TOP 5 ISSUES IN 2017 p8

MEET YOUR CSG LEADERS p28

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR NEW LEGISLATORS p44

LEARN TO LEAD WITH CSG p54
Thank you!

CSG’S 2017 LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CSG’S ASSOCIATES PROGRAM AND LEADERSHIP CIRCLE, PLEASE CONTACT

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SPOTLIGHT—TOP STATE ISSUES IN 2017
CSG policy experts explore the top issues facing the states in 2017 across the policy spectrum—from fiscal issues and transportation infrastructure to health and education.

SPOTLIGHT—MEET YOUR CSG LEADERS
CSG national leaders share their journeys to leadership within their states—from the challenges they’ve faced to the inspirations that helped them rise to the occasion—as well as their visions for the year ahead as leaders of The Council of State Governments.

SPOTLIGHT—TIPS FOR NEW LEGISLATORS
Connecticut Deputy Speaker Bob Godfrey and Idaho Senate Majority Leader Bart Davis have learned a lot in their combined 46 years of state legislative service. We sat down with them recently to get their thoughts on what freshman legislators need to know as they start their terms.

SPOTLIGHT—INTERBRANCH COOPERATION
The separation of powers among the legislative, judicial and executive branches is fundamental to our government, yet implementing policy effectively requires all three. The CSG Interbranch Affairs Committee co-chairs discuss the importance of interbranch cooperation and how the states are promoting multibranch solutions.
SPOTLIGHT: CSG Serves the States

6 IN THE KNOW: NEW TIMES, TIME-TESTED SOLUTIONS
New times like these demand bold, committed leaders with the resolve and courage to tackle the states’ biggest challenges through innovative thinking and approaches. CSG Executive Director David Adkins shares CSG’s long-term commitment to supporting state leaders.

8 TOP ISSUES IN 2017
CSG policy experts explore the top issues facing the states in 2017 across the policy spectrum—from fiscal issues and transportation infrastructure to health and education.

24 MY CSG
CSG is often described as a family of state leaders. Some of our members discuss how their participation in the organization has helped them grow their networks of friends and colleagues across the country, and, more importantly, how CSG helps them to build stronger state leaders.

26 BY THE BOOK: CSG HISTORY NOTES
For more than 80 years, The Council of State Governments has provided insights and information to state leaders. We take a look at CSG’s beginnings and the history of the forums, products and services that have helped state officials across all the branches advance the common good.

28 MEET YOUR CSG LEADERS
CSG national leaders share their journeys to leadership within their states—from the challenges they’ve faced to the inspirations that helped them rise to the occasion—as well as their visions for the year ahead as leaders of The Council of State Governments.

32 THE CSG REGIONAL OFFICES
CSG is a region-based forum to exchange insights to help state officials shape public policy. Learn how you can engage with CSG at the regional level to develop a broader network of state officials and share ideas and solutions to address the unique challenges facing states in your area.

40 THE CSG JUSTICE CENTER
Founded in 2006, the CSG Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan, research-driven strategies and tools to increase public safety and strengthen communities. Through its national programs and initiatives, the CSG Justice Center offers information and assistance to states to develop data-driven, consensus-based criminal justice and corrections policy.

42 COMMUNICATING DURING A TRANSITION
Navigating federal agencies can be a daunting task, and this uncertainty may be exacerbated during a presidential transition. To help, CSG’s Washington, D.C., office serves as a resource to help facilitate effective communications between state policymakers and federal intergovernmental affairs liaisons. Here, they share key intergovernmental affairs contacts to help keep the lines of communication open during a transition.

44 10 QUESTIONS: TIPS FOR NEW LEGISLATORS
Connecticut Deputy Speaker Bob Godfrey and Idaho Senate Majority Leader Bart Davis have collected a few tips for legislating effectively over their combined 46 years of state legislative service. We sat down with them recently in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, to get their thoughts on what freshman legislators need to know as they start their terms.

46 BUILDING INTERBRANCH COOPERATION
The separation of powers among the legislative, judicial and executive branches is fundamental to our system of governance, yet implementing policy effectively requires all three. The co-chairs of the CSG Interbranch Affairs Committee discuss the importance of interbranch cooperation and how the states are helping to promote more multibranch solutions.

48 YOUR CSG ROADMAP FOR 2017
CSG stays busy year-round, constantly reviewing its resources and priorities to provide the best help to state policymakers across the country. Peak into a year with CSG from winter to spring, summer to fall, and come along for the ride.

50 COLLECTIVE INNOVATION THROUGH INTERSTATE COMPACTS
Ask anyone what a contract is and they will likely tell you. But ask what an interstate compact is, and it may be a different story. But that’s starting to change, said compact experts and administrators who gathered at the National Center for Interstate Compacts’ Summit of the States on Interstate Collaboration, Dec. 12–13 in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.

54 CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP THROUGH CSG
Whether a first-time elected official or a veteran policymaker, all members of The Council of State Governments share in common a distinguishing characteristic. By their very nature, state elected and appointed officials have demonstrated leadership. But leadership is a quality that must be cultivated. CSG can help leaders do just that.
A new year means new beginnings, and this year there are many new beginnings for our family of state officials. A new presidential administration offers an opportunity to reshape engagement between the states and the federal government. New legislative sessions and newly elected state officials present a chance to refresh states' approaches to policy challenges both new and old—from addressing autonomous vehicles to solving public pension funding. CSG is honored to serve as a resource to states as they take on each new opportunity and challenge throughout the year. Through our ongoing research and recent publications to our longstanding programs such as Toll Fellows, CSG looks forward to supporting excellence in state governments throughout 2017.

Here’s what’s happening at CSG.

CSG provides policy recommendations on overseas voting, civic education and disability employment.


CSG is accepting applications for the 2017 CSG Toll Fellows.

Applications are now being accepted for the CSG Henry Toll Fellows Class of 2017. The 2017 CSG Toll Fellowship will host 48 emerging state leaders from across the country Aug. 25–30 in Lexington, Kentucky. The deadline for applying is midnight Hawaiian Time on April 23. Visit csg.org/TollFellows for more information.

CSG, NCSL and NGA receive federal grant to research occupational licensure portability.

CSG is part of a coalition of national organizations of state officials that has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, or DOL, to conduct research on improving occupational licensure mobility. In January, DOL announced the $7.5 million grant award to the National Conference of State Legislatures, in partnership with the National Governors Association and CSG, which will work collaboratively to conduct and publish research and provide technical assistance to 10 states on improving licensure portability across state borders.

Deadline approaching for SSL submissions.

The CSG Shared State Legislation, or SSL, Committee will convene during the CSG Spring Business Meeting, April 20–23 in Lexington, Kentucky, where it will consider a docket of proposed state legislation for inclusion in the SSL volume. All CSG members are encouraged to submit legislation for the docket. To be eligible, the legislation must have been enacted in at least one state and address a current state issue of national or regional significance; provide a benefit to bill drafters; and provide clear, innovative and practical structure and approach. To submit a bill for consideration, please send the relevant information to ssl@csg.org by Feb. 24.

CSG 2017 Policy Academy schedule is now available.

CSG has released its 2017 Policy Academy calendar, which will kick off June 12–14 with a session on autonomous vehicles in Detroit, Michigan. Designed to give state leaders customized training and a "deeper dig" on critical policy topics facing the states, CSG Policy Academies in 2017 will offer insights into a diverse range of complex, timely policy issues—from cybersecurity and Medicaid to public pensions and water management. For more information about individual Policy Academy sessions and how to register, please visit csg.org/policyacademies.
They Tweeted It

Barbara Rachelson
@BRVermont · 10 Dec 2016
@CSGovts thank you for the #tollfellow program - what a gift!

Danielle Gregoire
@DWGregoire · 19 Jul 2016
A huge thank you to @CSGovts for an informative webinar on human trafficking this afternoon. Much work to be done. #mapoli

Katherine Hadda
@USCGHyderabad · 15 Nov 2016
Great interaction with (@CSGovts) delegation led by (@GovernorMarkell) on the role regional States are playing in supporting #USIndia relations

Denise Merrill
@SOTS_Merrill · 8 Dec 2016
My friend, @VermontSOS Jim Condos, is right. Elections need resources. States need help. #VotingInAmerica

John E. Wetzel
@DOCSecretary · Jan 3
overcrowding and under-resources systems create more crime - condition of confinement counts

Tyrone Thompson @Thompson4AD17 · 10 Dec 2016
Attending @CSGovts National Conference workshop on Charter Schools-varied points of view from legislators. #csg2016

Jana Lynott @JanaLynott · 2 Nov 2016
How will aging affect state government? @CSGovts publishes great issue on topic. @CSGTransport @AARPpolicy @AARPadvocates

California DOR @CaliforniaDOR · 19 Dec 2016
@CSGovts @NCSLorg @USDOL release new report on policy that can move the needle on #disability employment.
“New times bring new needs in government, as in all other affairs.” Those words from The Council of State Governments’ original Articles of Organization in 1933 still ring true today in 2017.

These new times—times marked by uncertainty, partisan divides, and issues of enormous complexity and significance—demand bold, committed leaders with the resolve and courage to tackle the biggest challenges through innovative thinking and approaches.

These new times require leaders like you.

For more than eight decades, the mission of The Council of State Governments, or CSG, has remained steadfast—to support state leaders from across the three branches of government as they take on the most pressing challenges of the times. With its nonpartisan values and three-branch approach, CSG is uniquely positioned to convene strategic policy conversations among state leaders, augmenting the innovations in our states by providing forums for the sharing of best practices.

I encourage you to become engaged in our efforts to help states discover the policy solutions that meet their unique needs and interests while advancing the common good across all states. Here’s how you can do just that.

1. **ENGAGE AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL.** Part of what distinguishes CSG is its national scope paired with its regional focus. The CSG regional offices—located in Atlanta, Chicago, New York and Sacramento, California—offer an opportunity for state leaders to engage with their colleagues from neighboring states to address the issues specific to their region. Our regional offices are our organization’s front porch, offering a comfy place to sit with neighbors to discuss the day’s events and what may be on the horizon for tomorrow. You can find more information about our regional offices, the products and services they provide, and information about the regional annual meetings on pages 32–39 of this special issue of Capitol Ideas.

2. **ATTEND A CSG POLICY ACADEMY.** The policy concerns facing state leaders are both vast in their scope and complex, and information flow around each unique issue can be overwhelming. As part of its mission, CSG is committed to providing state leaders with nonpartisan, objective insights and analysis on key issues—serving as a go-to resource for the states on the most important issues they face. One of the ways we do that—in addition to our eCademy webinars and our print and online publications—is through our Policy Academy series, which provides in-depth, two-day customized training and a “deeper dig” on critical policy topics facing the states. The 2017 Policy Academy schedule, along with information about registering for these events, is available at csg.org.

