s) by Membership Committee Chair Piscataway Mayor Brian C. Wahler and our General Council. On June 8, the resolutions will be made available on usmayors.org and the USCM app, and will at that point be open for co-sponsorship by full Member Mayors. On June 8, we will also announce the schedule for the 10 virtual standing committee meetings that will take place during the week of June 22.

6. POSTPONED: COVID-19: Disparities to Treatment and Care

We will be announcing a new day and time soon for an important discussion on disparities to treatment and care and promoting inclusion (originally scheduled for Wednesday, 6/3, at 3:00pm ET). Mayors will highlight several targeted initiatives they are leading in their cities to advance equity and improve health outcomes for their most vulnerable residents. Additionally, the webinar will

provide strategies, policies, and sound advice you can implement now to advance equity in the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and future public health emergencies. Featured panelists will include:

- Richmond (VA) Mayor Levar Stoney, Chair of our Children, Health, and Human Services Standing Committee (Moderator)
- Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza
- Fremont Mayor Lily Mei
- Former Boston City Health Commissioner John Auerbach

7. CHANGED: Bloomberg Philanthropies COVID-19 Local Response Initiative City Leaders Virtual Sessions Transition to Monthly
In partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies and others, the COVID-19 Local Response Initiative is providing support and resources to help local leaders combat COVID-19 and protect the social and economic wellbeing of our cities.

We continue to join Bloomberg Philanthropies and their partners at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative for the convening of the Bloomberg COVID-19 Local Response Initiative City Leaders Virtual Session. This past week featured remarks by Harvard President Lawrence S. Bacow along with a recap of the previous 10 sessions.

The Local Response Initiative announced that the virtual sessions will be re-tooled and turned into monthly sessions beginning on June 18. The Conference invites you to join the more than 300 cities across the nation who have already registered for Bloomberg Philanthropies' COVID-19 Local Response Initiative. To join, please email coronavirusresponse@bloomberg.org.

8. WEBINAR RECAP: What's the Latest in COVID-19 Testing?
Last Wednesday, our Mayors Leadership Institute on Smart Cities - our mayoral leadership program in partnership with the NYU Wagner School of Public Service - hosted a webinar on the latest on COVID-19 testing. The hour-long session focused on the different kinds of testing options that exist and how your city can build capacity during this time.

Our Technology and Innovation Task Force Chair Austin Mayor Steve Adler moderated the session, including a great Q&A. I want to thank our speakers, Marc Gourevitch, Chair of Population Health, NYU School of Medicine, Lorna

Thorpe, Professor of Epidemiology at NYU School of Medicine, and Anthony Tran, Director, Public Health Laboratory, DC Department of Forensic Sciences for their time. And, of course, I want to thank Gordon Campbell, our partner at NYU Wagner for all of his great work.

Click here to watch a recording of this webinar.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tom McClimon at mcclimon@usmayors.org, Jocelyn Bogen at jbogen@usmayors.org or Colton Gibbons at cgibbons@usmayors.org.

9. WEBINAR RECAP: Can Summer Sports and Recreation Programs Open Safely?

The USCM held a follow-up webinar on May 28 that addressed questions on the topics of reopening procedures and guidelines for summer recreation programs, playgrounds, swimming pools, and sports.

Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve, Chair of our Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment, and Sports Committee moderated the session, and I want to thank her and our speakers:

- Lee Igel from New York University (NYU) Tisch Institute for Global Health
- Dr. Arthur Caplan from New York University (NYU) Langone Health
- Allison Colman, Director of Health, National Recreation and Park Association
- Tracey Gaslin Ph.D., CPNP, FNP-BC, CRNI, RN-BC, Executive Director, Association of Camp Nursing
- Michael Kelly, General Superintendent, Chicago Park District and Chair-Elect of National Recreation and Parks Association

All of the panelists discussed their professional insight on best practices in order for summer programs to safely reopen. Tracey Gaslin discussed doing programs outside when possible. She also explained the benefits of using cohorts and staying together in small camp or program groups. Dr. Arthur Caplan and Lee Igel, focused on the principles of washing hands, maintaining social distance, and using samples and guidelines provided by experts to develop programs. They also both covered how new training for staff is key, and a different version of traditional sports will be part of this summer's reopening process. Allison Colman discussed the significance behind

monitoring activities with social distancing, and to evaluate risks accordingly when assessing new programs. This includes using facilities and spaces safely to fit guidelines. In addition to emphasizing these points, Michael Kelly reviewed why having policies in place in response to new cases of Covid-19 is a crucial part of reopening.

