

"Trends and Issues in 2002"

BY KEON S. CHI

Where have we been? Where are we now? Where are we going? What do we need to do to get there? These are typical questions we raise when planning for the future.

The 2002 edition of *The Book of the States*, published by The Council of State Governments, offers valuable data and information for such planning for state policymakers and others. The volume contains more than 20 articles and hundreds of up-to-date 50-state tables on a variety of topics, ranging from state constitutions and federalism to finance and management. What follows are quotes from selected articles in the premier reference work.

State Constitutions: "In 2000-2001, as the 20th century ended and the 21st century began, the level of state constitutional activity continued to decline. The number of states engaged in amending and revising their constitutions was the lowest in 30 years." — Janice C. May, University of Texas at Austin

Federalism and Intergovernmental

Relations: "The contemporary era has been one of coercive or regulatory federalism, marked by historically unprecedented levels of federal pre-emptions, mandates, conditions of aid and other extensions of federal power into state affairs." — John Kincaid, Meyner Center for the Study of State and Local Government, Lafayette College

"Innovative state programs reveal the desirability of each state establishing a genuine partnership with its political subdivisions, with the state playing a major leadership role." — Joseph F. Zimmerman, State University of New York at Albany

State Legislative Branch: "An overriding issue for legislatures is whether they are taking steps to educate members and citizens alike about the importance and workings of the legislature in representative democracy. Building member and public support for the legislature as an institution and representative democracy as a system is a most important and most challenging part of the legislator's job." — Alan Rosenthal, Rutgers University and Rich Jones, National Conference of State Legislatures

State Executive Branch: "Currently, governors have moved from a half-decade of an economic boom, in which they could propose tax cuts and program increases, to a period in which there is more demand for program support and less income to use. Easy times have switched to hard times." — Thad Beyle, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

State Judicial Branch: "In these early years of the third mil-

lennium, the focus of justice reform has shifted from organizational and institutional change to public-focused reforms." — Mary Grace Hune, formerly with the National Center for State Courts

State Elections: "Elections are very likely to be a focus of the news media, academia, the court system and Congress for the next several years, and such attention will bring new chal-

lenges to state governments and policy makers." — R. Doug Lewis, The Election Center

"During this round [of legislative redistricting] ... the bizarrely shaped districts seem to have more to do with partisan considerations than with racial and ethnic considerations." — Ronald E. Weber, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee

"It is likely that 50 to 60 initiatives will appear on the 2002 ballot. This drop in the number of initiatives can be attributed to increased judicial action in stopping initiatives on technical grounds, as well as the growing cost of utilizing the initiative process." — M. Dane Waters, I & R Institute

State Finance and Census: "Along with the recession, there is the threat of reduced federal funding. The federal government expects to run a deficit for the next several years — a result of the recession, increased defense and security spending following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and a restricted flow of personal-income taxes as a result of a rate reduction." — Henry S. Wulf, U.S. Bureau of the Census

"Census 2000 data reveal a new set of patterns, featuring a new cast of demographic factors. ... The trend is toward declining demographic heterogeneity across the 'borders' of cities, suburbs and their environs and, consequently, toward greater demographic homogeneity within states." — William H. Frey and Bill Abresch, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor

State Management and Administration: "The most innovative and productive state agencies do not simply execute one good program. Rather, they integrate advanced management techniques into a comprehensive approach to productivity improvement." — Marc Holzer, Rutgers University at Newark

(Editor's Note: For information on *The Book of the States 2002*, contact Publications Sales Department, The Council of State Governments, (859) 244-8000.



States face tough issues when planning for the future.

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