3. **JOIN CSG IN LAS VEGAS, DEC. 14–16.** Each year, CSG convenes state policymakers to network, share best practices and discover new policy innovations during the CSG National Conference. In 2017, we will gather in Las Vegas, Nevada, where we’ll take on such issues as state pensions, workforce development and new funding mechanisms for transportation infrastructure, while building friendships and networks among colleagues from across the three branches and the 50 states. CSG is often referred to as a family of state leaders, and whether it’s your first or your 15th conference, we hope you’ll join us for our annual family reunion. It won’t be the same without you.

There are so many ways to get involved in CSG. Whether at the regional or national levels or through our federal affairs office in Washington, D.C.; through the meetings and events we host; the information and resources we provide state leaders online at csg.org; or by connecting with us via social media, we look forward to your engagement and to supporting your work to strengthen the states in 2017.

Since the founding of our nation, states have served as “laboratories of democracy.” As a fierce advocate for the states, CSG remains resolute in its commitment to strengthen the states and their critical role in our federalist system. Our mission is to ensure that the states’ labs are—and remain—fully equipped to meet the challenges of these new times and to achieve excellence in state government now and in the future.
Each new year brings new opportunities and challenges for state leaders.

Change, however, appears to be playing a particularly prominent role in 2017. With a new presidential administration, federal policy is undergoing a significant shift and that shift may mean big changes for the states. From repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act—and the changes that may bring to Medicaid—to environmental deregulation, and from federal withdrawal from international trade agreements to proposed transportation infrastructure investments, policy changes are on the horizon. CSG’s policy team is committed to helping state leaders make sense of it all.

In this special issue of Capitol Ideas, CSG policy experts take a look at the top five policy issues facing states in 2017 in education, energy and environment, fiscal and economic development, federal affairs, health, international affairs, transportation and infrastructure, and workforce development. Expanded analysis of these policy issues is available in the CSG Knowledge Center at knowledgecenter.csg.org.

For state officials, knowing what lies around the corner is half the challenge. The CSG Policy & Research team is committed to serving as a resource for state officials by providing key insights and analysis on emerging issues across the policy spectrum.

Please let us know how we can help you navigate the challenges facing your state in 2017.

John Mountjoy, CSG director of policy, research and strategic initiatives
859.244.8256 | jmountjoy@csg.org

EDUCATION ................................................................. 8
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT ............................................. 10
FISCAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ........................... 12
FEDERAL ................................................................. 14
HEALTH ................................................................. 16
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ....................................... 18
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE .................. 20
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT .................................. 22
State education officials are being given greater control over everything from evaluating teacher performance to setting education standards, thanks to a comprehensive reform bill signed by President Barack Obama in December 2015. The legislation, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, reduced the federal government’s role in setting education policy and granted more authority to the states, a move that education officials are hopeful will lead to strides in fixing widening achievement gaps and other issues that have plagued the nation’s public schools.

ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act, or NCLB, which allowed the federal government to have a major hand in overseeing testing, assessing teacher performance and monitoring low-performance schools. The new law does away with the NCLB’s one-size-fits-all approach, providing states and local districts with enhanced power to carry out many of those functions.

State policymakers are hopeful that the new legislation will help them tackle some of the major challenges they are addressing in public schools.

One of the key directives of the previous law was for schools to improve the performance of all students, through test scores and other measures. Many states found that requirement to be unworkable and ineffective. The new law empowers state and local decision makers to develop their own systems for school improvement based upon evidence, rather than imposing the cookie-cutter federal solutions set forth under the NCLB act. Officials agreed that providing more sway to states and school districts is a positive change from the prescriptive federal requirements of the past several years.

Kentucky state Sen. Jimmy Higdon, who serves as CSG Education and Workforce Development Public Policy Committee co-chair, praised the new flexibility for states to make education policy and funding decisions.

“The Every Student Succeeds Act provides much-needed flexibility for states to have greater control over funding decisions and accountability systems,” said Higdon. “In Kentucky, we are preparing for the new law by making education our top priority. SB 1 will be our Let Teachers Teach Act. It will repeal and replace outdated laws to meet the individual needs of our communities instead of following the prescriptive guidelines set forth in No Child Left Behind.”

Going forward, states will not be expected to transition to the new requirements all at once. They have until the 2017-18 school year to implement their new accountability plans. The U.S. Department of Education has indicated that the transition period will be gradual, rather than signaling an abrupt end to NCLB.

While the final regulations were released in December 2016, many states already have formed working groups, task forces and committees to plan for the implementation of ESSA.

States will still have to report their progress and maintain accountability under the new law, which requires that any action taken to support school improvement be driven by student outcomes.

The act also replaces more than 50 of the grant programs under NCLB with a block grant, known as the Local Academic Flexible Grant, to provide states and school districts the funding flexibility to support initiatives based on their local needs.

Looking ahead in 2017, the recent selection of Betsy DeVos by President Donald J. Trump for the position of U.S. Department of Education secretary and the anticipated changes in the role the department plays in policy implementation will have a large impact at the state and local level. State and local level education decision-making has been a stated priority of the Trump administration. “I look forward to the new presidential administration’s focus on increased local control of education policy,” said Higdon.

New Flexibility for States in Education Decisions
by Elizabeth Whitehouse, CSG director, education and workforce development policy
859.244.8142 | ewhitehouse@csg.org
2017

Additional Education Policy Trends

Early Childhood/Child Care

2 Affordable, high-quality and accessible child care is a challenge for many families. While studies show that early childhood education is important to cognitive development, programs can be relatively expensive, especially for low-income households. In addition, the availability and access to child care varies significantly across the states, and is extremely limited in some areas. Access to high-quality, affordable child care is a critical education issue for the future, and will continue to be a challenge for parents and guardians to fully participate in the workforce.

Skills and Apprenticeships

4 Skills and apprenticeship programs are a focus area for state education leaders looking to improve post-high school opportunities for students. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, apprenticeship programs provide significant benefits for both businesses and employees. Employees are able to earn on average $50,000 per year while in employer-paid training programs that allow the apprentice to earn a two- or four-year degree. For businesses, there is typically a return of $1.47 for every dollar invested in apprenticeship programs. The programs also correlate with lower turnover rates, improved productivity, and provides a custom-trained and experienced workforce.

Physical Activity in Schools

3 The Every Student Succeeds Act passed in 2015 emphasizes the importance of a “well-rounded education,” which specifically includes physical education and wellbeing. Since children and young adults spend a great deal of their time at school, educators must prioritize physical activity during the school day, which may increase academic performance and lower students’ risk for obesity and other health problems. Now that Congress has established physical activity as a national expectation for public education, it is up to states, districts and schools to decide how they are going to incorporate it into their curriculum.

College and Career Readiness

5 For over a decade, the federal government has closely linked college and career readiness with raising academic standards in English and mathematics. The newly passed Every Student Succeeds Act, however, gives states the flexibility to pursue the goal of “college and career readiness” in unique and well-rounded ways. As they implement ESSA, states must decide what knowledge and skills their public schools will prioritize in an attempt to prepare students for college and career.

Upcoming Events

Civics in the States: What it is and Why it is Needed
a CSG eCademy webcast
March 7 at 2 p.m. EST
csg.org/eCademy

The Every Student Succeeds Act: Looking at State Plans and Next Steps
a CSG eCademy webcast Sept. 19 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy

CSG Every Student Succeeds Act Policy Academy
Dec. 14 | Las Vegas, Nevada
csg.org/policyacademies
Rules and policies promulgated by the Obama administration, such as the Clean Power Plan and the Clean Water Rule, were some of the most controversial environmental regulations seen in recent memory. While these rules have not yet been implemented at the state level and remain stayed pending the outcome of litigation, the election of President Donald J. Trump in November called into question what the future of these and other Obama administration policies will be and what role states will play in guiding energy and environmental policy in the future.

In addition to pledging to undo the Clean Power Plan and the Clean Water Rule, Trump is generally in favor of expanding natural resource extraction and decreasing industry regulation and oversight. He has stated an intention to remove the United States from the Paris Agreement on climate change and roll back the Environmental Protection Agency’s reach.

Many are concerned that these policies could have far-reaching and negative impacts on the environment and on efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, others at the state level believe that market forces and state-level policies were driving renewable energy production and greenhouse gas emissions reductions previously and will continue to do so.

“The low price of natural gas and increases in renewable energy generation due to state policies is what resulted in the shift away from coal,” said Minnesota state Rep. Pat Garofalo, former chair of CSG’s Energy and Environmental Public Policy Committee. “What you will see going forward is that the market and state-level policy will drive decisions on what energy sources we use, and not federal regulation.”

Between economic conditions that have favored cleaner burning natural gas over coal, lower electricity demand, and state policies that have encouraged investments in and shifts toward renewable resources, the United States is on track to meet the goals set in the Clean Power Plan despite the stay of the rule.

In states that already have aggressive renewable energy policies, it is unlikely that the new presidential administration will affect the energy and climate landscape. Many states have aggressive renewable energy requirements and were well on track to meet the requirements of the Clean Power Plan regardless of its fate.

For example, Oregon recently upped its renewable energy requirements and now mandates that utilities meet half of customer energy demand with renewable power by 2040. Oregon also became the first state in the nation to pass legislation last year to phase out coal-fired power through 2030.

While states more dependent on fossil fuels are hopeful that Trump’s energy agenda may aid recovery of the coal industry, these states will likely continue to chart their own courses.

“Here in Ohio, industry has taken a tremendous hit and that is going to change, but not immediately,” said Ohio state Rep. Al Landis, co-chair of CSG’s Energy and Environment Committee. “There is going to be more of a national energy policy that doesn’t exclude fossil fuels, but we are looking at a year to 18 months before the coal industry sees a recovery in Ohio.”

However, Ohio is moving ahead on legislation that addresses its renewable energy portfolio standard, which was frozen two years ago. “Doing nothing is not an option because the freeze is set to expire,” said Landis. “The debate now is do we continue the freeze, go back to where we were or do we continue (to set new) goals? We’re trying to find common ground.”

“Despite the election, there was a sense of direction with or without what was happening in Washington,” said Landis. “We want to chart our own course.”

States will continue to take a variety of approaches to address energy challenges in the coming years. Several states are taking the lead in mandating renewable energy use. Illinois recently passed SB2814, which reforms the state’s renewable energy portfolio standard to increase from 25 percent of renewable energy by 2025 to 35 percent renewable energy by 2030. Other states with aggressive renewable energy targets include 50 percent by 2030 in both New York and California, 75 percent by 2032 in Vermont, and 100 percent by 2045 in Hawaii.
Infrastructure

Conflicts over the placement of and potential water quality and other adverse impacts from natural gas pipelines such as Dakota Access, will continue to be important as the need for natural gas infrastructure expansion confronts concerns for environmental protection and property rights. Replacing aging water infrastructure, a need brought to light by the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, and updating electric transmission lines in an era where the electric grid continues to modernize will also remain on states’ agendas.

