

AWC 2024 Federal Legislative Priorities



Maintain stable and reliable federal government operations

- Address budgets to **avoid actual or threatened federal government shutdowns**—which create uncertainty, fiscal impacts, and other hardships for our communities. Stable, reliable federal government operations are critical to cities and our residents.



Protect & maintain flexibility in COVID-19 response

- Ensure that **Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are not swept** for other purposes. Support proposals to enhance flexibility with previously appropriated COVID-19 response funding to **maximize local impacts and benefits** and minimize administrative burdens and costs.



Continue investing in local public infrastructure

- Pursue policy solutions that **support cities' basic infrastructure needs**. Protect and ensure access to federal funding in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) for cities of all sizes. **Minimize costly grant application and other administrative burdens** that may create a barrier to funding crucial projects.
- Seek sustainable revenue sources to address the existing backlog of city infrastructure projects in Washington. **Cities need ongoing and sustainable investments.**

- Support policies that **build climate-resilient infrastructure** capacity and invest in sustainable technologies to serve cities into the future.
- Support **digital equity in our communities**. Continue federal investment programs like the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), and **expand broadband access** in unserved, under-served, and hard-to-serve areas.
- Ensure that as perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) lawmaking and regulations evolve, **cities are explicitly recognized as "passive receivers" of PFAS, exempt from liability** under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). As cities continue to address PFAS in their water systems and beyond, we need funding and mitigation supports.



Invest in safe communities

- Support **community-centered, equitable programs that improve our behavioral health system** and local response to the opioid addiction crisis. Ensure that funds appropriated for substance use disorder education, treatment, prevention, and recovery programs are accessible to cities.
- **Provide financial assistance to help recruit and retain first responders.**
- **Provide direct funding to cities to support violence prevention programs**, including gun violence prevention.
- Support changes to federal banking regulation to **allow access to banking for state licensed cannabis businesses** to address safety concerns.

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Invest in transportation

- Support a more **sustainable revenue model to fund the Highway Trust Fund**.
- Support federal policies that **enhance municipal efforts to provide essential transportation systems**.
- Ensure that **funding for fish passage improvements** is available to both local and state governments.
- Support efforts and increase resources to **improve traffic and pedestrian safety**, including additional measures on overweight vehicles and vehicle safety.
- Continue support for **rail safety investments**.



Invest in affordable housing and emergency shelter

Support a **comprehensive federal housing policy** that preserves local decision-making while making substantial enhancements to **federal investments in affordable housing to benefit cities**.

- **Expand low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC)**;
- Expand **federal flexibility to use Medicaid** funding to **provide housing** and shelter.



Invest in early learning and childcare

63% of Washingtonians live in a “childcare desert.” Even when childcare is available, it’s often unaffordable.

- Partner with states and local communities to provide sufficient resources to ensure families can **access high-quality, safe, affordable, and available childcare**.
- Replace and subsidize the now-expired Child Care Stabilization Act dollars and **additional funding programs to expand capacity and access to childcare**.



Protect public control over public rights-of-way

Uphold local control over local public rights-of-way in order to balance community interests with the need for new telecommunications infrastructure.



Protect local fiscal sustainability and regulatory efforts

Washington cities **oppose federal policies that undermine local governments’ regulatory authority**, impose unfunded mandates, or preempt local government revenues and revenue authorities.

Preserve the tax exemption on all municipal bonds, including Private Activity Bonds (PABs), eliminate the \$10,000 cap on the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction, and restore the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds.



Support National League of Cities’ National Municipal Policy and Resolutions & U.S. Conference of Mayors’ priorities

AWC and many individual cities are members and supporters of the NLC agenda. Unless otherwise noted, AWC supports the recommendations of NLC and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

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