



**GREAT LAKES AND  
ST. LAWRENCE**  
CITIES INITIATIVE



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Cities Initiative Joins Biden-Harris Partnership to Accelerate Progress on Lead Service Line Replacement**

*This partnership will foster collaboration to accelerate lead service line replacement across the United States*

*\*Embargoed until 5am ET*

**Chicago, January 27, 2023** -The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative announced it has joined the “Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out” Partnership along with several member mayors and cities from across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

The “Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership”, announced today at the White House by Vice President Kamala Harris, is intended to foster collaboration to accelerate lead service line replacement across the United States and enable rapid progress toward the Administration’s goal of replacing all remaining lead service lines within the next decade.

Many of the estimated 6 to 10 million remaining lead service lines in the United States are located in basin cities. Studies have shown that lead exposure negatively impacts childrens’ IQs and causes lifelong health effects in adults. No amount of lead exposure is safe.

In response to this ongoing public-health crisis, the Cities Initiative formed the Mayors Commission on Water Equity to promote access to safe, clean and affordable drinking water for all residents of the basin. This Commission continues to advocate for the equitable implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, including the \$15 billion for lead service line replacement over five years.

The “Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership” will be valuable in advancing progress on lead service line replacement, especially in historically underserved communities,” said Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee, WI, who serves as Co-Chair of the Mayors Commission on Water Equity. “I also will continue to work with the Biden-Harris Administration to identify additional sources of direct federal funding for our cities.”

“Cities like Cleveland are particularly impacted by the lead line crisis,” said Mayor Justin M. Bibb of Cleveland, OH, who also serves as Co-Chair of the Mayor’s Commission on Water Equity. “We all have a commitment to solving this problem and our Commission intends to partner with the Administration on its efforts over the next decade.”



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“The Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership will provide an essential forum for facilitating purposeful collaboration to get the lead out of our drinking water,” stated Mayor Billy McKinney of Zion, IL, who serves as Chair of the Cities Initiative. “I look forward to continuing to work with the Biden-Harris Administration on promoting the equitable implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and securing technical-assistance funds for basin cities.”

In addition to joining the Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership, the Cities Initiative has endorsed the White House Lead Service Line Principles. These principles call for prioritizing lead remediation in underserved communities, replacing the entire lead service line without imposing financial burdens on residents and leveraging the full range of funding available to expedite lead service line replacement.

The following Cities Initiative member mayors and cities have joined the Biden-Harris Get the Lead Out Partnership:

- Mayor Justin M. Bibb and the City of Cleveland, OH
- Mayor Mike Duggan and the City of Detroit, MI
- Mayor Daniel Biss and the City of Evanston, IL
- Mayor Sheldon Neeley and the City of Flint, MI
- Mayor John Antaramian and the City of Kenosha, WI
- Mayor Cavalier Johnson and the City of Milwaukee, WI
- Mayor Malik Evans and the City of Rochester, NY
- Mayor Ryan Sorenson and the City of Sheboygan, WI
- Mayor Billy McKinney and the City of Zion, IL

The Mayors Commission on Water Equity is part of The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, founded in 2003 as a binational organization led by a coalition of mayors working collaboratively to restore and protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin for the benefit of our communities and future generations. With more than 230-member municipalities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally-driven organization in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

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For more information contact:

Jonathan Altenberg, President/CEO, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative,  
[Jon.altenberg@glslcities.org](mailto:Jon.altenberg@glslcities.org)

Jeff Fleming, Communications Director, Office of Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson,  
[jeff.fleming2@milwaukee.gov](mailto:jeff.fleming2@milwaukee.gov)

Sarah Johnson, Chief Communications Officer, Office of Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb,  
[sjohnson8@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:sjohnson8@clevelandohio.gov)