2

Water

Water quality and management will also continue to be an issue in 2017. Droughts continue to plague many states—particularly in the South and West—and water management will be a key issue for states going forward. Many states also share interstate water resources and states will have to cooperate to ensure effective use and management. With the Trump administration’s promise to roll back environmental regulations and increase fossil fuel production, state policymakers should expect concerns over water quality impacts to increase.

3

Solar Energy Policies

Net metering, the policy that allows rooftop solar customers to receive a credit on their electric bill for any excess energy they provide to the electric grid, is a policy that almost every state addressed in one way or another in 2016. Expect states to continue to determine how to value the solar power the customer-generator provides to the grid and to develop more creative policies that address how customers interact with the grid as technology continues to advance.

4

Natural Gas

The new presidential administration stated its intent to increase natural gas production and roll back fossil fuel regulations, including those relating to methane. States will continue to be largely responsible for regulating natural gas production within their borders. Last year saw numerous conflicts over whether local governments could more stringently regulate natural gas production, which are expected to continue into 2017.

5

Upcoming Events

State-Federal Relations in Environmental Regulations
a CSG eCademy webcast
May 23 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy

CSG Building Relationships between Regulators and Legislators Policy Academy
Sept. 13–15 | Washington, D.C.
csg.org/policyacademies

CSG Fundamentals of Water Policy Academy
Dec. 14 | Las Vegas, Nevada
csg.org/policyacademies
About one out of every three dollars of state revenue comes from the federal government. But with a new Republican-controlled White House and Congress, the future of that funding is unclear. “There is some uncertainty there. We just don’t know what’s going to happen with federal funding,” said Delaware state Rep. Helene Keeley.

“It’s really too soon to tell,” said Brian Sigritz, director of state fiscal studies at the National Association of State Budget Officers. “But from a budgetary perspective, any kind of federal uncertainty can make it difficult for states to do their budget proposals.”

The possibility of a change in federal funding levels comes on top of a slow economic recovery that has impacted states’ bottom lines. “We expect to see continued slow revenue growth in 2017. We definitely experienced that at the tail end of 2016, when a lot of states saw revenues come up below projections,” said Sigritz. “All of the state revenue sources have seen weak revenue growth and, in some areas, we’ve had declines, like with corporate income taxes,” said Sigritz. “A declining sales tax base is an issue and we’ve had very little inflation, almost deflation. The things that people are buying are the same price or in some cases, cost less than they did. So with the cost of goods stagnant, we’re seeing less growth in sales taxes.”

While the status of future federal funding may be unclear, instability from D.C. is not a new phenomenon. For example, Congress hasn’t approved all 12 appropriations bills on time since 1996, and it has relied on the use of stopgap continuing resolutions, also known as CRs, and omnibus bills to provide federal appropriations. That makes it difficult for state and local governments to manage fiscal resources and plan strategically. “It’s been unstable,” said Keeley.

Coupled with fewer and more unpredictable federal dollars, states like Delaware have struggled keep essential services such as education going. “We’ve plugged the holes,” said Keeley. “We’ve cut other places to make sure that funding is still there.”

“A lot of the states out there already have a bare-bones budget and Delaware is one of them. We are walking into a fiscal year where we already have a $350 million deficit and a bare budget,” she said.

In a weak recovery, raising taxes isn’t a preferable option, said Keeley, but if federal funding streams dry up, there may be no other choice. “I don’t really see any alternatives,” Keeley said. “If that federal support isn’t there, then we will have no choice but to look at ways to raise more revenue.”

But there are some bright spots, Keeley said. “For example, President Trump has talked about a grand transportation funding project, which I think would be a good thing.” “States have had a large amount of support from the federal government when it comes to transportation—building bridges, securing bridges and making sure that our roads and infrastructure were secure. But those funds have diminished,” said Keeley. “I’m hopeful that what President Trump has mentioned regarding this grand transportation project will come true. That could put a lot of people back to work.”
Public Employee Retirement

More than a decade ago, analysts were predicting the next big challenge for state governments: The mass retirement of baby boomers. Then the Great Recession hit and those same baby boomers stayed put. With a strengthened economy, baby boomers are resuming their retirement plans. This trend, coupled with less than stellar market returns for state public retirement systems and a nearly $1 trillion funding gap means that pensions will remain a significant area of concern for states in 2017.

Evidence-Based Decision Making

The slower than usual economic recovery has placed a strain on state budgets, making every dollar count. At the same time, state leaders are increasingly placing an emphasis on collecting and using good data to make decisions about where those dollars go and to set priorities. Using data to inform decision making can allow state governments to make more informed budget, policy and operational decisions that improve outcomes for their constituents and better steward taxpayer dollars.

Health Care Costs

Health care continues to be a growing and substantial part of state spending. Since the economic downturn, Medicaid has risen as a percentage of total state spending, from 20.5 percent in fiscal 2008 to an estimated 29 percent in fiscal 2016. With the fate of the Affordable Care Act up in the air, states may be facing a significant shift in how Medicaid is funded and will be tasked with prioritizing already stretched budgets to deliver health care services to residents.

Labor Markets

While labor market measures such as the unemployment rate and median household income have seen gains, those gains have been moderate and vary significantly across states. That means states will continue looking for ways for the public, private and academic sectors to work together more efficiently to create and sustain high-paying jobs and foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial investment. Workforce development strategies will increasingly include worker re-training and apprenticeship programs and leverage federal programs like the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Upcoming Events

The Legal Landscape of Public Employee Pension Reform
a CSG eCademy webcast
April 18 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademies

CSG Public Pensions and Retirement Security Policy Academy
Oct. 4–6 | Lexington, Kentucky
csg.org/policyacademies

The Cutting Edge: What are the Top Cybersecurity Concerns for 2018?
a CSG eCademy webcast
Nov. 28 at 2 p.m. EST
csg.org/eCademy

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Federal

On Jan. 20, President Donald Trump took the Oath of Office to be sworn in as America’s 45th president. Thousands stood along the National Mall to watch him offer his inaugural address. Meanwhile, behind the scenes of the inaugural festivities and mostly out of the public eye, frenetic activity has been taking place to plan and prepare for the transition to the next administration.

The president’s transition team must fill 4,000 political appointments to lay the groundwork for implementing the new administration’s policy agenda, and provide for the effective management of our civil service and military. This is a daunting task, and the administration’s future success will be a function of the people he selects. Ensuring that each incoming presidential administration is ready to lead is both a national security imperative and an obligation owed to the American people.

“Assuming governing responsibility for the most complex organization in the world is an enormous task,” said Kristine Simmons, who serves as the vice president for government affairs at the Partnership for Public Service and oversees the organization’s Center for Presidential Transition. “A new administration will need help—and lots of it—to manage the federal enterprise, implement policies effectively and find the very best people to serve.” CSG will monitor these appointments closely and engage early to forge constructive relationships that strengthen the federal and state partnership.

Of immediate interest to the states are the policy initiatives that the president said he would address during his first 100 days in office. Trump released a video outlining the executive actions envisioned for this time period withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership; canceling restrictions on the energy industry, including shale energy and clean coal regulations; and requiring federal executive branch agencies to abolish two existing regulations for each new regulation adopted. He showed commitment to this vision by signing executive orders on some of these items during his first two weeks in office. He plans to ask the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop a comprehensive plan to protect America’s infrastructure from cyberattacks and other threats. On immigration, he has vowed to direct the U.S. Department of Labor to “investigate all abuses of visa programs that undercut the American worker.”

Trump also has indicated an intent to work closely with Congress on certain other high-priority matters, such as tax reform, infrastructure spending, health care and filling the U.S. Supreme Court vacancy caused by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. Although Trump will be working with a Republican Congress, it is unclear how quickly acceptable solutions to these complex issues can be found.

All of these initiatives have important implications for the states. State officials must engage early with the new administration if they are to form constructive relationships and positively influence the adoption of policies affecting the states. CSG is committed to supporting these efforts. At the 2016 CSG National Conference in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, CSG outlined its vision for fostering effective cooperation with the federal government through a resolution titled, “Supporting a Successful Transition Process.”

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Strengthening States' Role

The diversity of policy experimentation and accountable governance made possible by the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has enabled our nation to thrive despite the changing needs of society and an increasingly global economy, and it is essential that the role of the states as the "laboratories of democracy" is preserved. The states should work with the federal government to adopt policies of constructive engagement to gather relevant information about existing issues, build on innovative programs already in place at the state level, and ensure national policies are implemented in the most effective and efficient manner possible. To that end, CSG is engaging the new administration early to cultivate an atmosphere that will advance the notions of federalism.

Civic Education

Civic education is fundamental to effective government and citizen engagement. It equips citizens with the knowledge and capabilities to become community, state, national and international leaders. It is also essential for building trust between citizens and elected officials—more important than ever in today’s highly polarized society. States are taking important steps to improve civic education and, in particular, to highlight the important role of the states in our republican form of government.

Fiscal Uncertainty

Inaction and delays associated with the appropriations process in Congress continue to cause uncertainty and make it more difficult for state and local governments to manage fiscal resources and strategically plan. Congress has not approved all 12 appropriations bills on time since 1996, and it has relied on the use of stopgap continuing resolutions and omnibus bills to provide federal appropriations. This pattern of patchwork funding and the recurring threat of government shutdowns have made it difficult to predict the flow of funds to state and local governments.

Intergovernmental Relations

Absent the federal Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, which was closed in 1996 and was the framework for the state and federal relationship in the rulemaking process, both federal and state leaders must identify opportunities to increase their coordination and improve the intergovernmental relationship. CSG has been working with the other national state and local organizations to identify recommendations on how to improve the state-federal regulatory process, including: updating the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, establishing consistent state-federal advisory committees within federal agencies and ensuring state legislators simply know who to contact in each federal agency. These efforts will remain a priority for the states and for CSG in 2017.

Upcoming Events & Products

Civic Education:
A Key to Trust in Government
By CSG Senior Fellows Katherine Barrett and Richard Greene
csg.org/civiced

Federal Regulatory Reform
a CSG Capitol Research brief
Expected release: April 2017

Update on the New Congress and Administration and What Lies Ahead
a CSG eCademy webcast June 20 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy
All but three state legislatures will meet in 2017 to adopt budgets. Medicaid, the federal-state health insurance program that currently covers about 73 million Americans, is the single-largest component of state budgets.

It is all but certain that big changes are ahead for Medicaid under the Trump administration, but the shape, fiscal impact and speed of those changes are likely to remain unclear before sine die adjournment in many states.

“We anticipate that there will continue to be discussions about changes that could potentially affect Medicaid financing and coverage,” said Stacey Mazer, a senior staff associate with the National Association of State Budget Officers. “These include changes from a repeal of the Affordable Care Act as well as proposals that may affect Medicaid financing in general such as moving to a block grant or a per capita cap approach.” Mazer said states need to look at implications for expanded Medicaid as well as regular Medicaid.

By the end of 2016, 31 states and the District of Columbia expanded Medicaid as allowed under the Affordable Care Act as well as proposals that may affect Medicaid financing in general such as moving to a block grant or a per capita cap approach.” Mazer said states need to look at implications for expanded Medicaid as well as regular Medicaid.