Click here to watch a recording of this webinar.

10. WEBINAR RECAP: White House COVID-19 Coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx and CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield Featured in Friday All-Mayors Call

Last Friday, we were joined by:

- Dr. Deborah Birx, White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator
- Dr. Robert R. Redfield, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Doug Hoelscher, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Throughout the webinar, they discussed four key phases of contract tracing including 1) The importance of tracing and monitoring contacts of infected persons, 2) Supporting the quarantine of contacts, 3) The expansion of staffing resources in states and cities, and 4) Increasing digital tools to support state and local efforts. Additionally, we were joined by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer helping raise questions for our featured guests.

Cities across the nation are already engaged in a variety of efforts to build their contract tracing programs, so our featured guests were pleased to showcase some of the following information here and indicated a close partnership and the work of cities will be key to reopening the nation.

Following the discussion with the White House, Charlotte Mayor Vi Lyles, Mayor Garcetti, and Mayor Faulconer provided updates on COVID-19 impacts and responses in their cities.

11. RECAP: National Day of Mourning and Lament

On May 31, a Washington Post story on U.S. faith leaders leading their

congregations through a tumultuous time included: “This week’s protests against racial injustice came as interfaith leaders prepared to mark a national day of mourning and lament for those killed by the coronavirus on Monday, an effort backed by The U.S. Conference of Mayors.” This captures the experience of the cities across the country that responded to the appeal by the Conference and the nation’s faith leaders to designate and observe June 1 as a National Day of Mourning and Lament for the more than 100,000 victims of COVID-19. Still, with protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis dominating the news for days leading up to June 1, the news media reported on National Day observances across the country.

In support of the National Day, the Conference last week conducted a webinar for mayors, suggested actions to be taken, and provided a model declaration to be used by mayors planning actions and events in their cities. More than 60 cities had notified the Conference in advance that observances would be taking place, describing a wide range of activities such as prayer services, proclamations, bell ringing at places of worship, flags flown at half staff, moments of silence, and other virtual and social media activity. Mayors’ responses to the Conference’s call for participation in this National Day are greatly appreciated.

12. Connecting with USCM and Exchanging Information with Fellow Mayors

As a reminder, we have placed numerous resources and key federal links on our special COVID-19 webpage on the usmayors.org site, and we’ve created a Slack Channel where cities can exchange information. We encourage you to join the conversation on Slack if you haven’t already done so. In addition, please feel free to reach out to me directly at 248-227-2869 (cell) or barnettb@rochesterhills.org on any matter on which I personally or USCM as an organization can be of assistance. And you can always reach our CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran at 202-744-9110 (cell) or tcochran@usmayors.org.

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Finally, in the midst of navigating a 100-year event in the coronavirus pandemic, we now face an equally serious and concerning matter. But I know one thing. The leadership of Mayors has never been stronger: America’s

mayors are leading once again, during an extraordinary time, and demonstrating extraordinary competence and grace. Mayors are at the forefront of it all, showing courage, determination, wisdom and empathy.

You may not be receiving a lot of “thank you’s” right now, but let me just say how impressed I am every time I speak to you, see you on television or read about what you’ve accomplished. You are everywhere and you are appreciated. For my part, I will continue my efforts to advocate for you, for a peaceful, measured response in our cities, and for justice for all Americans.

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As always: If you’re not a member of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, **please join us!** There’s never been a better time to be a part of this group. Questions? My contact information is above. Luther Roberts, Director of Membership at USCM, can also help. He can be reached at lroberts@usmayors.org.

Mayors, lead boldly -- and know that our USCM family is behind every one of you. Now more than ever.

BKB

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