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A look back in time

Correction
The telephone numbers for bill status information for two states was incorrect in the January State News. The correct number for the bill status line in Maine is (207) 287-1692. Bill status information in Wisconsin is available at (608) 266-2517 for the Senate and (608) 266-1501 for the Assembly.

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Military Education Compact

Children in military families face many challenges as their parents are transferred to new locations, both domestic and international. A proposal being considered in several states could help ease the educational challenges these children face. Read the story on Page 19, and visit Capitol Comments to learn more about the compact, including the progress states are making in adopting the compact. The CSG blog will keep you up-to-date as the compact makes its way through state legislatures.

Early Childhood Education

Many states are considering making changes in the education of the nation’s youngest students. Learn more about what states are doing in an upcoming State News article and an upcoming Trends Alert, and visit Capitol Comments to share your thoughts.

CSG and You

The Council of State Governments is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. You can find out more about the transformation of CSG with the addition of regional offices during the 1940s in the article on Page 6. And you can share your thoughts about the organization by visiting the CSG blog, Capitol Comments, and clicking on the Talk Back link.

National Guard

Has your state been impacted by the changing federal involvement in the National Guard? If so, we want to hear from you. Visit Capitol Comments and click on the Talk Back link to share your thoughts.

Talk Back

What would you like to see covered in Capitol Comments? Click on the Talk Back category link on the CSG blog and give us some ideas of the type of information you seek.

This Month in the NEWS

CSG Programs

It’s that time of year again. Time to select the best and brightest, in both up-and-coming state leaders and innovative state programs.

Visit the CSG Web site, www.csg.org, to learn more about the Toll Fellowship Program, the premiere leadership program for state officials. The program is unique in its purpose to help develop leaders from all three branches of state government. The 2008 program is Sept. 27–Oct. 2 in Lexington, Ky. Applications are due April 18.

You can also learn about, and apply for, the Innovations Awards Program, which helps state officials by highlighting innovative programs states have developed to address public policy issues. The intent of this program is not to influence the enactment of state policies, but to highlight cutting-edge programs so that the innovations of one state may prove beneficial to others. The 2008 awards will be presented at CSG’s annual meeting in Omaha, Neb., Dec. 4–7. The application deadline is March 1.

capitol trivia

Question:

Which state has the most mileage in rural roads under its control? Which state controls the least rural mileage?

To find the answer, log onto CSG’s Web site at www.csg.org!
CSG goes regional

In linking state governments together, The Council of State Governments not only has an office in Washington, D.C., and its headquarters in Lexington, Ky., it is also the only national state services organization to staff offices in four regions. That unique regional focus dates back to the 1940s when the majority of the regional offices were established. After establishing the Eastern Regional Conference in 1937, CSG grew to include the Midwestern Legislative Conference in 1945, and in 1947 established both the Southern Conference (which later changed its name to the Southern Legislative Conference) and the Western Regional Conference (which later became CSG-West).

Today each CSG regional office staffs policy committees and meetings, researches projects and distributes publications. Each region elects its own officers, who serve on the CSG national Executive Committee. This structure allows each region to bring its perspective to the forefront of national debates and program initiatives.

To commemorate CSG’s 75th Anniversary this year, here’s a look at how CSG became regionally focused.

Eastern Region

The first CSG region was established in 1937, and the Eastern Regional Conference’s purpose has always been to facilitate the exchange of ideas among state policymakers, business leaders and the academic community in its 17 member jurisdictions. The ERC’s offices have always been located in New York City. The organization even survived losing its offices in the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

The ERC not only includes the 10 Northeastern states as members, it also involves international members as well. In 1990, ERC became the first regional conference to recruit an International Affiliate Member—the National Assembly of Quebec—recognizing that an efficient functioning northern border is vital to the region’s economy and quality of life. Since then, four other Eastern Canadian Provincial Assemblies—New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia and Ontario—have joined the ERC. The ERC was a catalyst for creating the Northeast Recycling Council in 1990, the Eastern Trade Council in 1999, the Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship in 1999 and the CSG Justice Center in 2007.
Midwestern Region

As CSG celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2008, the Midwestern Legislative Conference, established in 1945, will mark its 63rd year of service to state legislators in the heartland. Originally located in Chicago—the birthplace of CSG—the region’s offices moved to Lombard, Ill., in 1986. During the last 20 years, the MLC expanded its membership base to include the active participation of three Canadian provinces, as well as 11 Midwestern states. While providing numerous forums for the consideration of critical issues facing Midwestern policymakers, the MLC also fostered several successful collaborative efforts between neighboring states, including two regional interstate compacts, and developed the premier leadership training program for emerging legislative leaders in the region.

The Midwestern office continues to provide research assistance and staff support to several other regional groups of state officials, including the Midwestern Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee, Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission, Great Lakes Legislative Caucus and Midwestern Legislative Service Agency/Research Directors Group.

Southern Region

The first meeting of the then-Southern Regional Conference of CSG was held in 1947 at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis with representatives of CSG from seven Southern states. At the 1948 meeting, held at the Edgewater Gulf Resort in Biloxi, eight more states became official members of the Southern Conference. Missouri has participated with the conference since the earliest days and became an official member in 1993.

Herbert L. Wiltsee, former director of research and publications for CSG’s headquarters, which was then located in Chicago, was instrumental in the Southern Regional Conference’s early days. During the late 1940s, Wiltsee began testing the waters for a Southern conference to correspond to already established offices in the other regions. In its formative days, the Southern Regional Conference conducted business without formal rules or a governing body until its ninth meeting in 1955 in Gatlinburg, Tenn., where organizational rules were adopted and an advisory committee was established. The Southern office opened in Atlanta in 1959, and officially changed its name to the Southern Legislative Conference in 1973. In the late 1980s, the SLC initiated the Super Tuesday presidential primary, when 15 Southern states held their primary elections on March 8, 1988.

Western Region

In the fall of 1947, political leaders from the western states met in San Francisco to establish the Western office of CSG. Leaders around the table acknowledged the need for the West to follow the lead of the South, the East and the Midwest in creating a regional association of state political leaders. The association’s purpose was to provide a voice and a venue for the unique issues facing Western states in the post-war period. CSG-WEST is now located in Sacramento, Calif.

Thirteen Western state legislatures make up CSG-WEST, and the organization benefits from associate memberships with the legislative bodies of the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia and the Pacific island governments of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam. On Western issues that have a broad consensus of support, CSG-WEST works collaboratively with other regional associations of elected officials. These organizations include the Western Governors’ Association, the Western Municipal Conference, the Western Interstate Region of the National Association of Counties, the Conference of Western Attorneys General and the Pacific Northwest Economic Region.
Report Sheds Light on States’ Teacher Pay

In 40 states, a public school teacher’s salary is less than workers of other comparable professions, such as reporters or insurance underwriters. That’s according to a new report released in early January by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit.

The teacher salaries analysis is a new feature of the Quality Counts 2008 report, which compared teacher salaries to those of 16 jobs requiring similar skill sets, such as museum curators, registered nurses and accountants. Teacher pay is deficient in 40 states, according to the report.

Teacher salaries vary greatly across the nation, but on average, teachers earn just 88 cents for every dollar earned in 16 comparable occupations. The lowest teacher salaries—when comparable occupations are taken into account—are in North Carolina and Missouri, according to the report. But in states such as California, New York, Ohio, Arkansas, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Michigan, Montana and Rhode Island, teachers earn as much or more than comparable workers, posting the highest salary grades in the report.

Seven states are experimenting with pay-for-performance programs, which reward teachers based on gains in student achievement. When it comes to providing incentives or rewards to veteran teachers who take on leadership roles outside the classroom, only 17 states do so, the report said.

The report looked at more than 150 indicators to grade states in six categories:

- teacher policies;
- standards, assessments and accountability;
- school funding;
- K–12 achievement;
- school transition and alignment policies; and
- a child’s chances for success in life.

The Quality Counts report was partially funded by the Pew Center on the States, which receives funding from the Pew Charitable Trusts. For more information on the report, visit http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2008/01/10/index.html.

States Ban Smoking in Vehicles with Children

In the latest wave of the push for smoking bans, Nebraska state Sen. Gwen Howard of Omaha introduced a bill Jan. 10 to ban smoking in motor vehicles—no matter if the windows are up or down—when a person under age 16 is present, according to the Omaha World-Herald.

Nebraska Legislative Bill 836 would make violations punishable by a fine of $50 to $150, the newspaper reports. The fine can be waived for a first time offense if the driver signs up for a smoking cessation program.

California, Arkansas and Louisiana already passed such smoking bans, and at least 16 other states considered similar legislation in 2007, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Arkansas pioneered the policy to ban smoking in vehicles carrying children in April 2006 after state Rep. Bob Mathis introduced a bill to shield children strapped in car seats from secondhand smoke, according to Stateline.org. Legislators in Arkansas passed the bill in less than two days, and then-Gov. Mike Huckabee, a reformed health enthusiast, signed it, Stateline.org reports.

Louisiana followed suit and became the second state to ban smoking in vehicles carrying children in car seats.

In California, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 7, which imposed a similar smoking ban, in October 2007. The California law took effect Jan. 1 and imposes a $100 fine on drivers and passengers who smoke in a vehicle with children age 17 or younger, the California Chronicle reports.
States Ask Where DUI Suspects Had Last Drink

Some states are taking a unique approach to curb drunken driving. Officials are asking DUI suspects where they had their last drink. That information is then compiled in a statewide database, and bars and restaurants named more frequently are checked out to make sure they aren’t serving alcohol to patrons who are already intoxicated.

States such as New Jersey, Oregon, Texas and Washington have used or currently use this type of information.

Oregon’s program began in the late 1980s, according to Linda Ignowski, enforcement and field operations director for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. Her organization compiles data from police reports that name a licensed premise as the last place of drink, although police are not required to submit the last drink information, she said in an e-mail. That data is sent to all law enforcement agencies that provide reports and any others who wish to receive it, she said.

“We do believe that this is an important tool to have for helping to reduce drunk driving in our state,” said Thomas B. Erwin, government affairs director for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

New Jersey announced its last-drink initiative in August 2007. Last drink information collected by state law enforcement officers from suspected drunken drivers is now available statewide. In fact, according to The New York Times, in the last four months of the year, New Jersey collected 1,400 last drink reports naming establishments from DUI suspects.

Idaho officials are “currently putting together a last drink data collection process, similar to Washington, where data information will be collected and entered into the breath testing instrument,” Lt. Bob Clements, bureau chief of the Idaho Alcohol Beverage Control Bureau, said in an e-mail. “We are still working on setting up the process, so it has not actually started yet.”

So far, in Idaho, information on DUI suspects is not collected statewide or entered into a database, according to Clements.

Texas has also used this type of information in the past, according to Carolyn Beck, a spokeswoman for the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. In late 2005 and early 2006, her agency was receiving that information from local law enforcement agencies and using it as an indicator of establishments that may be creating a public safety issue, Beck said in an e-mail. But the information was never compiled into a single statewide database, according to Beck. Law enforcement may still collect the information, but the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission is no longer using it, she said.

States are Requiring Voters to Show Photo ID

Twenty states now require voters to provide some form of identification at the polls. In South Carolina and now Georgia, voters who don’t have a photo ID must vote on a provisional ballot that can more easily be challenged and even disqualified.

Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue signed a law in April 2007 that requires voters to show photo identification before voting. Similar bills requiring voters to show identification passed the legislatures in both Indiana and Wisconsin. In Indiana, Gov. Mitch Daniels has said he will sign it, and in Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle has vowed a veto, Stateline.org reports.

Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana and South Dakota also request photo IDs but, they will allow a voter to sign an affidavit or to provide verbal or written corresponding personal information in order to cast a ballot at the polling place, according to Stateline.org. Other states such as New Mexico, which recently passed a voter identification law, allow for a broader range of personal documents—such as utility bills, bank statements, student ID cards and even a paycheck—to be presented at the polls, according to Electiononline.org.

However, in January the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on the constitutionality of Indiana’s voter identification laws—which some say is the strictest in the nation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Every first-time voter required to show ID at the polls:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kansas, Pennsylvania</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All first-time voters who registered by mail required to show ID at the polls:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All voters required to show ID at the polls:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All voters required to show photo ID at the polls:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida, Georgia, Indiana</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>All voters are asked to show a photo ID at the polls:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii, Louisiana, Michigan, South Dakota</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Electiononline.org, a project of the Pew Center on the States.
## Low-Income Children in the States

### Well-Being of Low-Income Children

According to a study released last year by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, low-income children fared the best in Utah, which was ranked number one based on six categories such as children’s health, social and emotional well-being and family activities. Below is the complete list of rankings with the percentages of children in each state who are from low-income households (those below 200 percent of the poverty level). The study took two years and involved interviews with more than 102,000 households. The report used the latest data from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey as well as other sources. For more information, or to view the complete report, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>% of Children from Low-income Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>N.D.</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wyo.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mont.</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Vt.</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Colo.</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kan.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Minn.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Neb.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Wash.</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ore.</td>
<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Va.</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>W.Va.</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>N.H.</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Calif.</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>N.M.</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Okla.</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Wis.</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Mo.</td>
<td>38%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>% of Children from Low-income Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Ariz.</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Ark.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>S.C.</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>N.C.</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ala.</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Pa.</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ill.</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Fla.</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Tenn.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Nev.</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Mich.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Ga.</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Conn.</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Miss.</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Ky.</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>La.</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Del.</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Md.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>N.J.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>N.Y.</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>R.I.</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Mass.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a Baltimore-based private charitable organization, focusing on vulnerable children and families. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).
The Henry Toll Fellowship Program is nationally recognized among all branches of state government. The program serves to equip talented state policymakers with the skills and strategies to meet the challenges ahead.

Application Deadline April 18

The Toll Fellowship Program will convene Sept. 27–Oct. 2, 2008, in Lexington, Ky. Applications are available at www.csg.org, keyword “tolls” and must be postmarked by April 18, 2008, to be considered for the 2008 class. If you have any questions about the program or application process, contact Krista Rinehart at (859) 244-8249 or send an e-mail to krinehart@csg.org.
Dr. Keon Chi’s life was the embodiment of the American dream. An immigrant who rose to prominence as a nationally recognized expert on state government, Chi spent 36 years as a popular college professor and was a family man with a supportive wife and two adoring sons.

The dream came to a tragic end Jan. 9 when Chi, 71, was killed in a motor vehicle accident in front of The Council of State Governments’ headquarters in Lexington, Ky.

It’s clear, however, that while Keon Chi’s life is gone, his impact on the hundreds of lives he touched will endure.

“This explains why at CSG we have been simply overwhelmed with e-mails from governors’ offices, legislative leaders and academic colleagues of Keon’s expressing heartfelt sympathy and a deep sense of loss, while extolling the virtues of this treasured man,” says Daniel M. Sprague, CSG executive director.

CSG is developing a proposal to honor the legacy of Chi, said Sprague. A formal announcement will be made in June.

A Beginning in Rural South Korea

The dream for Chi began more than 50 years ago in a small South Korean town in the mountainous Taegu province. His father died when he was young, but his mother was able to make sure her son attended Yonsei University in Seoul.

At the time, it was the end of the Korean War. Most South Korean university political science students wanted to study South Korea and its relations with other Asian countries such as China, Japan and North Korea. Chi thought the dynamics between South Korea and the United States was more important. And he wanted to learn more about foreign policy.
“There was a division among students,” Chi’s son, Ron, said. “Dad was fascinated with American politics. He knew that the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. was not going to be temporary. He thought he should study American democracy, because that was going to be the way of life in South Korea.”

After graduating Yonsei, Chi entered the South Korean Air Force. He never flew planes, but worked as an administrator and rose to the rank of captain. “We used to kid him about serving in the air force but not flying,” said Ron.

After his air force service, Chi planned to continue studies. He wasn’t sure what direction that would take until his younger sister, who had made some money in real estate, staked him to a trip and a graduate school education at the Claremont Graduate University in California, where he earned his master’s and doctoral degrees in political science.

“She gave him the money and told him to invest in his future in the United States,” said Ron. Chi’s sister later was able to immigrate to the United States.

**Studying in the United States**

While attending graduate school, Chi would meet another woman who would have a major impact on his life—his future wife In Soon.

In Soon had been in the United States for several years before Chi arrived. A musicologist, she was more grounded in the American way of life.

“Mom taught Dad to be an American,” says Ron. “She taught him how to drive and helped him get his license.”

In Soon gave up her studies after marrying Chi. She later returned to school and earned a Ph.D in music.

By the time Chi earned his Ph.D, he knew what direction he was headed. The title of his dissertation provided a hint: “Creative Federalism: A Study of Intergovernmental Relations under the Johnson Administration, 1964–68.”

**Georgetown College**

In 1970, Chi moved his young family to Central Kentucky, where he began teaching at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Ky., just north of Lexington.

In Soon put off finishing her doctoral studies until the couple’s sons were older and eventually earned her doctorate. She also worked as a librarian in the University of Kentucky Medical School.

During his 36 years at Georgetown, Chi taught American Government, World Politics, Politics of Japan and Korea, Public Administration, and State and Local Government.

Popular with students and faculty, he received Georgetown’s highest faculty honor, the Cawthorne Excellence in Teaching Award, for the 1997-98 academic year.

In 1998, Chi was named Professor of the Year in Kentucky by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which recognized his contributions as chair of Georgetown’s political science department.

Chi reluctantly stepped back from full-time teaching in 1999 when the college asked him to serve as academic dean.

**The Council of State Governments**

While his academic achievements and honors were important to Chi, he still wanted a greater challenge. “He didn’t think his mind was being challenged. His research did not fit the needs of his classroom,” said Ron. “He didn’t feel like he was making his mark.”

In 1981, he joined CSG part-time as a senior policy analyst and in 1991 was named a senior fellow.

“When he came to CSG, everything just clicked,” said Ron. “He found a new energy and I think it made him a better teacher.”

While continuing to distinguish himself as a professor at Georgetown, Chi was able to do the kind of research and writing he couldn’t do in the classroom.

And in a career as distinguished and esteemed as the one he had at Georgetown, Chi made his mark at CSG and throughout the community of states.

He served as editor-in-chief of The Book of the States, CSG’s annual reference book on American state government. In addition, he wrote more than 100 journal articles, monographs, book chapters and columns.

And because of his expertise and national reputation, he was often invited to speak to state legislative committees and national government service organizations. He also wrote and spoke at the American Political Science Association, the American Society of Public Administration and the World Future Society.

He retired from Georgetown College in 2006 and began work full-time with CSG. He continued as editor of Book of the States, completed several research studies and was recently named director of the Center of State Governance Transformation.

Underneath this academic prowess, however, was a playful man with a self-deprecating sense of humor.

Colleague Sujit CanagaRetna, an economic policy analyst in CSG’s Southern office, recalls the time when he and Chi attended a national meeting
where Chi was making a presentation on state business initiatives.

CanagaRetna said Chi, in his thick Korean accent, opened his remarks, “by apologizing to the audience for his Southern accent! Those in the audience were in fits of laughter.”

Secrets

Chi had some secrets, too. For the past five years he was learning golf.

“He not only went to the golf range every day. Sometimes on weekends he would go two to three times,” said Ron. “Even in the rain. He wouldn’t leave until he hit two or three balls perfect.”

Although he spent a lot of time in practice, he only went on the golf course occasionally with his sons. Although his sons pleaded for him to go public with his new sport, he said he couldn’t until his swing was perfect.

“His plan was to join a foursome, but until he got his swing down perfect, he kept the secret to his family.”

His home office, like his office at CSG, was covered with books, journals and papers on government and federalism.

But one of the biggest stacks, said Ron, was filled with Golf magazines and books about Tiger Woods and other golf legends.

Golf wasn’t his only sports interest.

Coach Papa Chi

“What a lot of people don’t know about Dad was that he had a passion to be a football coach,” said Ron.

Chi was familiar with baseball because it was played in Korea, but he thought that game and basketball relied more on talent than coaching.

“He saw that football relied on strategy,” said Ron. Ron is a middle school teacher and coach. His father attended all the games, camera in hand, and was one of the team’s loudest supporters.

When Ron’s team won the 2003 Fayette County football championship, the players and coaches recognized Chi as an honorary coach, Papa Chi.

“He was an X’s and O’s guy, who didn’t know what the X’s and O’s were,” said Ron.

And Chi took to coaching the way he taught. “He would stand on the sidelines, evaluate, assess, then provide me some feedback,” said a smiling Ron. “Why didn’t I blitz more? Why didn’t I run more?”

Making His Mark

Whether it was in the classroom, in his writing or on the sidelines of a middle school football game, Keon Chi made his mark, which to him was important.

Ron recalls that after he was accepted at the University of Kentucky medical college, he made a decision that would disappoint his parents. He didn’t want to go to medical school.

“I don’t like hospitals and I don’t like being around the sick,” said Ron. What Ron wanted to do was teach, like his father.

Chi was disappointed, but offered his son words of wisdom that have stayed with Ron since. He told me, “Find out what you are good at and make your mark.”

Ron first interpreted his father’s words to mean one had to have books written and historical markers dedicated in your name.

“What I’ve come to realize, is that you don’t need historic markers and books. It means you become a motivator and inspire people.”

“Keep a low profile. Move forward and don’t procrastinate. If you do those things, you don’t have to shout your achievements; others will do it for you.”

—Dr. Keon Chi’s advice to his sons

In Soon and Keon Chi.
Growing awareness of risks associated with storms—particularly hurricanes—has states grappling with property insurance availability and rising premium rates. Property insurance has become a political issue.

By Mikel Chavers

The effects of plastic bags are being considered across the U.S. Some officials say producing the bags takes too much energy and the bags create environmental hazards. But the plastic bag industry argues the bags are cheaper, and actually create less landfill waste than paper bags.

By Rona Cohen
hey’ve been known to crowd landfills, clog sewer pipes and snare sea animals, and they are snapped up in ever-dizzying quantities at supermarket checkout counters. Cheap and versatile, plastic bags are at once both a symbol of clever human innovation and perhaps a reminder of the ecological harm wrought by our throwaway culture.

In recent months, the petroleum-based sacks have come to embody a growing list of environmental, and other, ills. And in cities and states across the U.S., policymakers are seizing on the idea of outlawing the popular bags as a way to right at least some of these ills—by lowering pollution, cutting down on the use of fossil fuels some link to global warming, and moving us toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

“Our nation must reduce its dependence on foreign oil,” said Annapolis, Md., Alderman Sam Shropshire, who sponsored a bill last fall to ban the use of plastic bags in large retail stores and replace them with sacks made from reusable cloth or recycled paper. “If we could help the American people to make a small lifestyle change like this, then they would be willing to make other changes in the future.”