A December 2016 report by CBPP estimates that under the similar House Republican budget plan for fiscal year 2017, cuts to Medicaid would start relatively small but after 10 years, federal funding for Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program, CHIP, would be $169 billion—or about 33 percent—less than if current law continued.

Solomon said states should have hundreds of questions about Medicaid changes. Every state’s Medicaid program is different and is likely to be impacted differently, even with promised increased flexibility. For instance, historically low spending states may be locked into that status, at least in terms of federal support, even if a state prioritizes new spending. Changes in the supplemental payments made by Medicaid to hospitals to offset the costs of care to medically indigent patients could affect hospitals’ bottom lines, which could lead to increased costs for insured patients and even impacting hospitals’ viability in some communities. And a host of Medicaid waivers that allow states to experiment with new delivery and payment models could be placed at risk with implications outside just the Medicaid program.

Since the election, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown prioritized winning the Obama administration’s approval for another Medicaid waiver, according to the Statesman Journal. The state won a five-year approval during the last week of the Obama administration, however it is still in budget trouble and must come up with $350 million to fully pay for Medicaid over the next two years. While the waiver is not directly related to the ACA, federal changes to Medicaid could impact the Oregon coordinated care plan that claims to have saved $1.4 billion in healthcare costs since 2012.

“States must keep their eye on the ball, there are so many important issues and Medicaid is such a significant budget issue,” said Mazer.  

States Ponder the Fate of Medicaid under the Trump Administration
by Debra Miller, CSG director, health policy | 859.244.8241 | dmiller@cs.org
Repealing, Replacing the ACA

The Trump campaign promised to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. However, any details of replacement remain unclear. Will states resume a more active role in regulating the health insurance market? How will the Medicaid expansion that 31 states and the District of Columbia implemented be funded in the future? How will a replacement for the ACA provide affordable coverage? The Kaiser Foundation reports that in 2016, $32.2 billion in tax credits helped 9.4 million Americans purchase health insurance.

Social Determinants of Health

Increasingly, state decision-makers are taking a public health approach to improving health, pointing to high levels of spending that fail to generate positive health outcomes as compared to other nations. Social determinants of health—factors like socioeconomic status, education, physical environment, employment and social support networks—have a significant impact on health outcomes. To address the social determinants of health, states are linking broader social initiatives to health improvement, including early childhood education, school reforms, transportation and environmental policies.

Prescription Drug Costs

Public opinion polls find consumers concerned with the high cost of prescription drugs and the increase in their out-of-pocket costs for medicines. States, as providers of health insurance to employees, retired employees, Medicaid enrollees and rising prison populations, share their concerns. States are exploring benefit management strategies, rebates and effectiveness research to leverage savings, while still providing access to life-changing treatment options.

Fighting the Opioid Epidemic

No state or community is exempt from the scourge of the growing opioid epidemic. Prescription drug abuse gives way to heroin and now powerful fentanyl. States are looking for solutions, expanding treatment program availability and risk reduction strategies such as syringe exchange programs and naloxone distribution. Changes in federal Medicaid funding, however, may reduce the availability of affordable treatment programs.

Upcoming Events

State Solutions to the Opioid Epidemic
a CSG eCademy webcast
March 21 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy

What Do Federal ACA and Medicaid Changes Mean for the States?
a CSG eCademy webcast
June 6 at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy

CSG Medicaid 101 Policy Academy
June 28–30 | Washington, D.C.
csg.org/policyacademies
Global conflicts, health risks, populist political movements and changing attitudes toward trade all represent unpredictable influences on global economic stability, which has significant impact on states’ economies. In 2016, the world saw a number of political and trade issues—such as the United Kingdom’s decision to exit the European Union, also known as Brexit, and Americans’ resistance to international trade agreements—emerge unexpectedly that will continue to resonate in 2017. With little certainty as to how these and other issues will play out, global economic instability will be the most important international issue facing states this year.

But the news is not all bad. At the close of 2016, many—if not most—domestic economic indicators were favorable. Projections for annual foreign direct investment are on track for continued growth; household incomes are rising; unemployment is at its lowest rate since 2007; the American automobile manufacturing industry has created 310,700 jobs since it bottomed out in 2009; and the overall manufacturing sector has gained 822,000 jobs since 2010. The U.S. and individual states have seen great success in international engagement and trade.

“2016 was a great year for states and international trade,” said Manny Mencia, senior vice president at Enterprise Florida, a public-private partnership that serves as the state’s economic development organization, and president of State International Development Organizations, or SIDO, a CSG Affiliate. “While the failure of the Trans-Pacific Partnership was a disappointment, proposed national and local investments in ports, infrastructure and training suggest that the country and states are creating the environment necessary for continued long-term growth.”

In its General Assessment of the Macroeconomic Situation, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, warned that “worsening protectionism and the threat of trade retaliation could offset much of the (president’s proposed) fiscal initiatives’ impact on domestic and global growth.” Overall, however, the OECD estimates that President Donald Trump’s proposed stimulus plans could boost the United States’ GDP by approximately .4 percent in 2017 and .8 percent in 2018 through infrastructure investment and tax and regulatory reform, which is a promising sign for state revenues, as well. This stimulus also could lift global GDP by .1 percent and .3 percent during 2017 and 2018, respectively, according to the OECD.

Protectionist policies that disrupt imports, exports and supply chains could have a significant impact on state economies. Global trade and the State Trade Expansion Program, or STEP, in particular, are important to state economies, according to David Mathe, export trade director for Delaware. STEP provides financial awards to state and territory governments to assist small businesses with export development.

“Delaware companies are very much engaged in the global economy,” said Mathe. “As the success of our STEP program demonstrates, Delaware companies understand the opportunities of global trade and are utilizing the STEP program to proactively promote their products and services and expand their international sales.”

Some States Look Beyond Trade Deals to Boost Exports

by Jack Cobb, CSG policy analyst, Washington, D.C., office | 202.624.5460 | jcobb@csg.org

Policies, such as the STEP program, that foster global trade will help companies grow, support private sector job creation and generate tax revenue, which can be reinvested in state infrastructure, training and business support programs that foster a competitive business environment.

At the same time, many international crises continue in 2017 that increase global insecurity, such as the ongoing conflict in Syria, potential renegotiation of the Iranian nuclear deal, and long-term food supply and broader sustainability issues for China and the fisheries of the South China Sea. 2017 also will see a number of critical economic shifts, including negotiation of Brexit and new trade agreements by the U.K., as well as the fulfillment of the new president’s promises to renegotiate NAFTA and the recent engagement of Cuba, and punish Chinese currency manipulation and other unfair trade practices, particularly in the steel industry. Additionally, it remains to be seen how the U.S. will maintain business and diplomatic interests in the Pacific region as the Chinese backed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, or RCEP, trade deal fills the vacuum of the now doomed Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

Through 2017, the greatest challenge facing states at the international level will be the political, trade, health and diplomatic instability that could threaten economic growth. While it is unlikely that success, at least from an American perspective, can be achieved on every issue, it is critical that losses or instability be contained to prevent greater losses that could lead businesses to cut backs and lost jobs and tax revenues, among other impacts.
2017
Additional International Policy Trends

Trade

2017 will be a critical year for shaping the future of global trade. The U.K. will negotiate its departure from the EU, Trump has promised to renegotiate NAFTA as well as take actions in response to Chinese currency manipulation, and China is set to push the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement across Asia in the vacuum left by the TPP. These issues will shape state efforts to grow their economies through trade and the development of the new state-federal coordination plans on trade promotion.

National Security

One of the critical areas where international and state policies intersect is national security. This ranges from providing state services and support to citizens deployed abroad in the armed services and their families at home to protecting against cyberattacks that not only impact critical infrastructure but also state records and personally identifiable information. Another area that could significantly impact states is a potential round of military base realignment and closure, or BRAC. While this has not happened since 2005, the new presidential administration’s proposed spending plans and tax cuts could necessitate a new round of BRAC.

Global Conflicts

While global conflicts may seem distant to state policy, they often have significant impacts on states. As conflicts around the world continue, or come to a conclusion, states will also see changes in the arrival of refugees, the establishment of friendly democracies with which to engage, or the emergence of failed states that can become breeding grounds for security threats. In addition to the commonly discussed conflicts in the Middle East and Eurasia, states bear significant social and security impacts from the drug wars raging in Central and South America.

Global Health

As state health officials have seen over the past decades, new global health challenges are emerging constantly. While 2016 marked the final containment of the West African Ebola outbreak, it also brought the new threat of the Zika virus to North and South America. In 2017, states will likely find the emergence of new, or resurgence of old, health threats, which will require effective collaboration with national and international partners to combat.

Upcoming Events

Foreign Direct Investment in the States
a CSG eCademy webcast
April 11, at 2 p.m. EDT
csg.org/eCademy

The Future of Trade Agreements
a CSG Capitol Research brief
Expected release: May 2017

CSG Global Affairs Policy Academy
(open to CSG Toll Fellow Alumni)
Sept. 13–15 | Washington, D.C.
csg.org/policyacademies
The election of Donald J. Trump in November left some state transportation advocates scratching their heads about the role states and localities will need to play in the years ahead to ensure that progress on transportation continues, that priorities are maintained and that future investments reflect those priorities.

Darrell Steinberg, who as a longtime state legislator and state Senate president in California led the charge for innovative land use planning, transportation planning and cap-and-trade legislation, took office as mayor of Sacramento in December.

“Do we play defense and prevent bad things from happening when it comes to transportation infrastructure, or do we take the offense and try to control our own destinies when it comes to infrastructure and our transportation future?” Steinberg asked at Transportation for America’s Capital Ideas II Conference in November.

Steinberg believes many states and localities are well positioned to do the latter even if early indications about the Trump administration’s agenda come to pass.

“Donald Trump has talked about investing in infrastructure, but I don’t know what that means,” Steinberg said. “I’m not sure he knows what that means. … But I think it’s fair to say with all of the uncertainty about where the administration will go on these sets of issues that as states, as cities, as counties and regions, we may hope for the best but we ought to prepare to control our own destinies. And we ought to not be afraid to be creative and to push the envelope in ways that seek to achieve that balance between current needs and where the future lies.”

Utah Speaker of the House Greg Hughes also has concerns about how a big infrastructure investment might go. Hughes, a Republican, helped lead efforts to pass a gas tax increase in Utah in 2015 and, seeing the population growth that was on the way in the Beehive State, became a reluctant champion for the expansion of public transit. Last year he was mentioned as a possible candidate for U.S. Secretary of Transportation in Trump’s cabinet before the president nominated Elaine Chao for the post.

“What we have to be careful about and what I hope happens in this coming administration is that it’s not an economic stimulus where we just start throwing federal dollars at any (transportation) project that seems to be shovel-ready,” Hughes told the Transportation for America conference. “We better be bringing those projects that we know are multimodal, that we know are going to take full advantage of the infrastructure we can create.”

