

**Date:**  
**Resolution No:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Connecticut Congressional Delegation**

**A PERMANENT INVESTMENT IN AMERICA'S YOUTH**  
**\$2 Billion Summer Youth Employment Program**

**WHEREAS**, 280,000 youths throughout the nation had jobs in the summer and fall of 2009 as a result of the \$1.2 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants to States for year-round and summer youth employment activities; and

**WHEREAS**, this investment was critical given the current economic recession where according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in July 2009, 4.4 million youth ages 16-24 were unemployed, and the national youth unemployment rate was 18.5 percent, the highest July rate on record which began in 1948;

**WHEREAS**, according to the Northeastern University Center for Labor Market Studies, employment among 16 to 19 year-olds is likely to drop to a new all time low of 31-32 percent this summer; and

**WHEREAS**, according to national studies, youths who are engaged in a work connection to school are likely to finish high school and pursue post-secondary education and/or vocational training; and

**WHEREAS**, lost employment opportunities for our nation's young adults do not simply represent a current loss in earnings, but most significantly affect each youth's future employability, quality of life, and annual earnings; and

**WHEREAS**, the country's business community and economy is wholly dependent on a well-prepared future workforce to effectively compete and grow in an increasingly competitive global economy; and

**WHEREAS**, studies show that a continuum of educational and work-based learning, with a rigorous and relevant summer youth employment program, is imperative for systemic change; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2000, America's disadvantaged youths have been severely underserved with the elimination of a separate funding stream for a federal Summer Jobs program, leading to the highest youth unemployment rate since the Great Depression, with youth unemployment growing four times the rate of adult unemployment; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 25 percent of the nation's high school students fail to graduate in four years, and according to the Basic Education Commission, 113,432 students dropped out of school this past academic year; and

**WHEREAS**, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) provides the nation's only comprehensive youth system to improve the education and training prospects for at-risk in-school and out-of-school youth; and

**WHEREAS**, the late Senator Edward Kennedy in his March 13, 2009 letter regarding budget recommendations to Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (ND) and Ranking Member Judd Greg (NH) called for an additional \$2 billion for WIA youth programs and the restoration of a federally-funded program continuum;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the National League of Cities urges Congress to reconfirm its commitment to the youth of this nation, by allocating \$2 billion in funding in FY2010, FY2011 and FY2012 appropriations legislation for a Permanent Summer Youth Employment Program and in so doing answer the late Senator's call for an ongoing investment in youth employment opportunities for our nation's future workforce.