City and state officials from Maine to Oregon are echoing that view as they mull the benefits of paper, plastic or, simply, reusable. Shropshire and others who advocate shifting away from plastic bags tend to view the issue in global terms—specifically, as one of a wide range of measures, large and small, needed to tackle climate change.

“Any way that we can get in shape for that carbon challenge, we ought to be doing it,” said Maine Rep. Ted Koffman, who chairs the state’s House Natural Resources Committee. Koffman introduced a legislative proposal last fall requiring retailers to charge a 20-cent, per-bag fee at checkout counters. “I think we’re taking the higher ground when we move in this direction,” he said.

Shropshire, whose ardent campaign to rid Annapolis of the plastic sacks has earned him the nickname “the bag man,” has a ready argument for why the bags should go: 12 million barrels of oil are needed to produce the 100 billion plastic bags used in the U.S. each year. Very few of those sacks—about 5 percent—are being recycled, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The vast majority get tossed into landfills. Plastic bags from Annapolis float into Chesapeake Bay where they are swallowed by marine animals who mistake them for jellyfish, he said.

But some experts question whether the “ban the bag” movement will yield tangible environmental improvements, and whether the tradeoffs involved with bans will be inconvenient and costly. Many are pushing instead for more recycling as a first step toward cutting down on plastic bag waste.

Turning Bags into Walkways

In fact, plastic bag manufacturers warn that outlawing the ubiquitous sacks would put the brakes on a growing recycling industry.

“When people have the proper information, they understand there is a value for this material and a market,” said Donna Dempsey of the Progressive Bag Alliance, an industry group representing large plastic bag manufacturers. She said the alternatives to plastic bags—like paper—wouldn’t necessarily be greener.

Dempsey cited industry figures showing that paper bags gobble up more fossil fuels over their total lifecycle than plastic. Production of plastic bags uses 40 percent less energy than paper and plastic sacks generate 80 percent less solid waste, according to the alliance. It also takes 91 percent less energy to recycle a pound of plastic than a pound of paper, and seven times as many trucks to transport the same quantity of paper bags as plastic bags, the organization says.
Plastic bags are also cheaper, according to Dempsey. Typically, they cost about 1 cent to 2 cents apiece, compared with 5 to 8 cents for paper bags. “That cost will get passed down to the consumer. And that’s going to hurt people that can least afford it,” she said.

Others warn that greater use of paper bags will contribute to more landfill waste. That poses its own set of problems, because as the bags break down they emit methane, a greenhouse gas 20 times more potent than carbon.

Dave Heglas, director of materials for the Virginia-based Trex Company Inc., said demand for plastic bags is steady and more recycling makes economic and environmental sense.

Trex recycled 1.3 billion plastic bags in 2006 and turned them into composite lumber for products ranging from decks to walkways. Some of those bags were imported, because Trex can’t get its hands on enough sacks in the U.S.

“There is a need for more bags,” Heglas said.

Most large supermarket chains have recycling programs, but the problem is that many consumers either are unaware of those programs or simply not interested in bringing in their bags, said Heglas.

At the state level, some officials, concerned about the bags’ environmental footprint but wary of the impacts of a ban, believe encouraging more recycling is a positive first step.

California enacted a law in 2006 requiring retail establishments larger than 10,000 square feet to have visible recycling bins. In New York, state Sen. Carl Marcellino, who chairs the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, has sponsored similar legislation. The New York City Council in January overwhelmingly approved a measure requiring stores larger than 5,000 square feet and chains that have more than five outlets in the city to collect and recycle plastic bags.

Industry is generally supportive of such measures, as long as they do not impose extra costs on retailers, said Michael Rosen, senior vice president of the Food Industry Alliance of New York. The group has raised concerns regarding some of the provisions in the bills that are in play in the state.

“If we can work through those issues, we are more than happy to participate,” Rosen said. The alliance’s 800 members operate around 10,000 stores.

Some retailers have found that plastic bag recycling can yield financial benefits. Wegmans Food Markets Inc., a Rochester, N.Y.-based supermarket chain, collects plastic bags in 70 stores in five states, and sells them, along with shrink and stretch wrap used in its transport operations, to a Florida-based recycler, said Wegmans Resource Recovery Coordinator Suzanne Dunn.

The proceeds cover the cost of the company’s waste disposal, according to Dunn. Recycling also enables Wegmans to avoid the hauling charges and tipping fees it would have paid to send its plastic waste to a landfill.

“It makes good business sense,” Dunn said. Wegmans recycled 2.7 million plastic bags in 2006.

But that number represents a mere speck in the sea of plastic bag waste. Some 95 percent of plastic bags are not being recycled, according to the EPA. Given that statistic, some officials are skeptical that policies to promote more recycling would achieve the same goals as legislation curtiling bag use.

“It’s easy for the industry to say, ‘we’re going to require the vendor to have a box to take all that waste and recycle it,’ but that’s not what happens,” said Koffman, the state representative in Maine. Plastic bag recycling is mandatory at grocery stores in Maine, but the actual recycling rate is low, he said.

Bag Tax or Bust?

Some observers suggest the most effective way to influence consumers’ behavior is to appeal directly to their wallets.

“There is a very simple answer to the problem: Get the supermarkets to charge for the bags. Everything else pales in comparison,” said Reid Lifset, associate director of the Industrial Environmental Management Program at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Officials in Ireland decided to do just that in 2002, when they imposed a tax of 15 cents per bag in an effort to chip away at consumers’ annual consumption of 1.2 billion bags. Within months, officials reported plastic bag use had plummeted by 90 percent. Switzerland also charges a “PlasTax,” and Scotland and Britain have considered one.

The practice made its way to the U.S. last year, when Sweden’s IKEA home products stores began charging customers 5 cents per bag. Other countries, including Tanzania and Bangladesh, and parts of India, have banned petroleum-based bags outright. Last month, China announced a plan to prohibit supermarkets and shops from handing out ultra-thin plastic bags as of June 1.

Legislative proposals modeled after Ireland’s PlasTax have begun to crop up at the state level. Last year, Massachusetts state Sen. Brian Joyce announced a fee-based proposal that would start at 2 cents per bag this year, gradually ramping up to 15 cents in 2014, with some exceptions.

In Maine, Koffman’s 20 cent fee proposal is not scheduled for the current legislative session. But Koffman vowed to continue to work on the issue with various stakeholders in the state.

The San Francisco Way

Koffman and others said their interest in tackling the bag conundrum was sparked by San Francisco’s landmark decision in 2007 to compel large supermarkets and pharmacies to use either biodegradable plastic bags made of corn starch or paper bags.

New York Assemblyman Bill Colton, who chairs the Legislative Commission on Solid Waste Management, introduced a bill modeled after San Francisco’s last spring. Shropshire, of Annapolis, said he also considered following San Francisco’s lead. But after discussing the program with San Francisco officials, he determined Annapolis does not have the infrastructure to process biodegradable bags. And since those bags cannot be recycled because they contain corn starch, they can cause costly damage to machines if they accidentally end up in the recycling stream.

And then there’s the issue of whether biodegradable bags really break down in the environment. They won’t, unless they are collected and deposited in composting facilities, which exist in San Francisco but are hard to find in most other
cities, said Steve Mojo, executive
director of the New York-based Bio-
degradable Products Institute.

“Most consumers, when they think
of biodegradable think most materi-
als will disappear in less than a year
no matter where you put them,” Mojo
said. “It’s just not the case.”

Educating the Consumer

Koffman and others pushing for
measures beyond recycling say their
ultimate goal is to move away from
the concept of disposable bags—
both paper and plastic—altogether.
They tend to see the issue not just
in terms of waste reduction, but as
one small step in a broad continuum
of measures needed to fight global
warming.

“You just have to think it through
and say, ‘what makes common sense
here given the scale of the threat of
climate change?’” said Koffman. “If
it only starts with plastic bags, maybe
the next step is getting a more energy
efficient car, or getting compact fluo-
rescent bulbs.”

Dempsey of the Progressive Bag
Alliance suggested supporters of
bans who are really concerned about
cutting down on their fossil fuel use
should focus their efforts elsewhere.
Around 0.05 percent of a barrel of oil
goes toward making plastic bags for
the U.S. market, while 93 percent to
94 percent goes to home heating oil
and gasoline, she said.

“We could do our part to conserve
in those areas and that would make
a much bigger impact on our carbon
footprint,” said Dempsey.

Koffman finds that reasoning un-
convincing.

“Underneath it all is the question, if
we’re confronted with climate change,
are we as a society up to making the
changes needed to avert that prob-
lem?” he said. “Or are we so compla-
cent, and stuck in our ways, and feel
so entitled, that we’re not going to be
up to (it)?”

—Rona Cohen is senior policy analyst
in the Energy and Environment Pro-
gram at The Council of State Govern-
ments/Eastern Regional Conference.

Fast Facts: It’s in the Bag

- The San Francisco Board of Supervisors in
2007 approved first-in-the-nation legisla-
tion requiring large supermarkets and phar-
macies to use either biodegradable plastic
bags made of corn starch or paper bags. A
California state law requires retail estab-
ishments larger than 10,000 square feet to
have visible recycling bins.
- Laws mandating certain retailers to set up
in-store recycling programs are also in place
in Maine and Rhode Island.
- In January, the New York City Council ap-
proved a measure requiring stores greater
than 5,000 square feet and chains that
have more than five outlets in the city to collect
and recycle plastic bags.
- Elsewhere, officials in cities and states across
the U.S. are mulling a host of bills that would
require in-store plastic bag recycling pro-
grams, establish fees on plastic bag use,
or phase out the use of nonbiodegradable
plastic bags.
New Compact Aims to Ease Education Challenges Faced by Military Children After Parent’s Transfer

The U.S. Department of Defense and The Council of State Governments, along with educators and education groups, have developed the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, which is designed to ease the trauma when children are uprooted from school as parents are transferred from base to base and state to state. Ten states must approve the agreement before it takes effect.

By Mary Branham Dusenberry
Katie Morgan was in trouble.

Her grades were not what her mother Faith was used to seeing. And after Katie, 10, would breeze through her class work, she would try to help other students understand a concept and she’d get in trouble in class. The problem: Katie was not put in an advanced enough classroom where she could be challenged because the Florida school didn’t receive her records from New Mexico in a timely manner.

Bianca Phillips, 19, faced a challenge similar to Katie’s. When her family moved from a U.S. Air Force base in Japan, Bianca’s mother Vivia hand-carried her school records to Alaska. School officials wouldn’t accept those records. The family worked through that challenge, but after three years, Bianca’s father received a transfer notification months before Bianca was scheduled to graduate.

For Grace Worley, 16, the problem was that she needed a little extra help to reach her potential. She qualified for the Individualized Education Program—which addresses specific needs of students—in Virginia. But when the family was transferred to California, school officials deemed Grace was performing beyond expectations. Lori Worley was told her daughter would no longer get the help from the plan set forth in Virginia.

Their experiences are not unique. In fact, said Joyce Raezer, they’re fairly typical.

“They happen over and over again,” said Raezer, chief operating officer of the National Military Family Association. “Think about those stories and multiply that by 100,000 or 200,000.”

Addressing the problem

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children addresses those types of problems military families face in transitioning children into new schools. The special agreement among states requires approval in 10 states before it will take effect.

The compact specifically addresses such things as kindergarten and first grade start age; immunization requirements; placement in courses ranging from gifted and talented programs, Advanced Placement and honors courses to assistance for special needs; and requirements for high school graduation.