Hughes said he’s optimistic the years ahead will bring significant investments in transportation but states and localities shouldn’t wait on Congress, the administration or anyone else when it comes to envisioning transportation’s future.

“We are the laboratories of things like this, not the federal government,” he said. “It will be your respective communities that come up with these ideas and start working together.”

A number of states appear poised to move ahead with plans of their own to invest in and expand transportation in the years ahead. Among them:

• California, where voters in Los Angeles passed a major ballot measure in 2016 to fund transit but where legislators in Sacramento are still searching for a permanent source of transportation revenue to supplement the declining gas tax.

• Seattle, Atlanta and Indianapolis also passed notable transit expansion measures in 2016. In all, 24 states approved transportation ballot initiatives in 2016 that are expected to generate more than $200 billion in funding.

• States like Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Wisconsin are among those expected to have prolonged discussions about transportation revenues during 2017 legislative sessions.

• California, Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Missouri, Oregon and Washington are among the states that have received the first round of federal grant funding to test alternative transportation revenue options including mileage-based user fees.
Infrastructure Funding

State transportation funding efforts could be back in the spotlight in 2017. The list of those that could tackle transportation revenues includes as many as 16 states. Some have had a task force or special commission in place in 2016 to come up with funding ideas. Plenty of old ideas (gas taxes, registration fees, tolls) are likely to be considered, but mileage-based user fees and other innovations are likely to get a look as well.

Reshaping Communities

The 2016 election saw the passage of ballot measures to enable new transit investments in Atlanta, Indianapolis, Los Angeles and Seattle. But in Washington, D.C., and other cities, years of neglect of transit systems are burdening public officials with funding, safety and service challenges. Meanwhile, ride-hailing services are continuing to evolve to fill increasingly essential roles. As governments look to provide and enable all these mobility options, how do they ensure that successful communities are built around transit, that housing remains affordable and that those communities work for all their residents?

The Future is Now

After years of saying they were still years away, autonomous vehicles and other technologies are here or nearly here. Uber has a fleet of autonomous vehicles in Pittsburgh. Uber’s self-driving truck company, Otto, recently delivered a truck full of beer in Colorado. So now the question becomes how will state governments respond and how will they need to respond? The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued guidelines last summer for states to consider in drafting autonomous vehicle legislation. But in trying to encourage the development of these technologies and perhaps reap an economic windfall, states will need to guard against doing more harm than good through legislation and regulation.

Transportation Project Selection

States are seeking to change how transportation projects are selected by making project selection less political, determining which ones could have the best return on investment, factoring in long-term costs and reconsidering some long-planned projects that may no longer make sense in the modern age. States likely will need to do more of that in the future. What are states’ freight infrastructure needs going forward and how will that change in the face of automated truck platoons, carrier drones and the Panama Canal expansion? What are the transportation challenges for rural areas, particularly when it comes to serving seniors and individuals with disabilities?

Upcoming Events

States to Watch in 2017: Transportation Funding
a CSG eCademy webcast, Feb. 7 at 2 p.m. EST
csg.org/eCademy

State Capital Forums on State Policy Concerning Autonomous Vehicles
States and dates to be announced, presented in partnership with the Griffith Insurance Education Foundation.

CSG Autonomous & Connected Vehicles Policy Academy
June 12–14 | Detroit, Michigan
csg.org/policyacademies
State leaders are focused on skill development and apprenticeships as the way forward in increasing labor participation and attracting mid- and high-wage jobs to their states. As states and businesses continue to recover from the Great Recession, both are attempting to do so in a new environment. The 21st century has seen two historic shifts related to economics and workforce development. The first is the return of manufacturing jobs to the United States and the second is the new technological requirements of these jobs. While job opportunities continue to grow, today’s factories employ fewer people but require greater levels of technical knowledge from employees.

The result of these developments is referred to as the skills gap. In 2015, the Manufacturing Institute projected that the coming decade would produce 3.5 million new manufacturing jobs, but that the skills gap would result in 2 million of those jobs being very difficult for employers to fill due to a lack of qualified workers. Commenting on this challenge more broadly, former U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker said in a July 2015 press release, “I have met with over 1,800 CEOs since becoming commerce secretary, and almost every one of them has said that the need for a steady supply of skilled, qualified workers to fill jobs throughout our economy is a key challenge for their companies.” Today, states find themselves on the front lines of this challenge and uniquely equipped to address the gap between the demand for skilled workers and supply of talent from state institutions.

While it is clear that existing training programs are not meeting today’s business demand and therefore not preparing their students with the skills necessary to succeed, it is difficult to determine how to fix the existing system. To address this challenge states need to find new ways to invigorate existing job training and workforce development programs. Key to success is engagement with the business community; a community college cannot meet regional business needs if businesses do not articulate what their needs are. Key to supporting the retraining and upskilling of America’s workforce are partnerships between education/training providers and businesses through on-the-job training. This method’s gold standard is an apprenticeship.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, apprenticeship programs provide significant benefits to both businesses and employees. Apprentices are able to earn on average $50,000 per year while in employer-paid training programs that allow the apprentice to earn a two- or four-year degree. Over their lifetime, apprentices earn an average of $300,000 more than their non-apprentice peers. For businesses, there is typically a return of $1.47 for every dollar invested in apprenticeship programs. The programs also correlate with lower turnover rates and improved productivity, and provide a custom-trained and experienced workforce for businesses. As a result, apprenticeships are used to train more than 400,000 Americans in more than 1,000 occupations.

Apprenticeship programs also benefit communities by providing affordable pathways not only to education, but to education that leads directly to a good-paying job. In doing so, families that may otherwise be stuck in cyclical poverty or unable to take on student debt or lost income associated with education have an opportunity to study, work and move to the middle class. Since 2014, the U.S. Department of Labor has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to communities, community colleges and nonprofits to foster experimentation with and development of apprenticeship programs. This activity has led to some states beginning to explore new policies meant to foster apprenticeships and technical training. States such as South Carolina have developed tax incentives for businesses offering apprenticeship programs, while Tennessee has committed to providing two years of post-high school education or training at no cost to its high school graduates.

“Putting Tennesseans to work means more than just finding a job these days,” said state Sen. Mark Norris, majority floor leader in Tennessee. “It means making sure we have the skills necessary to do the jobs that are available, including those in advanced industries and manufacturing. That was the reason for the creation of the LEAP program in Tennessee. LEAP’s primary goal is to close skills gaps by ensuring that students enrolled in courses provided by Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology and community colleges gain the necessary skills to meet the requirements of high-skill and high-technology jobs demanded by industry leaders in the state.”

Looking ahead to 2017, more and more state leaders hold skill development and apprenticeships as integral parts of their workforce and economic development strategies.
Implementing WIOA

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, also known as WIOA, was signed into law by President Barack Obama in July 2014 and is a major reform of the public workforce system. The WIOA requires states to strategically align workforce development programs with employment training services so that job seekers can acquire the skills necessary to meet employer needs. In addition, the new WIOA requires the collection and reporting of timely information about individuals who receive services in order to provide accountability and measure performance. States must submit the first State Annual Performance Report required by the law in October 2017.

Occupational Licensure

Military service members and their families often have to move across state lines, and these moves can be difficult on military spouses as they try to maintain their own careers. More than one-third of military spouses are in an occupation that requires them to have a license, and licensing requirements are set at the state level with significant variation from state to state. State leaders have the opportunity to help ease some of the transitional burdens on those families through increased collaboration among states on occupational licensing for military spouses.

Wages and Benefits

Average wages and benefits have grown slowly for most Americans since the Great Recession. The lack of real wage growth has been cited as a contributing factor in the difficulty of employers to attract and hire workers who may incur employment-related costs such as transportation, childcare and retraining. Recent data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that real earnings are finally beginning to show growth, with real earnings growth averaged 1.2 percent from October 2015 to October 2016.

Workforce Re-entry

Workforce re-entry is a challenge for many Americans who have been out of the workforce due to involuntary job loss or disability, voluntary exit from the workforce, or incarceration, who often face challenges such as a bias against people who have large gaps in their work history, outdated skills, a loss of professional connections and networks, and unfamiliarity with effective work search processes. New tools and resources from the U.S. Department of Labor for state unemployment insurance agencies and workforce systems to support re-employment may help state governments reduce the barriers to workforce re-entry.

Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development: How States are Innovating with WIOA</th>
<th>Apprenticeships: A Successful Workforce and Business Development Strategy</th>
<th>CSG Workforce Development Policy Academy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a CSG eCademy webcast May 9 at 2 p.m. EDT csg.org/eCademy</td>
<td>a CSG eCademy webcast July 18 at 2 p.m. EDT csg.org/eCademy</td>
<td>Oct. 4–6</td>
</tr>
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by Sen. Beau McCoy
Nebraska State Senator 2009–2017
2016 CSG NATIONAL CHAIR, 2011 CSG TOLL FELLOW

Thousands upon thousands of earnest Americans in our nation’s history have sought to make a difference in the lives of their fellow citizens by serving in state legislatures. Eight years ago I joined these ranks as a freshman lawmaker in the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature. My CSG story began on the second day of my legislative career when our speaker of the Legislature, knowing my desire to grow as a leader, stopped at my desk on the chamber floor and strongly suggested that I apply to The Council of State Governments Midwest’s leadership program, the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development, or BILLD. I did as he suggested and that summer I fell in love with the CSG organization and family. Eight years and countless CSG events and conferences later, my belief in the mission and purpose of CSG is unshaken.

As is the case with many things in life, legislators, members of the judiciary and members of the executive branch get out of CSG what they put into it. I chose to embrace every opportunity to educate myself with the rich opportunities at CSG for policy knowledge, leadership development, mentorships, friendships and just plain fun!

My CSG journey has been a rewarding and deeply satisfying experience. No matter how many chances I have had to give back to CSG at the regional and national levels, they pale in comparison to the wisdom I have gleaned from some of the most special people I have ever had the privilege to know. Coast to coast, I have watched my colleagues at CSG give their precious time and serve this organization unselfishly. Perhaps that is one of the chief reasons that The Council of State Governments has remained vibrant and relevant for more than eight decades.

Eight years of involvement with CSG has taught me that in an age of cynicism toward government and government officials, there are actually thousands of well-meaning and hard-working public servants who toil daily to improve the lives of their constituents. I’m deeply proud and honored to call these public servants across America my colleagues and my CSG family."

Colorado state Sen. Nancy Todd
2015 CSG WEST CHAIR, 2009 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

I have had the honor of serving 12 years as a Colorado state legislator. Since my first year I became involved with CSG West and attended my first conference in Breckenridge, Colorado, followed by my first national CSG meeting in Puerto Rico. Through the years, I have had the pleasure of serving on several CSG committees, as vice chair and chairing committees, on the executive boards both regionally and nationally, and ultimately as the CSG West chair in 2013. The experience I have gained has been rich in the friendships and expertise garnered from other leaders across the United States. CSG is an organization that serves all branches of government, seeks bipartisan solutions, and challenges elected officials to rise to a cooperative and collaborative level of governing. I encourage all our newly elected officials to attend and get involved with The Council of State Governments. I am a proud CSG supporter!"

