



## City of Phoenix

**To:** Mayor and Council  
Executive Team

**Date:** November 13, 2008

**From:** Karen Peters  
Government Relations Director

**Subject:** FEDERAL UPDATE: NOVEMBER 7 – 13, 2008

This memorandum provides an update of the past week's federal activities – Congressional action, lobbying and national meetings. Please let me or Tom Remes know if you have any questions or need further information on specific legislation or issues.

**NOVEMBER 7 – 13, 2008**

### **Lame Duck Next Week**

The lame duck session of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress will begin on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Most of the first week will be focused on an economic stimulus package, but could also address organization and election of House and Senate leaders, and decisions about how to address remaining FY 09 Appropriations bills.

### **Even More on the Economic Stimulus Package**

The issue being debated by Congress and the Bush White House is how large a stimulus bill should be and what issues other than infrastructure it will embrace. Senate Republicans may still block a measure and the White House has balked at some stimulus proposals. Many observers believe that if the Bush Administration creates a roadblock the stimulus will simply be the first bill enacted after inauguration of the Obama Administration on January 20<sup>th</sup>. In response to requests from national organizations that Phoenix participates with, staff has prepared a list of "ready-to-go" infrastructure and other projects that could be implemented with stimulus funding. The list serves only as illustration but is being used in briefings with our Arizona delegation.

Governor Napolitano testified today before the Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee regarding the potential stimulus legislation, urging Congress to increase the federal contribution to Medicaid and to fund "ready-to-go" infrastructure projects. Staff understands that the State of Arizona is making the case for as much as \$500 million in aid to help address the State's budget deficit.

### **CDBG Reform**

Yesterday Councilman Michael Johnson hosted a meeting at the National League of Cities conference with representatives from Charlotte, NC, Columbia, SC and Dallas,

TX to request that these cities join Phoenix in a coalition to promote reform of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Councilman Johnson asked the group to help recruit other local elected officials to join the coalition. Attendees agreed that reforming the CDBG program is a long term endeavor, but recognized the opportunity to educate a new Administration and Congress about the need to strengthen CDBG by reforming the formula. The group understands that in order to be successful a new formula would have to keep current CDBG recipients whole and target funding to areas based on need.

### **Obama Transition**

President-Elect Obama will not announce any Cabinet-level appointments this week. Governor Napolitano's name continues to be mentioned as a contender for the U.S. Attorney General position, though she declined to comment today other than to confirm that she is meeting with Obama advisors on general transition issues. Appointments in the Executive Offices of the President are taking shape, with Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-IL) accepting the Chief of Staff position. Reports indicate that Phil Schiliro, a top staffer to Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), will take the position of White House Legislative Affairs Director.