



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Mayors Gather in Chicago to Advance Climate Action across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin**

**Chicago, IL – June 9, 2023** – Today, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative announced a renewed commitment to advancing climate action following its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary Annual General Meeting in Chicago on June 7 and 8. The two-day gathering of local elected leaders from across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin included hands-on training in developing and implementing climate action plans, policy insights from world-renowned climate experts and practical strategies for enhanced collaboration on climate action across the basin.

Mayor Justin M. Bibb of Cleveland, OH – a member of the Cities Initiative’s Board of Directors and the Vice-Chair of Climate Mayors – secured the approval of a member resolution committing the Cities Initiative to continue to support its members to advance their local climate action plans. These plans generate broadly shared benefits for residents across the basin by identifying key steps to prepare communities for climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Several members of the Cities Initiative’s Board of Directors also signed a pledge endorsing Mayor Bibb’s resolution.

“I am pleased to have received such robust support for my resolution on climate action plans,” said Mayor Bibb. “I look forward to continuing to work with the Cities Initiative to implement measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and bolster resilience in order to ensure Cleveland and other basin cities remain vibrant places to live, work and play for current and future generations.”

“It is a great honour to step into a leadership role with the Cities Initiative at a critical time for communities in the basin to help advance climate initiatives that will make us all stronger,” said Mayor Gino Moretti of Saint-Anicet, Quebec, and the incoming Chair of the Cities Initiative. “Natural disasters, such as the ice storm that hit my community and surrounding areas this spring, will only become more frequent and severe. We have no choice but to prepare ourselves and make sure that funding is going where it is needed to keep our residents safe and protect our local and regional economies.”

“I was proud to attend the Cities Initiative’s Annual General Meeting in Chicago to discuss the Milwaukee Climate and Equity Plan and learn about other basin cities’ efforts to galvanize climate action,” said Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee. “In Milwaukee, we will work to effectively implement the Milwaukee Climate and Equity Plan, which will ensure we achieve net zero emissions by 2050 while creating green jobs that pay at least \$40,000 and are focused on recruiting local people of color.”

Prior to its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary Annual General Meeting, the Cities Initiative released a survey of more than 130 U.S. and Canadian local jurisdictions in the basin that revealed communities are struggling to develop climate action plans even as risks increase. More than a quarter of local governments surveyed had not yet started developing action plans and only 17 percent were currently implementing a plan.

**About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational, mayor-led coalition of U.S. and Canadian cities dedicated to the environmental and socioeconomic health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. With more than 230 member cities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally driven organization in the basin focused on these issues.

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