

Accurate Public Information in a Digital Age

WHEREAS, communications in the modern day have rapidly increased in the past two decades, with the transmission of information becoming near-immediate, vast in scope, and available to many more people and groups than ever before;

WHEREAS, it is of great benefit to many people to be able to access information in a more open and widely available manner than ever previously possible in human endeavors;

WHEREAS, areas such as, but not limited to, public safety, emergency services, education, the arts & entertainment and public process have all benefited from the ability to communicate to a wide range of audiences in a near-immediate manner;

WHEREAS, another reality of modern technological capabilities in the realm of communications is the fact that both information and misinformation may be disseminated more readily than ever before, by more people and groups than ever before;

WHEREAS, it is squarely within the interests of a free and democratic society to work to ensure that its citizenry is both well-informed and accurately informed in order to ensure that a government of the people, by the people and for the people operates in a manner set forth by people who have been presented with truthful and open information;

WHEREAS, it is understood that honestly informed people may and do have honest differences of opinions, and that these differences are not just healthy but necessary to sustain a successful democracy of engaged citizens;

WHEREAS, it is further understood that a society, where the casual treatment of information in a manner where clear and more subtle falsehoods are regularly and without accountability set forth in a manner to further aims not designed to promote the interests of an educated and accurately informed electorate, is a society where basic democratic starting requirements are in the process of eroding;

WHEREAS, the remedy for such erosion of democratic foundations is a commitment to open conversation that embraces principles of fairness and compassion as much as it stewards the accuracy of information conveyed and the disclosure of interests represented;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors hereby affirms its commitment to ensuring that public discourse in the communities of our country be grounded in principles of truth in the setting forth of factual information, that our commitment to these principles meet the level of capability that our human endeavors have seen set forth in modern times, and that while we defend the right to express viewpoints, we also work to ensure that misleading information from undisclosed perspectives are brought forth to the light of day so that the body politic in our democratic society may make informed decisions uncorrupted by the non-democratic influence of falsehoods and undisclosed interests.