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Clarence E. Anthony

July 27, 2023

The Honorable Ruben Gallego
U.S. House of Representatives
Longworth House Office Building, Room 1114
15 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20515-0303

Dear Representative Gallego,

On behalf of the National League of Cities, I am writing to express our support for the "Extreme Heat Emergency Act of 2023." This crucial legislation, which proposes amending the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to add extreme heat events to the list of major disasters, holds immense significance for our communities and their well-being.

Extreme heat events have emerged as a pressing threat to our cities and towns, with devastating consequences on public health, local infrastructure, and vulnerable populations. By including extreme heat events in the definition of a major disaster, this act will grant the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) authority to provide crucial resources and support to local governments in times of crisis. This, in turn, will enhance their capacity to safeguard residents more effectively during heatwaves and promote a safer and more resilient environment.

One of the paramount reasons that we support this bill is the opportunity it presents to enable local governments to expand cooling centers. These centers serve as vital refuges during heatwaves, offering relief and life-saving protection to at-risk individuals, especially the elderly and those with health conditions that are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses.

Moreover, the bill allows local governments to extend critical support to the homeless population during extreme heat events. With federal disaster assistance funding and resources, cities will be better equipped to provide shelters with proper cooling facilities, ensuring that the most vulnerable members of our communities have a safe space to go when there are scorching temperatures.

Another significant aspect of this legislation is the potential support the federal disaster assistance can provide to hospitals and healthcare providers. The resources that can be made available under extreme heat disaster declaration can help enhance their capacity to care for individuals suffering from heatstroke and respiratory problems. This support is indispensable in maintaining the well-being of our residents and managing the increased strain on healthcare facilities during extreme heat emergencies.

The National League of Cities strongly advocates for the passage of the "Extreme Heat Emergency Act of 2023." By including extreme heat events in the definition of a major disaster, this legislation will empower

local governments to establish cooling centers, support vulnerable populations, assist the homeless, and enhance healthcare services during extreme heat events. Federal assistance for these measures will significantly contribute to the safety, health, and resilience of our communities in the face of escalating heat-related challenges.

Thank you for considering our support for this essential bill. We urge Congress to pass this important legislation quickly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clarence Anthony', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities

