

## Democratic Principles for Open and Effective Public Discourse

WHEREAS, many of the issues and problems that confront our communities in the modern day are both highly complex and multi-faceted;

WHEREAS, the democratic system of governance adopted and espoused in American society strives constantly to be open and inclusive;

WHEREAS, achievement of the democratic ideals of our system of governance has created a plethora of benefits for all of humanity;

WHEREAS, when we lose sight of the broader conversation and aims of our system of governance, democratic conversations turn into resource-wasting contention devoid of factual information, and the fulfilled potential of our aspirations devolve into a generalized sense of confusion and misdirection as to the appropriate courses of action in any given context and for any given issue or problem;

WHEREAS, our system of governance and our ideals remain remarkable ideas worthy of preservation and needing a reminder that ours is a society constantly assessing and re-assessing what it must need to do in order to maintain an effective democratic conversation that leads to inspired, innovative, individual and collective action;

WHEREAS, our public discourse and various conversations sit at a crossroads in time where our ability to communicate a message and substantive content has increased dramatically both in scope and speed within the recent past;

WHEREAS, the promise of our social ideals combined with our technological capabilities allows us at this time to envision a broader conversation where ideas are shared, problems and issues are fully and honestly explored, aims are identified and effective action is taken to enfranchise optimally and to preserve and enhance the public and social good;

WHEREAS, it is critical to do the work of having open and honest conversations, with at least some significant part of that work entailing, in addition to a full and fair conversation, the constant effort to remind ourselves and our fellow Americans that the opportunities we create are not founded in the fighting and the winning but in the understanding of viewpoints and the generosity inherent in fostering our inter-connections;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors supports as critical and necessary to effectuate democratic process leading to inspired results approaches to the problems and issues of our communities that take into consideration the multi-faceted and complex nature of many of our in-common problems and issues, that adopt the working ethos necessary to understand the various needs and perspectives, and that recruit the patience and temperament needed to steward the wide arc of passions and positions represented in the public and general conversation.