“While many states and communities have responded on an ad hoc basis to ease the shift of military children, no comprehensive policy approach exists to improve the long-term educational transition and outcomes of this constituency. That’s what this compact will do. It’ll bring consistency and those families need consistency,” said Charles Patterson, director of transition studies with the Nebraska-based Military Impacted Schools Association. Patterson is also the former superintendent for the school district in Killeen, Texas, home of Fort Hood.

The Council of State Governments’ National Center for Interstate Compacts worked with the U.S. Department of Defense, educators and education groups, and organizations that work with military families to draft the compact. Legislators and officials from states with large military populations were briefed on the compact at a meeting in December. While several in attendance said their states already work to accommodate incoming military students, they voiced support for the compact.

“I think it is absolutely necessary so our military children are not discriminated against, and I feel they are discriminated against,” said Rep. Marsha Looper of Colorado, home to more than 30,000 students from military families. “We should hold them in high esteem for the sacrifices their families make for our freedoms.”

The Need for the Compact

Many of the challenges students face when changing schools are emotional and psychological. The compact addresses academic and procedural issues, which can add to that trauma, according to Thomas Hinton, senior state liaison with the Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense.

“It’s not so much the emotion, but it adds to the emotion,” Hinton said.

The Department of Defense had worked for several years with school districts that serve large populations of military children to ensure transition issues were minimized. But, it wasn’t enough. Officials thought the process could be improved and began to explore the option of an interstate compact, Hinton said.

“If there ever truly was an interstate component, this was one of those issues,” he said. “It matters what happens in the state. It also matters when (students in military families) leave the state.”

Addressing the problem, he said, could be done in one of two ways: through an interstate compact or through Congressional action. Defense department officials believed the issue should be handled within the principles of federalism, Hinton said, and chose the compact route.

An interstate compact is essentially a contract between participating states, according to Rick Masters, special counsel to CSG.

“Its principle advantage is that it provides states with an effective means and an enforceable means of addressing problems that transcend the borders of your state, even though your laws may differ, without relinquishing authority to the feds,” Masters said.

Compacts are often used for issues in which states have traditionally exercised control and sovereignty, according to Masters. Education is one such issue.

“Our organization often reminds folks that kids serve too,” said Raezer, from the National Military Family Association. “And we as a nation, I believe, have an obligation to our nation’s children, to support them and enable them to enjoy a level playing field when it comes to educational opportunities. That, to me, is what this compact does.”

According to William Harrison, a member of the Military Child Education Coalition’s board of directors, the typical military child moves six to nine times between kindergarten and high school graduation. As superintendent of Cumberland County, N.C. Schools, which serves Fort Bragg, Harrison is well aware of the tolls those moves can have on children.

Different states have different educational requirements, and Harrison said that’s a good thing. “What’s best for the state of
Washington is not necessarily what’s best for the state of North Carolina,” he said. “The challenge that we have is within the context of individual requirements, how do we ensure that a child transferring from one place to another is not penalized? How do we ensure our military kids don’t suffer because their parents chose to serve our great country?”

Harrison’s school system was one of 302 that signed a memorandum of agreement in 2001 to deal with issues such as records transfers, access to extracurricular activities and graduation requirements.

“We think the compact, which has many of the same principles of our MOA, is much more powerful and can create a much higher level of assurance that what we’re signing is actually being carried out,” he said.

Leslye Arsht, U.S. deputy undersecretary of defense, said the compact has the potential to ease “the moving and academic pain that literally thousands of military children endure each and every year.

“There is nothing we can do that is more important to military families than to commit ourselves to preparing our children for their futures,” she said.

The issue is so important, according to Rear Admiral L.R. Hering Sr., commander of the Navy Region Southwest in San Diego, that it could impact national security.

“Retention in the United States military is not made on the deck plates of ships, or in the seats of our tanks or in the cockpits of planes,” he said. “It’s made at the kitchen table. If you don’t have the support of your spouse and your family that’s affected by your choice of service … those individuals will separate from the United States military and the all-volunteer will become the draft in a time of war.”

He urged state officials attending CSG’s December legislative briefing to begin the process of making the compact a reality.

The Process

The education compact for military children has been in the works for 18 months. An advisory group comprised of school superintendents from military communities, education associations, state legislators and executive branch state officials, as well as

About Compacts

- Compacts are rooted in Colonial history, and were used historically to resolve state boundary issues.
- Compacts are contracts between two or more states, and can be enacted on a regional or national level.
- The U.S. Constitution authorizes states to enact compacts in areas where states have traditionally exercised control and sovereignty. Compacts are protected under the Compact Clause of Article 1 of the Constitution.
- Congressional consent is required only if a compact encroaches upon the authority of the federal government.
- Congress has no standing to invalidate a compact for which consent is not required.
- There are approximately 200 compacts in effect across the United States; 38 of those compacts are inactive or dormant.
- Every state, on average, has adopted between 23 and 27 compacts.
- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, created in 1921, was the first compact to create a regulatory style mechanism.
- Types of compacts can be very broadly divided into three general categories:
  - Those that settle boundary disputes.
  - Those that are merely advisory—akin to administrative agreements between states.
  - Administrative compacts which create ongoing administrative agencies with a variety of subjects they seek to control, such as state transportation, environmental matters, public safety, education and corrections.
- Compact disputes can be, but are not required to be, brought before the U.S. Supreme Court as an original action.
CSG and Department of Defense staff, tried to address broadly the challenges of military moves in proposing the compact, the Department of Defense’s Hinton said.

Now, legislators in states with large military populations are working to pass legislation enacting the compact. An estimated 15 to 20 states are home to the majority of families impacted by the compact, according to Keith Scott, director of CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts. And Masters said the majority of U.S. military operations are in 10 states. For those reasons, the advisory group decided the compact needed approval in 10 states before it takes effect.

The first state to enact the compact will become the offering jurisdiction, which, in effect, means that state would be asking other states to join. The language in the compact requires other states to accept that offer by adopting nearly identical language, according to Masters.

“One once enacted,” Masters said, “a compact takes precedence over conflicting statutes of the state.”

States, he said, would not be free to contradict the contractual agreement. But that doesn’t mean they lose total control.

“The only thing you’re giving up is the right to act unilaterally,” said Masters. States will still have “collective sovereignty” in the compact, he said.

Once 10 states approve the compact legislation, stakeholders will form an interstate commission, according to Scott. States would also need to form state councils and to designate a state liaison between the state and the interstate commission.

The interstate commission would be a joint agency of the member states and would help resolve disputes among member states, as well as make rules to achieve the purposes of the compact and issue advisory opinions concerning the meaning of the interstate compact rules and actions. The commission would also hire an executive director to handle administrative duties related to the compact.

Ideally, stakeholders would like to see the compact in place as soon as possible, but Scott predicts it could be the 2009 school year before the compact has any real impact.

“The goal is to accomplish as much of this as we can in 2008,” Scott said.

He said several legislators have become champions for the compact and are making strides in gaining support in their states.

Looper, of Colorado, is particularly interested in the compact. Fort Carson, which is part of her district, is expecting an influx of students with a new brigade and military base realignment. While the school system already works to ease the transition of students, Looper believes the compact will improve communication between sending districts and receiving ones.

“This should help those children in transitioning to Colorado schools,” she said.

Rep. Ann Coody, whose Oklahoma district includes Fort Sill, has also been actively pushing the compact. As a former educator, Coody saw firsthand the challenges military children face when entering a new school.

Like other school systems with military students, the district that serves Fort Sill makes accommodations for incoming students. “I think it will be wonderful to have a compact that will enable the students that leave us to be accommodated,” said Coody.

The compact doesn’t come without costs, though. Once the interstate commission is operational, participating states would pay $1 per student covered under the agreement to fund the estimated $630,389 budget, according to the draft of the compact. The budget includes funding for staff salaries, commission and committee meetings, rent and utilities for commission offices, and indirect costs such as accounting and human resources services.

The Human Factor

Families of children who have been affected by military transfers say the compact is well worth the cost.

“It’s going to be a challenging task to figure out a way to do that and put the procedures in place to make it work, but I think it’s worthwhile to try to do that,” said Faith Morgan, Katie’s mother.
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

The advisory committee that drafted the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children tried to strike a balance in the plan, according to Rick Masters, special counsel for the Council of State Governments. “They were trying to find the lowest common denominator that will satisfy most states, but yet specific enough to deal with the problem,” he said.

Among the provisions of the compact proposal:

- Schools can use hand-carried education records to enroll and appropriately place students pending validation by official records—those sent from the sending school district to the receiving one.
- A sending school district will have 10 days after it receives such a request to process and furnish official records to the receiving school.
- States in the compact will give 30 days from the date of enrollment for students to obtain any immunizations required by the receiving state.
- Students will be allowed to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving state at the same grade level regardless of age.
- Students should be placed in educational courses—including Advanced Placement, honors, vocational and technical—and in educational programs, such as gifted and talented, based on their enrollment in the sending state and/or educational assessments conducted in the sending state, if the courses are offered. However, the receiving state can still conduct its own evaluation.
- Likewise, students should receive the same special education services they received in the sending state.
- Local schools can waive course/program prerequisites for placement in courses/programs.
- Students should be granted additional excused absences for missed school related to the deployment activities of their parents. However, the compact allows the receiving state to determine how many additional excused absences should be granted.
- Local schools should waive specific courses—such as a state history class—required for graduation if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another state.
- States should accept exit or end-of-course exams required for graduation from the sending state; national norm-referenced achievement tests; or alternate testing in lieu of testing requirements in the receiving state.
- Students who transfer during the senior year of high school and who become ineligible to graduate from the receiving district should be able to receive a diploma from the sending district if the student meets graduation requirements of that district. The compact encourages both school districts to work together to achieve this result. If one jurisdiction is not a member of the compact, the member state will work with the non-member state to achieve this result.

Her story in Florida turned out well: Katie was eventually moved to the advanced class in November after school officials received her records, and her grades are now back to what she’s been accustomed. But Faith knows this probably isn’t the end of Katie’s educational transitions. If, as the family expects, Faith’s husband is transferred again before Katie graduates high school, she’ll go through another transition.

“With any luck,” Faith Morgan said, “by that time, there’ll be something in place to ease that transition.”

As for Bianca Phillips, her father Junior requested, and received, an extension to avoid the move until after Bianca graduated high school. Now she’s happy to be attending college in Colorado, knowing that her educational transitions because of military reassignments are behind her.

But Grace Worley continues to face challenges. After moving back to Virginia, she’s facing exit exams on information she didn’t learn in the other states that she’s called home. And the high school sophomore is facing summers filled with classes just so she can meet Virginia requirements and graduate on time.

“A lot of the crises our kids face are in the individual state requirements that it must be done (that state’s) way,” said Lori Worley. The compact could resolve that problem, she said.

In an essay for English class last fall, when Grace voiced her opinion on exit exams—one point addressed by the compact—perhaps she voiced the issue best. “We should not make it harder than it already is for military kids,” she said. “Military kids should not have to face exit exams on top of the trauma of having to leave friends and go to a new place.”

—Mary Branham Dusenberry is managing editor for State News magazine.