Delaware state Rep. Deborah Hudson
2007 CSG NATIONAL CHAIR, 1998 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

My first few visits to CSG meetings were at the regional level, with CSG’s Eastern Regional Conference, where I found a tremendous variety of tools to assist me as a new legislator. I began to access filed legislation from adjoining states to solve problems—seamlessly—as a region, and to not be in conflict with other surrounding states.

Eventually, I attended the national CSG meetings where the agenda focused on emerging trends in states and featured interactive sessions with experts on contemporary issues—what a gold mine for a young legislator!

Today, I am in a leadership position and really push my colleagues to participate in CSG. Engagement with CSG will lead legislators to high levels of professional development sessions on key state issues and to top-drawer leadership training, which can easily enhance a legislator’s ability to serve citizens of their district and state."
Rhode Island state
Rep. Marvin L. Abney
2015 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

Since my election in 2012 through my 2016 appointment as chair of the Rhode Island House of Representatives Finance Committee, CSG has been with me every step of the journey. From outstanding Policy Academies to the Henry Toll Fellowship, and workshops at regional annual meetings and national conferences to in-depth research provided by an excellent CSG staff, all have been instrumental in my growth as a legislator. CSG continues to help me grasp the art and science of public service at the highest levels. Most of all, I am provided an opportunity to learn from, and grow with, some of the highest caliber of elected colleagues in this country."

Kansas state
Sen. Vicki Schmidt
2007 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

CSG is an organization that is full of so many resources, both for me as a legislator and for our legislative research department. No matter the topic, CSG has current information on how other states are addressing key issues, and the staff at CSG is always helpful and ready to answer any questions. I also have been fortunate to attend leadership events sponsored by CSG. In that experience, I have been able to forge friendships with public officials throughout the United States and Canada. They, too, have become resources for me. And as the only organization that encompasses all three branches of government, the opportunity CSG provides to network is unmatched by any other organization!"

Nevada Assemblyman
Michael Sprinkle
2015 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

CSG has always provided me with the opportunity to discover who I am as a legislator and public servant. It has given me the skills to do what is right by the people who have elected me to office. The leadership academies as well as regional and state conferences have helped me discover evolving issues and trends, which then allows me to return to my state and help Nevada move forward. Mostly, I feel CSG has my best interests at heart and works hard to allow me to grow as a legislator."

Tennessee Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris
2014 CSG NATIONAL CHAIR, 2010–11 CSG SOUTH/SLC CHAIR, 2002 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

States are the bedrock foundation of our federal system, the repository of liberty in our republic. CSG helps keep states strong. CSG helps state leaders do the hard work of freedom by strengthening states, decentralizing power and preserving individual liberty. This is important because strong states make democracy and our entire republic work better.

I’ve always been proud to participate because it helps me keep Tennessee strong."

Oklahoma Commissioner and Cabinet Secretary of Public Safety
Mike Thompson
2012 CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOW

The CSG is an extraordinary organization that I am proud to be associated with. The most beneficial aspect of being a CSG Henry Toll Fellow is having the luxury of reaching out to an abundance of gifted CSG colleagues who have a wealth of experience and talent. At times, we may feel that we are alone in our state or organization, struggling to find solutions to complex issues. This isn’t always true. The access to The Council of State Governments’ network is a treasured resource to help solve arduous problems or develop sensible options that everyone benefits from. As an agency head of a statewide organization with more than 1,400 employees, I look forward to many years of being a productive part of CSG."
For more than 80 years, The Council of State Governments has provided insights and information to state leaders. Here, we take a look at CSG’s beginnings and the history of forums, products and other tools that help elected and appointed officials in all three branches of state government throughout the country shape public policy and advance the common good.

Laying Groundwork

1925  Henry Wolcott Toll, a Colorado state senator, created the American Legislators’ Association, the forerunner to CSG.

1933  CSG founded by Toll.

“Until the states provide themselves with adequate machinery for cooperating with each other, they cannot cooperate adequately with the national government.” — Henry Toll


1984  CSG Associates Program established. It allows representatives of the private sector to support CSG’s public service mission.

1987  American Probation and Parole Association affiliates with CSG.

2004  CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts established.

Sharing Information

1935  The Book of the States first published.

The Book of the States became an annual publication in 2002. 2017 will mark its 49TH VOLUME.

1940  CSG Suggested State Legislation (now Shared State Legislation) program launched.

1958  State Government News (now Capitol Ideas) first published.

It was “initiated in response to widespread expressions of belief by state officials and legislators that such a publication would help meet a growing need for up-to-date briefing on state action, studies and reports on important subjects,” the first issue reported.

Capitol Ideas has a distribution of about 15,000 and produces 6 ISSUES PER YEAR.
“The hallmark of our work has been to base criminal justice policy discussions in data and to engage stakeholders from across the political spectrum to find common ground and translate this consensus into actionable change.”

» Michael Thompson, director of the CSG Justice Center in September/October 2016 Capitol Ideas.
Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has served in both chambers of the legislature, as secretary of state and as governor, making her exceptionally fit to lead CSG members from all three branches and all levels of state government as the 2017 president.

And according to Brown, her participation in organizations such as CSG has helped to prepare her for the challenges she faces today within her state and in her leadership roles at the national level.

“I am a strong believer in mentorship and collaborative leadership, and CSG offers terrific opportunities for developing those skills and learning from others,” she said. “These experiences have been formative and extremely beneficial to me, and I want to make sure other state leaders have the leadership development experiences and networking opportunities that will cultivate strong leaders.”

Brown became Oregon’s 38th governor in 2015. Since taking office, she has dedicated much of her attention to helping support working class families by passing the nation’s first minimum wage increase law and championing paid sick leave for all workers. Brown also has focused on improving the efficiency, transparency and accountability of state government. From 2009 to 2015, she served as Oregon’s secretary of state, implementing an online voter registration system that made it easier for residents to vote and saved taxpayer dollars. She continued that legacy as governor, enacting a landmark, first-in-the-nation automatic voter registration law, which put ballots in the hands of hundreds of thousands of new Oregon voters in its first year.

As governor, Brown has made education a priority, making the largest investment in K-12 and early childhood education in the state’s history, including fully funding all-day kindergarten statewide for the first time. She also doubled funding for career and technical education and science, technology, engineering, arts and math programs shown to connect students with careers and keep them on track to graduate, and Brown appointed Oregon’s first education innovation officer working to make sure every Oregon student graduates from high school with a plan for his or her future.

“Education is like an elevator—it allows each of us to rise,” she said. “Oregon needs a skilled and capable workforce to fuel strong economies in all regions, and Oregonians need good jobs. In order to have a strong business sector, we need strong public education from cradle to career; a system that serves all kinds of learners and supports their successful transition to a career.”

She said she hopes to reduce economic disparities between urban and rural areas of Oregon through efforts to strengthen the state’s education system and foster sustainable—and equitable—economic growth.

As CSG national president, Brown also brings perspective gained during her 17 years in the Oregon Legislature: five years in the House of Representatives and 12 years in the Oregon State Senate. In 2004, she became the first woman in the state’s history to serve as Senate majority leader. She said that during her time as president, she wants to ensure that other state leaders have the same opportunities for growth and leadership development through CSG that she did.

It was during her time in the Oregon Legislature that Brown first discovered The Council of State Governments. She said she initially got involved with CSG because she wanted to participate in a national organization that would give her a legislative boost and would help her tackle issues facing the Pacific Northwest; she found that boost through CSG West.

“I enjoyed participating in this regional organization,” she said. “I was very excited to work with folks who understood and ‘got’ our issues. I loved the family-like feel of the organization, the commitment to bipartisanship, and met folks through my CSG West work that I think are some of the best in the country—folks like Bart Davis, still the majority leader in the (Iowa) Senate, and former (Nevada Assembly) Majority Leader Lynn Hettrick.”

A 2004 graduate of the Henry Toll Fellowship, CSG’s leadership development program for state government officials, Brown said the program’s three-branch, nonpartisan approach to developing leaders from across the country was a meaningful experience. “I loved the camaraderie, the different perspectives, and it was great meeting folks from around the nation,” she said of the program.
Nevada state Sen. Kelvin Atkinson credits his daughter Haley, who was born in 1996, for inspiring him to run for state Assembly. His goal was to improve educational opportunities not only for her but all of Nevada’s children.

In 2002, Atkinson was elected to the Nevada State Assembly, and he quickly demonstrated his talents and devotion to the job. Now, he has also devoted his talents to The Council of State Governments.

“I am a strong believer in mentorship and collaborative leadership, and CSG offers terrific opportunities for developing those skills and learning from others.”

— Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, CSG 2017 National President

“The work CSG does not only to educate those in state government but also to build camaraderie among state leaders is invaluable.”

— Nevada State Sen. Kelvin Atkinson, CSG 2017 National Chair

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CSG 2017 National Chair, Nevada State Sen. Kelvin Atkinson, Committed to Camaraderie

Atkinson went on to serve as chairman of CSG West in 2013 and was the first African-American to serve in that role. He is also a 2005 graduate of the Henry Toll Fellowship, CSG’s national leadership development program.

During his days in the Nevada Assembly, Atkinson served as chairman of the Transportation Committee. In 2012, Atkinson ran for the Nevada State Senate and was elected with 80 percent of the votes. He was immediately appointed by the majority leader of the Senate to chair the Commerce, Labor, and Energy committee.

Atkinson currently serves in a leadership position in the Senate, as assistant majority leader, and he chairs both the Senate Commerce, Labor and Energy and the Senate Rules committees.

In October 2014, after the 9th Circuit Court of Nevada struck down the prohibition on same sex marriage, Atkinson and his partner, Sherwood “Woody” Howard, made history by becoming the first same-sex couple to get married in the state of Nevada.

Born in Chicago, Illinois—where his mother was a union worker in a mill for more than 20 years and his father was a railroad worker—Atkinson fell in love with the West Coast early in life. At the age of 10, Atkinson visited his fraternal grandparents in Los Angeles and he found that he loved the city so much that he asked his parents’ permission to remain there with them. He finished high school in Culver City, California.

After graduating high school, Atkinson attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. However, during his junior year at Howard, Atkinson’s father was murdered and Atkinson decided to leave school and return to Los Angeles to be with his family.

“He was the best father any child could have, he was my best friend,” Atkinson said.

When his grandparents moved to Las Vegas in 1991, Atkinson followed and enrolled in University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he continued to study political science.

Atkinson felt a calling to help people and in 1992 began working for local government. Throughout his employment he was tireless in his efforts and was promoted several times as a result. He still works for Clark County as a management analyst and has been with them for more than 25 years.
CSG provides a unique opportunity for elected officials from every state to share ideas and policies, said Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers, CSG 2017 chair-elect.

