



## *CLIMATE COMMUNITIES'* SUCCESSES AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

*Climate Communities* is a national coalition of cities and counties that is educating federal policymakers about the essential role of local governments in addressing climate change and promoting a strong local-federal partnership to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Launched in 2008, *Climate Communities* is already realizing significant climate change successes:

- *Climate Communities* worked with Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) and John Warner (R-VA), the sponsors of the Climate Security Act of 2008 (S. 3036), to include more than \$300 billion for climate actions at the local government level. This legislation originally included no funding, no allowance allocations, no auction proceeds, no offset credits, no technical assistance, and no direct help for local climate activities.
- *Climate Communities* rallied local government support for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, championed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The EECBG Program would enable cities and counties to enact strategies that reduce fossil fuel emissions, cut total energy use and improve energy efficiency. The House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee appropriated \$295 million for the program in FY 2009.
- The House Interior and Environment Appropriations Committee provided \$15 million for a *Climate Communities* proposal to create a climate change demonstration pilot program. The demonstration pilot funding would enable the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide grants to units of local government for efforts that reduce GHG emissions.

As this session of Congress winds down, *Climate Communities* is working with its members to plan an ambitious agenda for 2009 when the new President and Congress take office. Specifically, in the coming months we will:

- Continue to support full funding for the EECBG Program, championed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, as the Congress considers economic stimulus legislation.
- Ensure that Congress enacts *Climate Communities'* proposal for a \$15 million climate change demonstration pilot program, and work with EPA to develop implementation guidelines.
- Host a Local Government Climate Leaders Retreat in September at the Pocantico Conference Center in Tarrytown, NY, sponsored by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. This event will convene city and county officials to discuss opportunities for strengthening the local-federal climate partnership, and identify strategies for working with the next Presidential Administration and Congress.
- Prepare a "Local Government Climate Action Blueprint" for the next Presidential Administration and 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- Arrange for members of *Climate Communities* to meet with the Presidential transition team in December following the election to provide a briefing on the blueprint and demonstrate the critical climate change role of local governments.
- Organize a Local Government Climate Protection Summit in Washington, DC in Spring 2009, where *Climate Communities* members can meet with key Administration and Agency decision makers.