Photo Captions: Page 21: Bianca Phillips, left, Katie Morgan and Grace Worley have all faced transition challenges in school when their fathers were transferred to another military installation. Page 22: Bianca and Vivia Phillips, top photo, Faith and Katie Morgan, middle, and Lori and Grace Worley all spoke about the challenges they faced following transfers during a December legislative briefing on the proposed Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.
Presidential candidates on both sides of the political aisle are proposing changes to the way health care is delivered in the United States. While most Democratic candidates recommend publicly funded programs to cover the uninsured and expand access to health care, Republican candidates espouse the merits of tax incentives and market-based solutions.

But where these diverse plans share some common ground is on the issue of prevention, with candidates from both parties expressing a belief that increasing access to and use of primary and preventive health care will help bring down the costs caused by chronic diseases and ultimately save lives.

The annual costs attributable to chronic disease are indeed staggering. The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion reports:

- 112,000 deaths and an estimated $75 billion in direct costs attributable to obesity;
- 438,000 deaths, $75 billion in medical expenditures and another $92 billion in indirect costs (lost productivity, etc.) caused by tobacco use;
- 1.4 million deaths and $432 billion in direct and indirect costs due to cardiovascular disease and stroke; and
- 556,000 deaths and $206 billion in overall costs for cancer.

In fact, chronic diseases account for 70 percent of all deaths in the United States each year. Although they are among the most common and costly health problems, chronic diseases are also among the most preventable. Getting Americans to improve their diets, be more physically active and avoid tobacco use could have a dramatic impact on decreasing the levels of chronic disease and bringing substantial cost savings to the health care system, many believe. And it seems, some of the presidential candidates recognize that.

The Partnership for Prevention also recognizes that principle. The Washington, D.C.-based organization, which strives to advance policies to prevent disease and improve health, reports that more than 100,000 lives could be saved each year by increasing the use of five clinical preventive cost-saving or cost-effective services. Those include daily aspirin use to prevent heart disease, tobacco use screening and intervention, colorectal cancer screening, flu shots and breast cancer screening.

But the current health care system is focused on treating diseases, not preventing them, analysts say, and insurance companies have little incentive to bear the costs of preventive care such as tests and immunizations.

Here’s a guide to what the presidential candidates have said about prevention this campaign season.
Sen. Hillary Clinton

The New York senator's health plan includes a national prevention initiative to reduce the incidence of chronic diseases including diabetes and cancer. Her plan cites "our back-ended coverage of health care that gives short-shrift to prevention" as one of the drivers of health care costs. Clinton recommends requiring all insurers participating in federal programs to cover prevention priorities. Under her plan, insurers would provide financial incentives to individuals and health care providers including eliminating co-pays for some prevention services. She would also coordinate and pool public spending on prevention across federal programs in the Department of Health and Human Services in order to maximize these services. She plans a public-private coalition to offer free preventive benefits in schools, workplaces and supermarkets. A new prevention work force including pharmacists and church leaders would be enlisted in the effort.

Read Clinton's plan at http://www.hillaryclinton.com/feature/healthcare/.

John Edwards

The former North Carolina senator's plan would increase vaccine production and reserves to prepare for flu epidemics and other public health threats. He would boost funding for anti-obesity measures and smoking cessation. Edwards would work with schools to remove unhealthy foods, invest in physical education and promote fitness in communities and workplaces. He supports community efforts to increase physical activity by making streets safer, improving walking and biking trails, and providing safe and well-equipped parks. He would require public health plans to offer preventive care without co-pays. Individuals who schedule free physicals and enroll in healthy living programs would be rewarded with lower insurance premiums.

Read the Edwards plan at http://www.johnedwards.com/issues/health-care/

Mike Gravel

Former Alaska Sen. Mike Gravel calls for the federal government to issue annual health care vouchers to Americans based on their projected health care needs. He said his universal health care voucher program would fully cover all Americans and cans with free health care that includes primary care and prevention.


Rep. Dennis Kucinich

The Ohio congressman is one of the authors of a bill (H.R. 676) that would seek to expand Medicare. It would establish the United States National Health Insurance program to provide all Americans and cians with free health care that includes primary care and prevention.

Read Kucinich's views on health care at http://www.dennis4president.com/go/issues/

Sen. Barack Obama

The Illinois senator said he would support efforts to expand and reward preventive health strategies in the workplace, schools and communities. He would reward worksites that offer health promotion programs, preventive services such as flu vaccinations, nutritious foods in cafeterias and exercise facilities. The senator would provide support for school-based health screening programs, clinical services and physical education. He would expand funding to improve the health care workforce by providing loan repayment, revised reimbursement mechanisms, improved training curricula and better working conditions. Obama also supports strategies to improve public health infrastructure and disaster preparedness at the state and local levels. He would require coverage of cancer screenings and smoking cessation programs in all federally supported health plans.

"Our health care system has become a disease care system, and the time for change is well overdue," Obama's plan states. "In the absence of a radical shift towards prevention and public health, we will not be successful in containing medical costs or improving the health of the American people."

**Rudy Giuliani**

Giuliani’s health care plan proposes that “health insurance should be redefined to cover wellness as well as sickness.” The former New York mayor promises new initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles and wellness programs and tie federal Medicaid payments to a state’s success in promoting preventive care and tracking obesity in children. Giuliani, a prostate cancer survivor, credits a blood test for saving his life by showing that he was at risk for the disease. He is now a fervent advocate for the importance of early screenings as well as maintaining overall health.


**Mike Huckabee**

The former Arkansas governor, who has received media attention for losing more than 100 pounds after a chest-pain scare and diabetes diagnosis, would waive cost-sharing for preventive benefits to encourage their use and seek to improve chronic disease management. He would also reduce health insurance premiums for those who live healthy lifestyles. On his Web site, Huckabee says “We don’t need universal health care mandated by federal edict or funded through ever-higher taxes. We do need to get serious about preventive health care instead of chasing more and more dollars to treat chronic disease.”


**Alan Keyes**

The former assistant secretary of state and ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council says on his Web site “I think the objective of the system should be health, not just health care, and that means taking what we’ve learned about the importance of diet, exercise and fitness and including those in our concept of health care.” Keyes also says he supports putting together an approach based on free-market principles aimed at keeping people healthy.


**Sen. John McCain**

The Arizona senator promises to invest in prevention and care of chronic illnesses. He would seek to provide Medicare payments for prevention. McCain touts education of children about health, nutrition and exercise. He would support public health initiatives to stem obesity and diabetes and to deter smoking. “The final important principle of reform is to rediscover our sense of personal responsibility,” McCain told an audience in Iowa last October. “We must personally do everything we can to prevent expensive, chronic diseases. Parents who don’t impart to their children a sense of personal responsibility for their health, nutrition and exercise … have failed their responsibility.”

Read McCain’s views on health care at [http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/Issues/19ba2f1c-c03f-4ac2-8cd5-5ef2ed8527cf.html](http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/Issues/19ba2f1c-c03f-4ac2-8cd5-5ef2ed8527cf.html).

**Rep. Ron Paul**

The Texas congressman says on his Web site that “Americans are justifiably concerned over the government’s escalating intervention into their freedom to choose what they eat and how they take care of their health.” The federal government has “replaced personal responsibility and accountability with a system that puts corporate interests first,” Paul said. He opposes legislation to increase the legal powers of the Food and Drug Administration, saying the agency has failed to protect the public from dangerous drugs, genetically modified foods, dangerous pesticides and other chemicals in the food supply while “(wasting) public funds attacking safe, healthy foods and dietary supplements.” Paul has sought to expand the ability of Americans to use alternative medicines and new treatments. He also opposes giving government the power to require immunizations.


**Mitt Romney**

The former Massachusetts governor emphasizes in his plan the role of states as “laboratories of innovation” in health care reform and says the federal role is to facilitate and encourage reforms but not mandate them. It was Romney who signed into law the ground-breaking Massachusetts health care reform effort, which included mandates on individuals to obtain health insurance and on employers to provide it. The reform effort included an expansion of eligibility for the state’s MassHealth Medicaid program. Beneficiaries are provided with lower cost sharing responsibilities if they demonstrate healthy behavior such as quitting smoking or being screened for diabetes or cancer.

Read Romney’s health care plan at [http://www.mittromney.com/News/Press-Releases/Policy_Briefing_Health_Care](http://www.mittromney.com/News/Press-Releases/Policy_Briefing_Health_Care).
CSG provides insights about major trends to state officials. It also highlights state responses to these trends. Our Innovations Awards Program, now in its 22nd year, is a key component of both endeavors. We invite your agency or department to consider applying for a 2008 award.

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Download an application: www.csg.org/programs/innov/apply.aspx
Contact: Nancy J. Vickers, nvickers@csg.org, (859) 244-8105
A Nissan Motors engine manufactured in Decherd, Tenn., might find its way across the border to be installed in a vehicle at one of two Nissan auto manufacturing plants in Mexico. From the southern border, that vehicle might be shipped north to Canada as its final destination.

“So you can have a Tennessee engine in a Mexican Nissan that’s exported to Canada for final sale,” said Matt Kisber, commissioner of Tennessee’s Department of Economic and Community Development.

That’s just one example of the interdependence between the economies of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Many states have found relationships with their North American neighbors are vital to their economies.

“This particular relationship is probably among the most important in the world,” said Sujit CanagaRetna, “particularly the U.S. and Canada. It’s the largest bilateral trade relationship in the world.”

CanagaRetna, senior fiscal analyst with the Southern Legislative Conference, The Council of State Governments’ southern region, said exports to Canada have played a huge role in the growth plan of every U.S. state.

For that reason, many states have established trade offices in Canada—as well as in other countries—to attract businesses, according to Chris Whatley, director of CSG’s State International Development Organizations.

State activities in this global marketplace can only grow, particularly with the volatility of the dollar, according to CanagaRetna. Twenty-two percent of total U.S. exports in 2006—the latest figures available—went to Canada, while 13 percent of U.S. exports went to Mexico. CanagaRetna said those exports have likely increased as the value of the dollar has fallen.

“In all the doom and gloom, with the economy slowing down, a real bright spot has been our exports,” he said. “We’ve seen a huge competitive advantage because of the falling dollar.”

Exports are more competitive, he said, because it now takes less of other currencies to purchase the U.S. dollar. That makes U.S. products cheaper in foreign markets.

States are already facing multi-million dollar shortfalls in this economic slowdown, CanagaRetna said, yet the export sector has been thriving. “In that equation, the trade with Canada and Mexico loom as very, very important,” he said.

U.S. & Canada

It’s easy to see just how important those trade relationships are.

Consider this: There’s more than $550 billion in two-way trade between Canada and the U.S.
each year, according to Roy Norton, minister, Congressional, Public and Intergovernmental Relations with the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. And, Norton said, the U.S. exports more to Canada than to China, Japan, Germany and Great Britain combined.

“By our calculation, there are a little more than 7 million jobs in the United States supported by two-way trade with Canada,” he said.

Individual states see trade with Canada and Mexico as vital to their economies. Take Tennessee, which is home to operations of 72 Canadian companies, ranging from the transportation operations of the Canadian National Railroad to the printing operations of Quebecor World. The state operates a trade office in Toronto to recruit new companies and maintain good relations with those already in Tennessee, according to Kisber, of the state’s economic development department.

The value of the dollar, almost equal to that of the Canadian dollar, has affected states’ abilities to recruit in Canada. Bob Bathgate, the Canadian director for Tennessee’s economic development department, said the falling U.S. dollar has been almost another recruiting tool for businesses.

“With the dollar separation, it was easier for Canadian companies to export and still be competitive,” he said. “But with the dollar as close as it is … it’s another reason to set up facilities in the U.S.”

