

# States go global

BY CINDY J. LACKEY

As the American economy becomes more service oriented, state international trade offices plan to increase assistance they offer service-sector businesses. State trade offices also expect to work more closely with other states and in-state partners as state governments move toward more comprehensive international policies in the future.

These are two of the trends identified during The Council of State Governments' assessment of states' international capacity. The assessment looks at how states mobilize and direct resources internationally to improve their residents' quality of life. The study looks beyond traditional trade and investment programs to other international aspects of economic development, such as tourism and work-force education, and nontraditional indicators of international capacity, such as public education and technical assistance exchanges.

The U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S.-Asia Environmental Partnership funded the CSG assessment.

Rather than collecting statistics on trade and investment through paper surveys, the CSG assessment is based on interviews with the people involved in state international activities. CSG hosted a series of toll-free conference calls to identify which international programs that states consider most successful, the measures they use to gauge their success, the goals they set for their international programs, and the obstacles that limit their efforts.

Four conference calls among state trade directors focused on state pro-

*Cindy J. Lackey is a senior policy analyst, State Trends Group, CSG Center for Leadership, Innovation and Policy.*

grams that enhance economic development through international trade and investment. Two conference calls among other actors in state international activities, including nonprofit organizations, universities and state labor agencies, discussed the role organizations other than state trade offices play in trade promotion and other goals, such as providing technical assistance overseas.

A paper entitled *An Assessment of States' International Capacity*, released in January, summarizes the results of these interviews. CSG now is using the assessment results to sharpen its international programs to help states get where they want to be in their international agendas.

The assessment was the topic of discussion at a workshop at the CSG Annual Meeting and State Leadership Forum in Québec. Featured speakers Massachusetts Rep. Dan Bosley and Jeff Lane, vice president of State and Local Government Relations for Procter & Gamble, explained why states will become more active, influential international actors in the future. Bosley and Lane serve on the panel of experts advising CSG on this project.

Bosley outlined several reasons that states should develop an international policy. For example, he said there are fewer value-added or manufacturing jobs available in the new economy. States compete against each other to attract these

limited jobs, but that's a zero-sum game.

"The only way we can expand the economy and jobs is by looking elsewhere — international," Bosley said.

Bosley advised states that want to grow internationally to expose all students to foreign languages early and consistently. Being able to communicate and work in other cultures are critical skills. He also recommended that states coordinate existing state international programs across agencies to leverage those resources.

Lane also predicted a greater role for state and local governments in international affairs. Not only will the federal government have less money to fund international programs, Lane said it is becoming less relevant in solving the problems of the 21st century.

"The new role for states internationally will be as facilitator, catalyst, broker, convener and capacity builder," Lane said.

For copies of the CSG paper, call Cindy Lackey at CSG headquarters, (606) 244-8163. For more information on CSG's international programs, call Jeff O'Malley at CSG's Washington, D.C., office, (202) 724-5434. ★



*Pictured, from left, are Massachusetts Rep. Dan Bosley, CSG staff members Cindy Lackey and Jeff O'Malley, and Jeff Lane, vice president of State and Local Government Relations for Procter & Gamble.*