“If there is a bill that seems to be gaining traction in Kentucky, it most likely has been passed or proposed in some form in another state,” Stivers said. “CSG provides a platform and a network where I can reach out to a fellow legislator in another state and ask, ‘how was this policy received by the public?’ or ‘what were the pros and cons of passing this bill in your state?’”

Stivers has served in the General Assembly since 1997 and represents the 25th District, which encompasses Clay, Knox, Lee, Owsley, Whitley and Wolfe counties in the southeastern part of the state. He was elected by his colleagues to serve as Senate majority floor leader in 2009, a position he served in until being elected Senate president in 2012 and again in 2014 and 2016. As the Senate president, Stivers represents the entire body of the Kentucky State Senate in any official state business. His term runs through the 2018 session.

Stivers serves as chairman of the Senate Committee on Committees and Rules Committee and the co-chair of the Legislative Research Commission. Additionally, he is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Among other issues, Stivers has focused on career readiness and economic development during his time in the Kentucky Legislature.

“When you talk about creating jobs, I often ask, what are the barriers that keep businesses from growing in our communities?” said Stivers. “Sometimes we can help by ‘cutting the red tape’ and eliminating unnecessary government regulations; and sometimes we can help identify funding sources to repair a bridge or build a new bypass to improve traffic flow to a given area.”

In 2015, Stivers was honored by Governing magazine as a Public Official of the Year for his work in the General Assembly. That same year he was named chair of CSG Southern Legislative Conference. He became CSG’s vice chair in 2016 and will serve as chair-elect this year.

“It is truly an honor to serve as The Council of State Governments’ chair-elect for 2017,” Stivers said. “I am excited to begin working with the CSG leadership team to move the organization forward and continue to develop innovative ways to share policy ideas and good-governing practices across all branches of state government throughout our great nation.”

Stivers was the assistant commonwealth’s attorney from 1989 to 1993. He has served as a member of the Kentucky Appalachian Council, the Kentucky Appalachian Commission, the Early Childhood Development Council, the Governor’s Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, the OxyContin Task Force, the Evidence Committee at the University of Louisville Law School, The Council of State Governments’ Public Safety and Justice Task Force, the Fiscal Affairs and Government Operations Committee of the CSG Southern Legislative Conference and the Southern States Energy Board.

Stivers graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in industrial management and minor in economics and earned his law degree from the University of Louisville.

A practicing attorney in Manchester, Kentucky, Stivers is married to Regina Crawford Stivers and has four children—Joshua, Caroline, Margaret and Robert—and one grandchild, Mia.
The values of community involvement and public service that drove Delaware state Rep. Helene Keeley to first run for public office in 1990 were instilled in her as a child by her family. After running three times in a row, Keeley was elected to the Delaware House of Representatives in 1996 where she continues to serve today, making her the longest-serving member in the House.

“I ran at 25—the earliest age I could,” she said. “The majority of my friends were freshly out of college and we were out having fun on the weekends—there was still something in me, though, motivating me to do it. Several people approached me and asked me to run and at first I thought I didn’t really want to do it, but then the more I thought about it the more I felt it was something I really wanted to do and I stuck with it and was finally able to achieve that goal.”

Keeley served as House minority whip from 2007–2008. She currently serves as chair of the Revenue & Finance Committee, vice chair of the Gaming & Pari-mutuels Committee, and a member of the Economic Development, Banking, Insurance & Commerce, and Labor committees. Keeley works as the community relations coordinator with the Delaware Department of Labor, and previously worked for Rosenbluth International as a global project manager.

Keeley is also an active volunteer at the community, state and national levels. She serves on the board of directors for Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, St. Patrick’s Day Society Board and AIDS Delaware. She is a member of the New Deal National Democratic Leadership, and a current board member and state director for the National Foundation for Women Legislators, or NFWL.

Keeley has long brought that sense of commitment, hard work and leadership as an engaged and active member of CSG. She graduated from the Henry Toll Fellowship, CSG’s leadership development program, in 2001, and in 2015, Keeley took on the role of co-chair of the CSG Eastern Regional Conference. She also served as co-chair of the CSG Fiscal & Economic Development Public Policy Committee in 2015 after being a member of the National Working Group on Economic Development that was the impetus for establishing the committee.

“CSG has been a tremendous resource for me, not just through the leadership program, but a resource for information and for opportunities to learn,” said Keeley.

“CSG has been a tremendous resource for me, not just through the leadership program, but a resource for information and for opportunities to learn,” said Keeley.

She hopes to use her position as vice chair to encourage a new slate of leaders to emerge in the organization by getting involved in various CSG activities and regional leadership positions.

“One of the things we’ve talked about with the leadership at CSG is when someone either becomes a regional chair or is in process of becoming national chair, we want to make sure that that person is involved so that when they do get to that position, they actually know what is happening within the organization,” she said.

“As the incoming vice-chair, I want to solidify that we will do that, so that people coming after me, when they are sitting in the leadership circle, will have a process in place so they have the knowledge to help make the decisions to steer the organization for years to come.”

Through her tenure with the Delaware General Assembly, Keeley has taken an active role in championing important legislation including improved DUI laws and the Medical Marijuana Act, which Keeley said has had a profound impact on her constituents. “I get emails from people thanking me because other pharmaceuticals were not helping their cancer or chronic pain and I’m floored—a couple months will go by and then all of the sudden I get another email thanking me for sponsoring the bill,” she said.

Keeley has worked to successfully pass legislation to provide additional training to first responders to sexual assault cases, and she successfully championed a bill that requires ballistics information be added to a national database so that gun-related crimes could be solved in a timely matter. Keeley has worked to establish a statewide needle exchange program and the statewide Foreclosure Mediation program to assist homeowners facing foreclosure, and to decriminalize certain marijuana possession offenses. Among her current efforts is to strengthen regulations of payday loans in the state, which she said unfairly targets people in poverty and low socioeconomic status.

Keeley resides with her husband, Michael Green, and her dog, Hebe, in Wilmington. She is a graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Business.

Neither legislators have dedicated much of their careers to health care and public health, a focus they will carry to their leadership at CSG East.”

Connecticut state Sen. Theresa “Terry” Bielinski Gerratana and state Rep. Kevin Ryan will bring their extensive experience in both houses of the Connecticut Legislature to their roles as 2017 CSG Eastern Regional Conference co-chairs. Both legislators have dedicated much of their careers to health care and public health, a focus they will carry to their leadership at CSG East.

Gerratana said the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid in the states is one of the biggest issues facing the Eastern region this year, as most ERC member states expanded their Medicaid programs under the ACA. In 2016, Medicaid covered more than 15 million enrollees in the ERC member states, said Gerratana.

“Medicaid expenditures in the CSG Eastern Region states totaled $141 billion in fiscal year 15, with 57 percent of that total provided by federal matching funds,” she said. “A major focus for Connecticut and ERC’s Regional Health Policy Committee will be on working with our congressional counterparts to preserve a strong partnership between the states and the federal government in support of this critical program.”

ERC’s Executive Committee passed a resolution, drafted by the ERC Health Policy Committee, urging the federal government to maintain the strong state-federal partnership that has been the hallmark of the Medicaid program since its inception more than 50 years ago, Gerratana said. The resolution also asks that Congress, in reforming the federal Medicaid program, avoid imposing any new burdens on state budgets or programs.

“Through ERC, I feel I can be a more effective advocate in Washington for maintaining strong federal support for this critical program than I could be acting alone as a Connecticut state official,” said Gerratana. “We have already begun to work with the CSG Washington, D.C., office on plans for a visit to the capitol later this year to follow up on the ERC resolution.”

Gerratana was elected to the Senate in a special election in 2011 to represent the citizens of New Britain, Berlin and Farmington and was re-elected to serve her fourth term in 2016. She serves as co-chair of the Public Health Committee and vice-chair of the Children’s Committee. She was instrumental in passing children’s health care legislation as well as managed care and mental health reform. She worked to create a breast and cervical cancer early detection and treatment referral program, to require health insurance plans to provide 48-hour inpatient care for mothers and infants after normal delivery and to create a work incentives program for people with disabilities.

Gerratana received her B.S. at Central Connecticut State University and was certified as a secondary school teacher. Gerratana, who is a mother and a grandmother, lives with her husband Dr. Frank Gerratana in New Britain.

Gerratana will be joined in leading ERC by Ryan, who serves the towns of Bozrah, Montville and Norwich in the 139th House District. He is a deputy speaker and a 13-term General Assembly veteran.

One of Ryan’s top priorities is health care, especially health care for children. He has been a member of the Public Health Committee since 1993. He was a member of the Pilot Studies Committee, which dealt with Children on Medicaid under the age of 21 and Emergency Medical Services for Children, and was involved with the Certificate of Need for Health Care Facilities. He also served on the Children in the Recession Task Force. He worked for the passage of a bill allowing for the use of medical marijuana by children.

Ryan served eight years as the House chairman of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, and he served as co-chair of the School Building Subcommittee. Under Speaker Brendan Sharkey, he chaired the Municipal Organization Regional Efficiencies subcommittees of Education and Municipal Efficiencies. Ryan has been a member of the Appropriation Committee since 1993, and he has served as a vice chair as well as co-chair of the the Health and Hospitals subcommittee.

Ryan holds a doctorate in optometry with a certificate in public health from Pennsylvania College of Optometry. Ryan has been a member of the adjunct faculty at the University of New Haven, teaching physics, since 1980.
ERC Transportation Policy Newsletter
A monthly newsletter outlining important topics and key news regarding transportation in CSG’s Eastern Region. To sign up for alerts, contact Steve Hewitt or Don Hannon, ERC’s Transportation Policy consultants, at donhannon@icloud.com, or shewitt109@aol.com.

Canada-U.S. Border Update
A monthly newsletter highlighting important border issues with Canada and the United States. To sign up for the newsletter, contact Earl Eisenhart, ERC’s Canada-U.S. policy consultant, at earlgrs@gmail.com.

Green Matters Newsletter
Monthly newsletter highlighting energy and environment issues in CSG’s Eastern Region. For more information, contact Rona Cohen, senior policy analyst, Energy & Environment Program, at rcohen@csg.org.

Perspectives
ERC produces an annual report outlining our yearly activities and the work of our policy committees, providing highlights of the ERC Annual Meeting and initiatives planned for the year ahead.

ERC ERC Policy Consultants
The Eastern Trade Council, or ETC, strengthens state trade programs and increases regional exports by sharing trade development data and best practices, jointly promoting regional products and services, and collectively advocating for federal trade promotion programs and policies that benefit the region. The ETC is supported by annual appropriations from its 11 member jurisdictions. For more information about ETC, please contact Veronique Cavailler, director of the Eastern Trade Council at vcavailler@csg.org.

The EASTrain program brings seasoned experts to state legislatures throughout the region for hands-on professional development training designed to improve leadership skills. Many of the presenters include professional development trainers affiliated with the ERC Eastern Leadership Academy. The programs are developed at the request of legislative leadership and customized to meet the needs of members. For more information, contact Veronique Cavailler, director of leadership training programs, at vcavailler@csg.org.