According to Norton, Canadian companies have invested almost as much in the United States as U.S. companies have invested in Canada—a much smaller economy. Much of that investment, he said, has occurred since 1994 when the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, took effect.

About a third of the bilateral trade, Norton said, is intra-firm trade, which means the same companies with operations in both the U.S. and Canada are shipping components back and forth along the border. The auto industry is a good example.

“Before a car emerges in its final form from an assembly line in the U.S. or Canada, on average, it crosses the border seven times,” he said. Canada also provides more gas, oil, electricity and uranium to the U.S. than any other country in the world, according to Norton.

### U.S. & Mexico

States’ trade relationships with Mexico are equally important. U.S. exports to Mexico in 2006 totaled $134.2 billion, according to CanagaRetna.

Border states naturally benefit from trade with Mexico. For Arizona, Mexico is its largest trading partner, according to Arizona state Sen. Tom O’Halleran.

“When you’re a border state, you’re going to have a tremendous amount of need for that trading partner,” he said. Arizona exports more than $5 billion a year into Mexico and Central America, according to O’Halleran.

“It means jobs in Arizona; revenue for the state of Arizona,” he said. “We need to have good cross-border relationships.”

That relationship goes beyond exports.

“Mexico is a source of labor both skilled and unskilled, that’s legal and illegal, that comes in and helps our economy,” said California Sen. Michael Machado.

But more than just border states benefit from a good relationship with Mexico, according to California Assembly Member Hector DeLatorie. Maquiladoras, factories that operate along the U.S.-Mexico border, supply everything from electronics to automobile components for the U.S. market, he said.

Commercial trade isn’t the only benefit from the close relationship between states and Mexico. In addition to the factories, according to O’Halleran, Mexico has developed several power plants that provide energy to the U.S.

Retail sales and tourism for Arizonans are also important to the state, which borders the Mexican state of Sonora.

“In the Tucson area, a tremendous amount of Mexican citizens cross the border and buy products in that area, and that goes into the sales tax base,” said O’Halleran. He said the cross-border trade is just part of the economic systems in areas such as Yuma and Tucson.

That cross-border relationship is also just a way of life for people living along the U.S.-Mexico border, according to DeLatorie from California. Residents in southern San Diego County, for instance, might cross the border...
into Tijuana to meet friends for dinner. Likewise Tijuana residents might visit California for a day of shopping.

“That’s like a daily occurrence,” said Delatorie. “For those of us who are a little more inland, it might seem a little peculiar, but it’s just a part of their lives.”

Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

The relationships that Delatorie and O’Halloran describe didn’t happen without relatively open borders, which have helped to foster those trade relationships between the U.S. and its neighbors. But some officials worry that the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative—tentatively scheduled to take effect in June 2009—might impede travel and create barriers to trade.

Even though Arizona still benefits greatly from the flow of traffic crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, the system is far from perfect, O’Halloran said. “The free flow of commercial traffic is in bad condition today and if we don’t watch it, it’s going to get worse,” he said. WHTI could make things worse.

His biggest complaint is the lack of infrastructure to support the changes in WHTI that require passports or other secure documentation for border crossings, which he says could add another 20 minutes per person to pass through in some areas that already create bottlenecks. The ports of entry in Arizona are inadequate—from logistical and computer standpoints—to meet the growing needs of border crossings, he said.

Norton, of the Canadian Embassy, said most everyone agrees the borders need to be secure to prevent terrorists from entering the country. But he, and others, would like to see more preparation before WHTI takes effect to lessen the possible negative impact on trade and tourism.

Norton said the Japanese model of just-in-time delivery, which many companies have embraced, has helped companies cut costs and become more competitive globally.

Delays at the border could increase costs for those businesses especially, and some say that could be bad news for states.

“The bottleneck at the border of trucks and the flow of goods with just-in-time production system makes it extremely difficult when you only have a limited number of points where goods can cross the border,” said Kisber, of Tennessee. He’s especially concerned with the impact on the auto industry, which has factories in his state and all both U.S. and Mexico. “The ability to move goods back and forth is extremely important in that industry.”

Kisber works with companies worldwide. From his perspective, “It is very clear in today’s global economy that commerce will go to where there is the best environment as well as the best market,” he said. “We have the market in North America. I think we need to be careful that we don’t create obstacles that make it more expensive and logistically more difficult in order to manufacture in North America, further accelerating the migration of jobs to other parts of the world.”

WHTI’s impact on trade is important to the Canadian government, but Norton says officials are also concerned that the initiative could impact tourism with the U.S. He said there are 160 million crossings of the Canada-U.S. border every year and only 15 percent are by air. While air travelers need passports to enter the country, land and sea travelers do not. “If you had to have a passport, our calculation is that traffic would stop.”

That’s also a concern along the U.S. border with Mexico. O’Halloran said a condominium development on the Sea of Cortez is drawing many Arizonians looking for summer homes. U.S. citizens crossing into Mexico often face a border guard just waving them through the crossing. But returning home is a problem.

“You could wait eight hours in line before you cross back into the United States,” O’Halloran said. “There’s a whole industry set up on the Mexican side of the border to sell cold drinks and ice cream and other goods and wares for people who are stuck in line.”

California’s DeLatorie thinks that problem could be resolved by establishing a two-tier system of border crossings into the United States. The first tier would be those people who live along the border and cross frequently, whether for personal, business or commercial reasons. The second would be those infrequent visitors who would be required to have more documentation to cross.

DeLatorie said immigration issues shouldn’t be confused with the natural interaction of residents along the border.

“Those folks who live along the border and go back and forth, they’re not part of that (immigration) problem because they are very comfortable living where they’re living, on either side of the border, and going back and forth,” he said. “We have to separate this dynamic and our interaction with them from the rest of our immigration policies and the way we deal with Mexico, and Canada too for that matter.”

States will be watching progress on WHTI closely over the next few months. The Council of State Governments will hold a special meeting on WHTI in Detroit at the end of this month. And CSG-WEST will focus on aspects of the initiative at its annual meeting in July.

“The ability to have, as much as possible, a secure border with a seamless, efficient process to expedite commerce and individuals is of critical importance to Arizona, other border states and the U.S.,” said O’Halloran. “And that goes for Canada also.”

—Mary Branham Dusenberry is managing editor of State News magazine.
After a somewhat difficult childhood, solar energy comes of age as states like Oregon and Arizona nurture it into the mainstream.

State Policies Help Solar Energy Take Off

After a somewhat difficult childhood, solar energy comes of age as states like Oregon and Arizona nurture it into the mainstream.

By Jennifer DeCesaro
From warehouse rooftops in urban New Jersey to Colorado’s rural San Luis Valley, and from new subdivisions in California to the Florida Governor’s Mansion, solar electricity is becoming increasingly more common.

Federal Support for Solar

Two key tax provisions at the federal level are designed to support residential and business solar systems.

- A 30 percent tax credit—capped at $2,000—is offered for the purchase of residential solar water heating and photovoltaic systems. The residential credit is due to expire at the end of 2008.
- A 30 percent business credit is offered for the purchase of solar energy systems. That credit is slated to revert to a permanent 10 percent level at the end of 2008.

The final version of the Energy Independence and Security Act (PL 110-140, H.R. 6) passed by Congress in December 2007 ultimately did not contain any renewable energy tax provisions leaving in question the future of the solar investment tax credit.

In October, the National Mall in Washington, D.C., played host to 20 energy-efficient, solar powered houses designed and built by university students. The solar village showcased the latest in solar design and technologies demonstrating their accessibility.

Legislators, regulators, utilities and ratepayers are working together to move these technologies into the mainstream. Initiatives include requiring utilities to purchase a certain percentage of their electricity from renewable technologies—including solar—as part of a renewable electricity standard, and supporting rebate and incentive programs that assist homeowners with the costs associated with the purchase of a solar energy system.

Back to Basics: Solar and Its Uses

The sun gives off heat and light, providing an abundant source of energy that can be harnessed in many different ways. The technologies using the sun’s resources range from the very basic, such as hanging clothes outside to dry, to the very complex, including power for homes.

Homeowners across the country are using the sun’s energy to heat water and to produce electricity. Architects use passive solar heating and daylighting design strategies to help homes and commercial buildings operate more efficiently. Utility companies are even taking advantage of the sun’s abundant energy resource in a variety of ways, including allowing homeowners with photovoltaic systems that collect the sun’s rays to sell their excess converted electricity back to the grid, and constructing large-scale solar power production facilities. This net metering allows for the flow of electricity both to and from the customer through a single, bi-directional meter.

But the widespread use of these technologies by utilities and consumers is a result of state government policies. Without net-metering rules, incentive programs and other policy mechanisms such as the renewable electricity standard, advancing solar energy is an uphill battle; effective policies stimulate markets. It becomes not solely about the quality of a state or region’s solar resource, but rather the policies in place to support solar technologies.

State Support of Solar

From the Pacific Northwest to the desert Southwest, states across the country are developing programs to support the deployment of solar technologies. Earlier this year, the Oregon legislature passed several pieces of legislation aimed at launching the state into the solar spotlight.

Among numerous other provisions, the Oregon legislature passed a 25 percent renewable electricity standard, which includes a provision extending funding for the Energy Trust of Oregon until 2025. The trust manages programs that fund the installation of both solar hot water and photovoltaic systems.

In addition to enacting the renewable energy standard, legislators increased the Oregon Business Energy Tax Credit from 35 percent to 50 percent of eligible renewable project costs up to $20 million. As a result, two new solar manufacturers located in the state.

“The legislature’s approval of a 50 percent tax credit for both (solar) installations and manufacturing facilities clearly places Oregon as one of the lead states in the advancement of solar energy,” said Christopher Dymond, the Oregon Department of Energy’s solar program manager. The state is ranked fifth in the nation for solar hot water systems and is in the top 10 for photovoltaic systems. The solar industry is continuing to grow at a rate of more than 30 percent a year.
In Arizona, Gov. Janet Napolitano has deemed the state the “Saudi Arabia of solar energy within the United States.” Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords is determined Arizona will become the “Solar-con Valley” of the U.S., and the technology is benefiting from a number of different policy approaches. Last summer, the legislature passed, and the governor signed, Senate Bill 1254 preventing homeowners’ associations from restricting the use of solar energy systems.

Another boost to solar energy came when the Arizona Corporation Commission, the entity responsible for utility regulation in the state, increased the state’s renewable energy standard to 15 percent, where nearly 5 percent of that requirement must be met with solar energy. The state provides a 25 percent credit for solar devices—both electricity and hot water together—of up to $1,000.

Even with an increasingly friendly policy environment, solar still faces some hurdles in Arizona. “There’s tremendous potential in the sun, but we are not there yet,” said Mike Gleason, chairman of the Arizona Corporation Commission.

Still, solar manufacturers agree that solar faces hurdles, stating that more can be done in the way of providing incentives to solar businesses and consumers.

Larry Kazmerski, director of the National Center for Photovoltaics at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, said incentives will bring people in and that the timing is good for Arizona to position itself as a solar capital.

“Arizona really is considered tops in the point of view of technology expertise,” said Kazmerski. “You have a tradition, but you also have a future.”

Where Do We Go From Here?

While the U.S. solar industry continues to grow at an exceptional rate with the help of states like Oregon and Arizona, the U.S. is by no means a world leader in advancing solar technologies. Even though in 2006, the U.S. solar market grew by 43 percent for installed megawatts, and is on track to grow 60 percent in 2007, as of 2005, renewable energy technologies generated just 7 percent of the nation’s electricity. Of that 7 percent, solar consisted of just 1 percent, totaling just 211 megawatts of installed solar electric generating capacity.

