

CITY OF TACOMA 2022 FEDERAL PRIORITIES

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The City of Tacoma successfully advocated for direct federal relief for State and local governments in 2021 and was allotted \$61 million in aid over 2 years to support existing City emergency programs addressing income, housing, and food insecurity of residents and financial distress of small businesses, nonprofits, and venues. The City received a first tranche of American Rescue Plan funds in May of this year and will receive the second tranche in May 2022 to support ongoing recovery. The City supports flexibility of fund dispersal at the discretion of local governments, which are on the frontlines of COVID-19 and disaster recovery. The City will prioritize working with local partners to meet the needs of Tacoma residents and businesses, and with the federal government to meet reporting requirements.

Together, We Will Change—Systems Transformation

The City hopes to work together in partnership with federal policy makers to advance reforms that address the disparate impacts of systems and institutions on communities of color. As part of this, the City calls on Congress to advance transformation policies with regard to policing and the criminal justice system, economic security, immigration, housing, climate justice, and infrastructure to better support communities that historically have not been well-served by existing systems and policies. The City finds the following reforms of great importance:

Policing and Criminal Justice Transformation

Tacoma is undertaking an effort to analyze our existing policies in the Police Department and we are working to implement new initiatives and policies at the local level. We support comprehensive police reform legislation at the federal level that can align with our local and state efforts. **The City urges Congress to continue discussion on legislation such as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.**

The City also supports several other issue-specific bills that seek **to implement sentencing reform and provide financial incentives for states and cities to implement independent investigations and body-worn camera programs**, for example:

- Enhancing Oversight to End Discrimination in Policing Act
- Police Training and Independent Review Act
- Justice Safety Valve Act

Economic Security

Community members are asking leaders to not only address the violence of police brutality, but also the violence of poverty and the violence of a lack of opportunity. **Mayor Woodards joined Mayors for a Guaranteed Income (MGI), a network of mayors who are studying or piloting guaranteed income (GI) projects in their communities.** The City's own pilot program will launch this month. The City supports the priorities of this network and joins the Anchors Institutions Task Force **in calling for the creation of a Fund for Anchor Institutions within a federal agency** to rebuild in the wake of the pandemic by targeting low-income and historically disadvantaged communities of color.

We also support the **Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act**, to establish a commission to study and recommend reparation proposals in a report to Congress and examine federal and state policies that contribute to white supremacy.

Human Dignity and Public Safety: Immigration Reform

The City urges Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform so that all residents may have an accessible path to citizenship and live without fear in the United States. The City shares concerns expressed by the Tacoma community for the health, safety, and welfare of detainees held locally in the Northwest ICE Processing Center, a privately owned and operated immigration detention facility. The City finds that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s current operations are dehumanizing and **implores the federal government to replace it with an anti-racist agency that will humanely and equitably implement immigration laws and eradicate human trafficking.** To that end, we support legislation that would **end the use of privately-operated prisons and instead utilize available alternatives to immigration detention.** The City also supports legislative efforts such as the **Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act**, which will ensure that all immigrants receive individualized and fair bond hearings by ending the use of mandatory detention of certain immigrants and requiring the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to establish probable cause of removability in 48 hours. Likewise, the City supports the New Way Forward Act, which would end mandatory detention policies for immigrants in deportation proceedings, ban local law enforcement from aiding federal agents, and phase out the practice of holding federal detainees in private detention centers and county jails.

The City also is in favor of initiatives such as the **COVID-19 in Immigration Detention Data Transparency Act**, which calls for ICE, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), and detention facilities to collect and share data on COVID-19 cases and vaccine distribution among detainees. More broadly, however, given the highly communicative nature of COVID-19, we support the immediate release of individuals in ICE custody for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, we support legislative efforts such as the **Federal Immigrant Release for Safety and Security Together (FIRST) Act**. This bill is crucial to ensuring the health and safety of undocumented individuals during a National Emergency related to a communicable disease.

