



November 25, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As mayors of 66 cities representing millions of Americans, we write to thank you for your leadership on climate mitigation and resilience. As you said in your State of the Union speech, “No challenge poses a greater threat to future generations than climate change.”

We are writing to call on you to act in the best interests of the American people and fight for the strongest possible climate agreement at the upcoming 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) in Paris, and for federal action to establish binding national greenhouse gas emissions reductions here at home. The United States can and should be the leader in the transition to a clean energy economy, and we applaud the Clean Power Plan as an important step toward that end.

To support your leadership and assist you and the U.S. delegation in reaching the strongest possible agreement, we have launched a campaign to engage with our constituents, elected officials and other stakeholders to help achieve these strong outcomes at the national and international levels, while building on municipal leadership on climate change.

As mayors, we understand that we are stronger working together. That is why we have come together and created the Mayors National Climate Action Agenda (MNCAA) to help lead the way to a solution to global climate change. A changing and variable climate has tremendous implications for the livability, competitiveness and resilience of communities across the country. The extreme weather events we have all increasingly experienced in recent years and the future projections we face make it clear that we all share a common risk and commitment to safeguarding our communities.

The MNCAA is a mayor-to-mayor initiative to raise the collective voice of leading mayors, demonstrate the essential role of cities in working towards climate solutions, and build political will for U.S. leadership. This initiative, established by the Mayors of Houston, Los Angeles and Philadelphia, already includes more than 30 cities, and will continue to grow.

The negotiations in Paris will be as challenging as they are critical to our cities' environmental health and economic prosperity.

Cities across the country are already taking the lead. The cities we represent are working to take responsible steps to curb emissions and plan for the changing climate. Many of our cities have reached Kyoto commitments far ahead of states and the national government, and cities across the country are committing to binding targets, creating standardized inventories and climate action plans and laying the ground work for a municipal offset protocol. But we cannot act alone. We need the federal government to provide a path forward to making meaningful reductions in carbon pollution while preparing for the impacts of climate change.

Despite the dangerous and irresponsible stalemate in Congress, climate change is not a policy debate in communities all across the United States. The effects of a changing climate are presenting a clear and present threat. Extreme weather is presenting itself more regularly, though it takes many forms—from droughts in the west, wildfires in the intermountain states, to flooding and snow storms in the east and coastal erosion in the Gulf states.

Momentum is building for international coordination, as exemplified by the recent signing of the U.S.-China Climate Leaders Declaration. COP21 represents a prime opportunity for American leadership on a global scale. We recognize that local governments have a major role to play in reducing greenhouse gas levels, including ambitious implementation of the Clean Power Plan. We are encouraged that there is interest on the part of COP 21 for having language in the final agreement that specifically pertains to cities.

The time for strong U.S. action is now. We look forward to standing with you here at home and in Paris to bring leadership and focus to the reality of climate change and to urge national dialogue and action.

Sincerely,

MNCAA FOUNDERS

Houston Mayor Annise Parker
Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti
Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter

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Sitka Mayor Mim McConnell

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