With solar parks blanketing the countryside and photovoltaic panels tiling the rooftops, Germany boasts the largest solar market in the world, with an installed capacity of more than 2,500 megawatts. While the solar resource in Germany is low—equivalent to the most resource poor areas in the U.S.—only Northwest Washington and Alaska have solar resources comparable to Germany’s. So how has Germany been able to grow its solar market to such a level? The answer: Germany uses effective policy programs to support the expansion of the solar market.

The U.S. continues to refine its solar policy portfolio at both the state and federal levels, and one thing is certain: The solar market is continuing to expand. In 2001, the first year of New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program, there were only six solar-power installations. In 2006 alone, nearly 800 residential and commercial systems were installed under the program. One spokesman for the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities called it “a drastic and dramatic increase.”

That drastic and dramatic trend in solar is being mirrored in an increasing number of states across the country.

—Jennifer DeCesaro is project director for the Clean Energy Group and the Clean Energy States Alliance based in Denver, Colo.

Solar Technologies

Solar Water Heating devices directly absorb the sun’s radiation to heat air or water for use in a building. Solar water heaters can be used in large commercial applications or in low-profile installations on residences anywhere in the nation. Solar water heating systems can be either open loop, in which the water to be heated flows directly through the rooftop collector, or closed loop, in which the collector is filled with an antifreeze solution that passes through a heat exchanger mounted in or around your normal water heater. Closed loop systems can be used anywhere in the U.S., even in freezing conditions, while open loop devices must be drained during freezing conditions. In any weather, the heating system can back up an existing heater, reducing overall energy costs.

Photovoltaic devices generate electricity directly from sunlight via an electronic process that occurs naturally in certain types of material. Electrons in certain types of crystals are freed by solar energy and can be induced to travel through an electrical circuit, powering any type of electronic device or load. Photovoltaic devices can be used to power small devices such as road signs or phone call boxes, as well as homes, and even large stores or businesses.

Concentrating Solar Power devices optically focus or concentrate the thermal energy of the sun to drive a generator or heat engine using mirrors arranged in a dish, trough or tower configuration. When the sun is unavailable, concentrating solar power plants can also provide constant output using natural gas or landfill gas.

Trough systems focus the sun’s energy on a pipe filled with a heat exchange fluid; that heat is then used to run a steam generator in a central plant.

Power Tower systems use a field of computer-controlled flat mirrors to focus solar heat on a central tower, which then runs a central generator. Demonstration systems have shown power outputs of more than 10 megawatts, along with the ability to run overnight or in bad weather by storing heated transfer fluid in what’s called a hyper-efficient “thermos bottle.”

Dish systems use a dish to track the sun to focus energy onto a high-efficiency heat engine, which generates electricity directly.
Water scarcity is a growing problem across the United States. This article, based on a broader publication by the American Society of Civil Engineers, details some of those problems. This article is one in a series that highlights CSG Trends’ publications, which will focus on various public policy issues facing the U.S. today.

By Stephen E. Draper

The single greatest public policy challenge facing government in the 21st century is confronting growing water scarcity. The solutions rest with implementing comprehensive water conservation measures paired with fair and effective agreements on sharing interstate waters.

Water scarcity, once a threat largely confined to the West, is now pervasive throughout the United States. Demand for fresh water is increasing dramatically while the supply of surface water, from rivers and lakes, and ground water, underground aquifers, remains fixed. The scarcity threat will expand further as climate change disrupts both the timing and amount of available water.

Conflicts could develop as water users increasingly compete for the same scarce supplies of clean water. Conflicts will not, however, be solely between water users or between specific stakeholder interest groups. Since most river basins cross state lines, interstate disputes will increase as states vie for control of the source water needed by their constituencies.

Resolving Interstate Water Disputes

States have two alternatives to resolve interstate water disputes. They can use the federal court system, leading to final resolution by the U.S. Supreme Court, or disputing states can adopt plans on how to share the interstate waters in question. The federal court system involves a time-consuming and expensive process, and the outcome is uncertain. The best solution, with the least uncertainty for states, is to formulate and enforce an agreement that specifies each party’s use of the shared water resource.

There are significant obstacles to negotiating and developing a successful water-sharing agreement that satisfies all states. Although a number of obstacles to reaching an effective water-sharing agreement exist, three are significant.

**Transparent Negotiations:** First, states must negotiate transparently. Four principles of negotiations and management are essential to reach a viable water-sharing agreement. These principles include:

- an obligation to cooperate and negotiate in good faith,
- an obligation to prevent unreasonable harm to other parties,
- a commitment to the equitable utilization of the shared water, and
- an obligation to exchange all available data with the other states.
Misperceptions of a State’s Right to Use Interstate Waters: Misperceptions by state officials also present an obstacle. Often state negotiators believe their share of an interstate river should be determined geographically, by the percentage of the river system that lies within their boundaries. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, has ruled otherwise, allocating interstate waters so that a fair division of the water resource is achieved, considering the effect on each state’s economy, their consumptive use patterns and other factors.

Complexity of State Water Laws: Existing laws and policies of the individual states present another obstacle to reaching an agreement. Individual state water allocation laws differ. For example, the grandfathering of certain uses under state law may make reasonable compromise or bargaining difficult. Also, private water marketing by one state removes its ability to control allocation within the state and may thwart a reasonable settlement of interstate allocation issues.

In past water-sharing agreements, the hydrologic record—which details the water movement, distribution and quality—of the shared water resources has been used to estimate the water that might be available in the future. But climate change makes past hydrologic records unreliable to predict future water supply. Climate changes are altering precipitation patterns and intensities, causing intensified cycles of droughts and floods, decreased depths and earlier melting of snow pack. The impact of climate change must be factored into future water-sharing agreements.

The drafting and signing of a water-sharing agreement without proper funding and enforcement mechanisms is meaningless. The agreement should contain a dispute resolution mechanism that offers meaningful alternatives to the federal court system. The agreement should include rules for dispute resolution and identify a forum in which these rules are enforced.

—Stephen E. Draper, Ph.D., P.E., J.D., served as chair of Shared Use of Transboundary Water Resources Committee of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He is the editor and principal author of Model Water Sharing Agreements for the 21st Century (ASCE, 2002) and Sharing Water in Times of Scarcity (ASCE, 2006). Draper founded the University of Georgia’s Draper Center & Archives for the Waters of Georgia in History, Law and Policy.

### Fast Facts:

- The average American household uses more than twice the amount of water than the average European household. This trend is expected to continue; by 2025, the average American household will use 29 cubic kilometers annually, compared to 13.3 cubic kilometers in European households, according to a report by the International Food Policy Research Institute and the International Water Management Institute.

- According to a 2003 U.S. Government Accountability Office report, at least 36 states could over the next five years face regional or statewide water shortages.

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**Trends in America Water Scarcity**

Last June, The Council of State Governments released a new report focusing on 10 trends that state policy experts, state government leaders and business professionals have identified as major forces of change. These Trends in America were addressed in issue briefs released at last year’s annual meeting. This year, a new Trends in America series begins and CSG will continue to educate state officials through online issue briefs.

The nature and extent of water scarcity in the United States is the subject of February’s issue brief. Learn about efforts by some states to cope with the strain on the nation’s fresh water reserves; interstate water-sharing agreements; and federal action. The issue brief also covers expected trends and includes expert opinion about the challenges states can expect to face in the future. Visit www.csg.org to read this issue brief.
Two representatives from The American Probation & Parole Association (APPA) testified on preventing and responding to prison rape before the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission Dec. 5, 2007, in New Orleans.

APPA’s President-elect Barbara Broderick, the chief probation officer for the Adult Probation Department in Maricopa County, Ariz., and Carrie Abner, APPA research associate, were among several witnesses asked to provide testimony during a commission hearing on “Special Topics in Preventing and Responding to Prison Rape: Medical and Mental Health Care, Community Corrections Settings, and Oversight.”

The federal commission is a bipartisan panel created by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003, and is charged with developing standards to carry out that mission. Members of the commission were appointed by President George W. Bush and the U.S. Congress.

The act supports the elimination and prevention of prison rape in the nation’s prisons, jails, lock-ups and community-based correctional facilities. The act establishes a zero tolerance policy for corrections-based sexual assault, enhances data collection and information-sharing on the incidence of prison rape, and calls for the development of standards for the prevention and response to prison rape.

“Without a doubt, the field of community corrections needs clarification on its roles/responsibilities with regard to (the Prison Rape Elimination Act),” Broderick told the commission. While many community corrections departments are making “a good-faith effort” to address the issue of sexual assault, Broderick urged the commission to provide additional guidance on how the act applies to the community corrections field.

Abner argued in her testimony that “the experiences of offenders within institutional settings directly affect their behavior once released into the community and community supervision strategies must reflect the whole of these experiences.

“Given that the majority of probationers and parolees spend some time in custody—either following their arrest, as part of a split sentence or following a violation of their community supervision sentence—the community corrections field should be actively engaged in efforts to safeguard communities against corrections-based sexual assault,” Abner said.

Through funding from the U.S. Department of Justice/Bureau of Justice Assistance, APPA is developing a guide for frontline community corrections staff and supervisors on preventing and responding to corrections-based sexual assault.

Transcripts of testimony provided to the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission are available at www.nprec.us.

Toomy Recognized for Service

Dan Sprague, executive director of The Council of State Governments, left, and Rep. Chris Ross, co-chairman of CSG’s Suggested State Legislation Committee, right, recognized Louisiana Rep. Joe Toomy at the 2007 Annual State Trends and Leadership Conference in Oklahoma City. Toomy was presented a plaque and framed photograph to thank him for his many years of service to CSG.
Western Lawmakers Sharpen Legislative Skills

They came from 13 Western states, from two political parties, and from a dazzling array of professions. Thirty-seven state legislators attended The Council of State Governments Western Legislative Academy in November with one common desire: to sharpen their legislative skills.

Classes at the academy included speechmaking, time management, media relations, team building, negotiations and ethics. They were taught by faculty members representing academia, the military, the media, veteran legislative leaders and corporate trainers.

The highlight of the 2007 Western Legislative Academy was an afternoon at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, where retired United States Air Force Lt. Col. Danny Miller administered personality profiles to help legislators understand, as he put it, “why everybody isn’t just like me.” Miller engaged lawmakers in some of the same team-building exercises given to Air Force Academy cadets and officers.

Wyoming Senate President John Schiffer and Nevada Senate Minority Leader Dina Titus led a session on what makes good legislatures.

Participants selected New Mexico Rep. Thomas Garcia as their class president. Washington Rep. Jeff Morris, then-chair of CSG-WEST, presided over the Academy.

Admission to the CSG-WEST academy was competitive, and each Western state was allocated at least two, but no more than four, slots at the academy. Since its inception in 2000, 300 Western legislators have graduated from the leadership academy, and many alumni have gone on to become leaders in their legislatures and in state government. Two alumni now serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and two serve in the U.S. Senate.

Applications for the 2008 Western Legislative Academy may be found at www.csgwest.org or, for more information, call 916-553-4423.

Former CSG Chair Rep. Tom Murphy

Former Georgia House Speaker Tom Murphy died Dec. 17, nearly four years after suffering a major stroke. He was 83.