Human Dignity and Public Safety: Gun Violence

Nearly 38,000 Americans die from gun-related injuries in the United States every year. Finding and declaring that gun violence directly affects residents, the Tacoma City Council adopted a Firearms and Ammunition Tax in 2019. The City joins the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities in requesting that Congress **advance critical legislation to reduce gun violence and promote public safety.** The City supports the **Bipartisan Background Checks Act** and the **Enhanced Background Checks Act**, to require and enhance background checks, as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives.

Human Dignity and Public Safety: Combatting Hate Crimes

In light of the recent surge in hate crimes against Asian Americans and other communities in Tacoma and across the country, the City calls for the creation of a **Hate Crimes Commission.** The City supports legislation that will create a bipartisan commission to investigate and expand reporting on hate crimes throughout the United States. This commission would be comprised of a group of 12 members appointed by House and Senate leadership who would have one year to prepare a report on the rise in hate crimes, potential causes of increase, and how to combat it.

Affordable Housing and Homelessness

The City supports the **Housing Fairness Act to assess prevalence of housing discrimination and create a grant program for organizations to study the causes and effects of such discrimination**. We seek flexibility in federal funding to be able to deploy those resources toward communities in Tacoma that need them the most so that we may effectively address housing disparities.

Telecommunications

Access to high-speed broadband service in every community is essential to our ability to provide quality education, create more jobs, and increase small business growth. Local governments are central players in ensuring broadband connection to homes and businesses is achieved. **Tacoma calls on the Federal Communications Commission and Congress to preserve local government authority to manage their rights-of-way to ensure the siting of cell towers and small cells is safe and appropriate**. The City supports the **Accelerating Wireless Broadband Development by Empowering Local Communities Act of 2019 (H.R. 530)**, which would overturn the FCC regulations limiting the ability of local governments to regulate the deployment of 5G wireless infrastructure.

TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

TPU-Wide

Infrastructure financing tools

TPU supports legislation that promotes the availability of tax-exempt municipal bonds and will support proposals that revoke changes made in 2017 relating to advance refunding. TPU supports providing comparable tax incentives to consumer-owned utilities. TPU also supports restoring Build America Bond payments back to their originally-enacted levels.

TPU supports programs to assist limited-income residents

TPU supports policies and additional funding for programs that provide assistance to limited-income residents.

Tacoma Power

Support proposals that maintain and improve BPA's competitiveness

TPU will continue to support federal proposals to maintain and improve BPA's cost competitiveness.

Carbon reduction policies

TPU will actively engage in and seek to support proposals that decarbonize the economy at reasonable costs to customers and that appropriately acknowledge and credit hydropower as a carbon-free generating resource.

Support investment in zero-emission transportation infrastructure and programs that advance the development of clean fuels

TPU will support additional funding for zero-emission transportation infrastructure and policies that advance the development and production of clean fuels, including electrolytic hydrogen.

Provide funding for the Hydropower Incentive Program

Tacoma Power continues to support federal appropriations for the Department of Energy's Hydropower Incentive Program. The program provides payments to hydropower utilities, including Tacoma Power, for hydroelectric production added to an existing dam or conduit.

Support legislation to maintain municipal utility control over poles and pole attachment rate setting

TPU supports legislation that would ensure that municipally-owned utilities maintain their historic authority to safely manage pole attachments on utility poles.

Tacoma Water

Support implementation of the Howard Hanson Dam – Additional Water Storage Project

Tacoma Water continues to support federal authorization, appropriations, and actions necessary to complete the Howard Hanson Dam – Additional Water Storage Project. Any federal action must respect federal/non-federal cost share agreements already in place. TPU believes Howard Hanson Dam fish passage and the Additional Water Storage Project are critical to salmon and orca recovery as a construction-ready project with broad impact.

Support funding of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)

Tacoma Water supports appropriations to fully fund the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA).

Support funding of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Tacoma Water supports adequate appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

Tacoma Rail

Explore opportunities for infrastructure funding

Tacoma Rail intends to pursue funding opportunities to make investments in rolling stock, track, and other infrastructure.