Murphy was first elected to Georgia’s House in 1960 and served nearly three decades as Georgia House leader from 1974 to 2002. He was the longest-serving state house speaker in the country before his election defeat in 2002. He served as chair of The Council of State Governments in 1990.

“Speaker Murphy was my first CSG chairman in 1990 and he is truly a legend. For several decades he was the main power broker in Georgia,” said Daniel Sprague, executive director of CSG. “And, he was a longtime supporter of SLC (Southern Legislative Conference) and a wise leader of CSG. We’re grateful for his service to us.”

During his time as speaker, Murphy provided legislative support that made Atlanta’s bus and rail system, built in the 1970s and 1980s, possible.
This calendar lists meetings as designated by CSG’s Annual Meeting Committee. For details of a meeting, call the number listed. “CSG” denotes affiliated organizations of CSG. Visit www.csg.org for updates and more extensive listings.

### February 2008

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<tr>
<td>Feb. 2-5</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) Southern Region Winter Seminar</td>
<td>Austin, TX—Intercontinental Stephen F. Austin Hotel. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 10-13</td>
<td>CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Winter Training Institute</td>
<td>Phoenix, AZ—Phoenix Hyatt Regency. Contact Kris at (859) 244-8204 or visit <a href="http://www.appa-net.org">www.appa-net.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 29-March 1</td>
<td>CSG Cross-Border Travel and Trade: A U.S.–Canada Forum on WHTI</td>
<td>Detroit, MI—Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.csgeast.org/echome.asp">http://www.csgeast.org/echome.asp</a></td>
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### March 2008

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<tr>
<td>March 9–12</td>
<td>National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Legislative Conference</td>
<td>Washington, DC—Willard Inter-Continental Hotel. Contact Adrié Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or <a href="mailto:ohomanilton@csg.org">ohomanilton@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 10–14</td>
<td>CSG/National Emergency Management Association—NEMA Mid-Year Conference</td>
<td>Washington, DC—JW Marriott. Contact Karen Cobuluis at (859) 244-8143 or <a href="mailto:kcobuluis@csg.org">kcobuluis@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12–14</td>
<td>CSG/National Lieutenant Governors Association—State Federal Meeting</td>
<td>Washington, DC. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.nlga.us">www.nlga.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14–16</td>
<td>CSG/ERC Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Atlantic City, NJ—Sheraton Hotel. Contact Pamela Stanley at (212) 482-2320 or <a href="mailto:pstanley@csg.org">pstanley@csg.org</a></td>
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### April 2008

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<tr>
<td>April 8–10</td>
<td>CSG/State International Development Organizations—SIDO White House Forum</td>
<td>Washington, DC. Contact Chris Whatley, Director of International Programs, at <a href="mailto:cwhatley@csg.org">cwhatley@csg.org</a> or (202) 624-5460</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 19–22</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) Eastern Region Seminar</td>
<td>Mystic, CT—Hilton Mystic. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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### May 2008

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<tr>
<td>May 18–21</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) Midwestern Regional Seminar</td>
<td>Duluth, MN—Radisson Hotel Duluth-Harborview. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 29–30</td>
<td>Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOOS) Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Lexington, KY—Marriott Hotel. Contact Baro Saturday at (859) 244-8235 or <a href="mailto:bsaturday@csg.org">bsaturday@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 29–June 1</td>
<td>CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration—Spring Conference</td>
<td>Lexington, KY—Griffin Gate Marriott Resort and Spa. Contact registration at (800) 800-1910 or <a href="mailto:registration@csg.org">registration@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31–June 3</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) Western Region Seminar</td>
<td>Moran, WY—Jackson Lake Lodge at Grand Teton National Park. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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### June 2008

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<tr>
<td>June 7–11</td>
<td>National Association of State Chief Administrators (NASC) &amp; National Association of State Facilities Administrators (NASFA) National Conference &amp; Resource Expo</td>
<td>Jackson, WY—Jackson Lake Lodge. Contact Marcia Stone at (859) 244-8181 or <a href="mailto:mstone@csg.org">mstone@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14–18</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) Southern Region Summer Seminar</td>
<td>Little Rock, AK—Peabody Little Rock Hotel. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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### July 2008

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<tr>
<td>July 11–15</td>
<td>CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—62nd Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK. Contact Elizabeth Lewis at (404) 633-1866 or visit <a href="http://www.slcatlanta.org">www.slcatlanta.org</a> for more information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 12–16</td>
<td>National Association of State Personnel Executives, Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK. Skirvin Hilton. Convention Center. Contact Leslie Scott at (859) 244-8182 or <a href="mailto:lsco@csbg.org">lsco@csbg.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 13–16</td>
<td>CSG/Midwestern Legislative Conference—63rd Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Rapid City, SD. Contact Cindy Andrews at (630) 925-1922 or <a href="mailto:candrews@csg.org">candrews@csg.org</a> or visit <a href="http://www.csigmidwest.org">www.csigmidwest.org</a> for more information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 16–20</td>
<td>CSG/CSG-WEST Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Anchorage, AK—The Hotel Captain Cook, contact Cheryl Duvaucheille or Lolita Urnsia at (916) 553-4423 or <a href="mailto:csw@csg.org">csw@csg.org</a>.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 3–6</td>
<td>CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—33rd Annual Training Institute</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV—Rio All-Suite Hotel. Contact Kris at (859) 244-8204 or visit <a href="http://www.appa-net.org">www.appa-net.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 8–12</td>
<td>CSG/Midwestern Legislative Conference—14th Annual Bowlay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD)</td>
<td>Madison, WI—Plano Center of Executive Education. Contact Laura Tomaka at (630) 925-1922 or <a href="mailto:ltm@csbg.org">ltm@csbg.org</a> or visit <a href="http://www.csigmidwest.org">http://www.csigmidwest.org</a> for more information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 9–11</td>
<td>CSG/Southern Governors’ Association—SGA Annual Meeting</td>
<td>White Sulphur Springs, WV—The Greenbrier. Contact Liz Purdy at (202) 624-5897 or <a href="mailto:sg@sga.org">sg@sga.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 10–13</td>
<td>CSG/ERC 48th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum</td>
<td>Atlantic City, NJ—Sheraton Hotel. Contact Pamela Stanley at (212) 482-2320 or <a href="mailto:pstanley@csg.org">pstanley@csg.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 18–21</td>
<td>National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Annual Conference</td>
<td>Rockport, ME—Samoaet on the Ocean Resort. Contact Adrié Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or <a href="mailto:ohomanilton@csg.org">ohomanilton@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 23–27</td>
<td>National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD) 31st Annual Conference &amp; Technology Showcase</td>
<td>Boston, MA—Seaport Hotel &amp; World Trade Center. Contact Pamela Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or <a href="mailto:ppjohnson@csg.org">ppjohnson@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8–11</td>
<td>CSG/National Emergency Management Association—NEMA Annual Conference</td>
<td>Portland, OR—Contact Karen Cobuluis at (859) 244-8143 or <a href="mailto:kcobuluis@csg.org">kcobuluis@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8–11</td>
<td>Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOOS) Annual Business Meeting</td>
<td>Palm Springs, CA—Wyndham Palm Springs Hotel. Contact Baro Saturday at (859) 244-8235 or <a href="mailto:bsaturday@csg.org">bsaturday@csg.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 20–24</td>
<td>CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills (CALS)</td>
<td>Norman, OK—University of Oklahoma and the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center. Contact Lori Jones-Rucker at (404) 633-1866 or <a href="mailto:ljones-rucker@csg.org">ljones-rucker@csg.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27-Oct.2</td>
<td>CSG—Henry Toll Fellowship Program</td>
<td>Lexington, KY—Hilton Suites at Lexington Green. Contact Krista Rinehart at (859) 244-8249 or <a href="mailto:krinehart@csg.org">krinehart@csg.org</a>.</td>
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### December 2008

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<tr>
<td>Dec. 4–7</td>
<td>CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration—Annual Conference</td>
<td>Omaha, NE. Contact registration at (800) 800-1910 or <a href="mailto:registration@csg.org">registration@csg.org</a>.</td>
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Although the federal government tends to get more attention, state officials are often on the front lines of cutting-edge trends and issues. On the other hand, sometimes in the community of state governments, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

In print since 1958, State News (formerly State Government News) has chronicled many of the changes … and continuities.

Here's what we reported on:

40 years ago—February 1968
State Governments Undergo Change

Several Western states were studying government organization and management in early 1968, and had formed groups to recommend improvements. Then-Gov. Paul Laxalt of Nevada, for instance, appointed several businessmen to a group to identify areas where immediate savings could be made by executive order, determine areas where potential savings justify in-depth studies, and make recommendations for long-range consideration by the executive and legislative branches.

California, Idaho, Wyoming and New Mexico were also looking at reorganization of their state government operations.

Update

In August 2006, The Council of State Governments created the Center of State Governance Transformation. Since its inception, the national center has begun work on a monograph publication, “State Governance Transformation: Why and How.” The center’s staff has begun compiling information on foresight and strategic planning, results-focused legislation and management, collaborative and networked government and transparent governance with civic engagement for a national clearinghouse to benefit state officials.

In addition, the center sought collaboration from key officials of cooperating organizations, such as the National Governors Association, National Association of State Budget Officers, National Conference of State Officials, State Legislative Leadership Foundation, National Center for State Courts and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

The center will hold an inaugural workshop designed to help state officials contemplating governance transformation in their state at the CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration—Spring Conference in Lexington, Ky., May 29–June 1.

25 years ago—February 1983
Budgets Top States’ Agendas

State officials ranked the need to balance the budget as their top concern in a national survey by The Council of State Governments. Governors and legislators said the possibility of a deficit and possible tax hikes or spending cuts were the most critical challenge they faced.

That concern was followed by jobs and economic development, including unemployment compensation fund problems, education, water and infrastructure, including highways. Officials who responded to the survey seeking the top five issues facing their states also mentioned hazardous waste disposal, drunken driving legislation, health care costs, and prison overcrowding.

10 years ago—January/February 1998
Almost Anything Goes

Proper and improper conduct in the legislature—the norms or rules of the game—has undergone a lot of change over the past half century. Alan Rosenthal, a professor with the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, detailed those changes in the January/February 1998 State Government News. He cited a national study—recent at the time—that found veteran lawmakers found that “legislators today are less likely to spend time learning the norms or folkways of the chamber and paying their dues.”

Rosenthal found that friendships and socializing among legislators were much diminished, contributing to a decreased level of trust. That lack of trust, Rosenthal found, along with heightened partisanship contributed to a lack of civility in the chambers.

Update

The decreased level of civility in state legislatures continues today. While some say that political culture reflects today’s culture, others believe that a legislature where civility is replaced by contention or strained relationships can fail to serve the people it represents, according to a September 2006 article in State News magazine.

Chris Carlson, executive director of the Policy Consensus Initiative, told State News that one reason legislators faced heightened tensions is that policymakers don’t have as many opportunities to talk in an informal environment. “Partisanship can sometimes lead to a breakdown of communication, a lack of trust and a lack of respect,” she said.

But Rosenthal told the magazine that lack of consensus means state legislatures are right on target. “That’s the way the framers of the constitution designed the system,” he said in 2006.

Rosenthal believed the intense competition in politics today adds to the tone of debate. “Where there’s competition, there’s less civility,” he said.
CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration
Celebrating Our Past SHAPING THE FUTURE

Spring Conference
May 29–June 1, 2008

Lexington
75th Anniversary Celebration
The Council of State Governments