Quad Caucus, consisting of African-American, Asian, Hispanic and Native American legislators from ERC’s member states and provinces, sponsors programs for state officials on public policy issues of particular concern to communities of color. The caucus seeks to engage all ERC members in dialogue on issues involving race, diversity and inclusiveness in our states, communities and in the workplace. Communities of color face difficult, and often unique, economic, environmental and social challenges; the Quad Caucus seeks to focus attention on these issues and promote the conversations necessary to produce public policy solutions, not only to improve the quality of life in these communities, but to improve the productive capacity of our states and the region.

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Mississippi Speaker Philip Gunn Embraces Diversity as SLC Chair

“The programs and services provided by the Southern Legislative Conference are immensely helpful to legislators across the South, whether it’s the inquiry service, leadership and staff development training, or legislative delegations.”

Mississippi House Speaker Philip Gunn credits his ability to reach across the aisle in the legislature to his time spent at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. While earning his Bachelor of Business Administration, Gunn met students from every state in the nation and from countries around the world. Being exposed to this diversity set the foundation for Gunn’s career.

Now, as the 2017 CSG South/Southern Legislative Conference chair, Gunn will continue to reach across the aisle to support The Council of State Governments’ nonpartisan efforts.

“The programs and services provided by the Southern Legislative Conference are immensely helpful to legislators across the South, whether it’s the inquiry service, leadership and staff development training, or legislative delegations,” he said.

After graduating from Baylor, Gunn earned a J.D. from The University of Mississippi School of Law, where he was elected student body president. He is currently a practicing attorney at Wells Marble & Hurst PLLC in Ridgeland, Mississippi. In 2010, Gunn was named “One of Mississippi’s Top 50 Leading Attorneys” in the Mississippi Business Journal’s Leadership in Law Class of 2010. In 2012, Gunn received the State Legislative Achievement Award from the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, as a result of the Attorney General “Sunshine” Act passed during the 2012 legislative session.

Gunn began serving in the Mississippi House of Representatives in 2004. On Jan. 3, 2012, he became the 61st speaker of the House; it was the first time in 136 years that a Republican held the post. During his time in the Legislature, Gunn has been a leader not only in the House of Representatives but also throughout the state, serving on the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Republican Party and as chair of the Republican House Conference since it was formed in 2006.

Through bipartisan committee chair appointments, Gunn created a functional House of Representatives in his first session as speaker, ensuring the approval of the House redistricting map by the U.S. Department of Justice. Business-friendly legislation was passed, along with many other laws that focused on education, health care and keeping Mississippi’s government running within its budgetary means.

Gunn has been active in the Southern Legislative Conference, or SLC, since he was elected. He served as vice chair in 2014, and is continuing his active membership on the SLC Executive Committee as the 2017 chair. The new chair said he was looking forward to the coming year and the 71st Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference in Biloxi, Mississippi.

“As chair of the SLC, I am pleased to host the 71st SLC Annual Meeting—typically the largest gathering within The Council of Governments’ meetings—and showcase our beautiful state,” he said.

Gunn is actively involved in his community. Before being elected to the House of Representatives, he served on the Clinton Public School Board. He currently serves as an elder at Morrison Heights Baptist Church in Clinton, a member of the Clinton Chamber of Commerce and as a trustee of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

Gunn met his wife Lisa while attending Baylor. They are the parents of Meredith, Alex, Andrew and John David.
Prepared under the auspices of SLC’s six standing committees, **SLC Regional Resources** provide a regional analysis on the background and current status of the most prevalent and unique state government policy issues facing Southern states. Focusing on policy issues, trends and developments particular to the South, these reports provide a point of reference that allows SLC members to view their state’s governmental policies in relation to their closest neighbors.

**SLC Special Series Reports** provide an in-depth analysis of key policy issues facing Southern states. Focusing on governmental issues with multiple layers and highly nuanced solutions, these reports provide an extensive analysis of national, economic and political trends, with a focus on how these developments relate to the SLC member states and the region as a whole.

**SLC Issue Alerts** comprise concise reports on recent and quickly approaching state and federal developments of importance to the Southern region. These communications keep SLC members apprised of forthcoming opportunities, concerns and deadlines related to policy issues.

**Comparative Data Reports**, or CDRs, are prepared annually by select SLC states’ fiscal research departments. Prepared under the auspices of the SLC Fiscal Affairs & Government Operations Committee, CDRs track revenue sources and appropriations levels in Southern states and are a useful tool to legislators and legislative staff in determining their respective state spending.

Reports for 2016 and previous years are available through the SLC website at: [www.slcatlanta.org/Publications/](http://www.slcatlanta.org/Publications/).

**SLC Delegations**—In order to better facilitate information sharing among its member states, the U.S. federal government and foreign nations, the SLC arranges delegations comprising committee chairs and legislative leaders to domestic and international points of innovation to observe programs or services first-hand, communicate member states’ positions on federal legislation and regulations, and enhance economic relations with countries important to the Southern region.

Through the **State Transformation in Action Recognition**, or STAR, award the CSG South office affirms that states are the best problem solvers. Submissions outlining innovative state government policies, programs and initiatives are accepted from an array of state agencies, departments and institutions operating within the executive, legislative and judicial governmental branches. The deadline for submitting your program for consideration is May 26, 2017. The SLC office has begun accepting applications for its 2017 STAR award for creative, impactful, transferable and effective state government solutions.

**Legislative Staff Exchange Program**, or LSEP, provides opportunities for legislative staff in SLC member states to participate in peer-to-peer briefings and exchanges to develop effective strategies, identify best practices and share innovative ideas across a broad spectrum of legislative processes. Tailored for the particular needs and schedules of the participants, LSEPs are held in both formal and informal group settings, with funding provided by the SLC.

Through **SouthTrain**, the SLC periodically arranges for policy experts to visit member state capitols and conduct workshops on pre-selected topics for legislators and legislative staff. The topics and presenters are decided in close consultation with leadership and senior staff in the respective legislative offices. All costs related to the workshop are borne by the SLC.
Iowa State Sen. Janet Petersen, 2017 Midwest Chair, Stresses Importance of Listening, Learning

“As a member-led association, CSG pulls together its members and experts from different states and provinces to work on issues and find solutions we can push together for the benefit of all of our states.”

“...very early on in my life, our dinner-table discussions often revolved around the issues that my mom was working on at the statehouse,” she said. An Iowa native, Petersen has three children with her husband Brian Pattinson. She was instrumental in making Iowa the first state to expand its birth-defects registry to include surveillance work on stillbirths, and she is the founder of Healthy Birth Day, an organization that strives to prevent stillbirths and infant death, and its Count the Kicks public health campaign.

“I would love to see the Midwest become the safest place in the country to have a healthy baby,” Petersen said. “The United States is falling well behind other areas of the world in how we care for both moms and their babies before and after they are born. I’m hoping to start a conversation on what we’re doing right in our states, what is working in other parts of the world, and what changes we should make to help Midwestern babies get a healthier start on life.”

Petersen said she expects legislators from around the country will be pleasantly surprised to learn about the changes that have occurred in Iowa’s capital city when the 72nd Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting is held in Des Moines July 9–12. “It’s always fun to get Midwesterners together,” she said. “We’re looking forward to pouring on the Iowa hospitality in Des Moines this summer. We’ve got an impressive lineup of speakers who should spark some interesting dialogue on issues we’re facing in our region and our country.”

Interactions with parents and other constituents have shaped the legislative work of 2017 CSG Midwest Chair Janet Petersen, an Iowa state senator, for more than 15 years, from advocating for the passage of the Iowa Smokefree Air Act to sponsoring legislation to pair the state’s refugee groups with AmeriCorps volunteers.

“I think we’ve done a good job in Iowa of showing that we don’t have to choose gridlock under divided government,” said Petersen, who has been a member of the Legislature since 2001 and serves as Senate Commerce Committee chair.

In 2002, she completed the CSG Midwestern Legislative Conference’s Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development.

Petersen said CSG helps policymakers tackle issues that affect multiple states and regions.

“As a member-led association, CSG pulls together its members and experts from different states and provinces to work on issues and find solutions we can push together for the benefit of all of our states.”

Petersen stressed the importance of listening and learning from others not only across the Midwest but also across the country.

“Diversity helped build our country,” she said. “It’s what makes companies more profitable. It’s what makes our ideas richer. We have to be willing to focus on the common good when we tackle hard issues and conversations. When we stay focused on what unites us, we can do good things.”

Petersen said she became interested in public policy at a young age after her father died of melanoma and her mother re-entered the workforce, taking a job as a lobbyist for social justice issues for a coalition of churches.

“So very early on in my life, our dinner-table discussions often revolved around the issues that my mom was working on at the statehouse,” she said. An Iowa native, Petersen has three children with her husband Brian Pattinson. She was instrumental in making Iowa the first state to expand its birth-defects registry to include surveillance work on stillbirths, and she is the founder of Healthy Birth Day, an organization that strives to prevent stillbirths and infant death, and its Count the Kicks public health campaign.

“I would love to see the Midwest become the safest place in the country to have a healthy baby,” Petersen said. “The United States is falling well behind other areas of the world in how we care for both moms and their babies before and after they are born. I’m hoping to start a conversation on what we’re doing right in our states, what is working in other parts of the world, and what changes we should make to help Midwestern babies get a healthier start on life.”

Petersen said she expects legislators from around the country will be pleasantly surprised to learn about the changes that have occurred in Iowa’s capital city when the 72nd Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting is held in Des Moines July 9–12.

“It’s always fun to get Midwesterners together,” she said. “We’re looking forward to pouring on the Iowa hospitality in Des Moines this summer. We’ve got an impressive lineup of speakers who should spark some interesting dialogue on issues we’re facing in our region and our country.”

2017 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

72nd Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting
July 9–12 | Des Moines, Iowa
Iowa Sen. Janet Petersen, chair of the MLC, and her legislative colleagues will host the four-day event—the premier meeting for the Midwest’s state and provincial legislators. Through its mix of speakers, sessions on public policy, networking opportunities and professional development workshops, the meeting gives attendees the unique chance to learn from and collaborate with their legislative colleagues from other states and provinces. The family friendly event will offer a number of activities in the Des Moines area for the spouses, adult guests and children of attendees.

23rd Annual Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development
Aug. 11–15 | Minneapolis, Minnesota
BILLD is an intensive, five-day educational and training opportunity for newer state legislators, offering them a unique opportunity to heighten their leadership and policymaking skills and meet the challenges facing state government as they become tomorrow’s leaders. The agenda includes a rigorous curriculum of leadership development workshops, policy analysis seminars and public service skills training. BILLD focuses on major issues facing state governments, such as education, corrections, health care and economic development, along with skills development training such as negotiation and conflict resolution, time and focus management, and communications and speechmaking training.

Great Lakes Legislative Caucus Annual Meeting
Sept. 22–23 | Toronto, Ontario
The Great Lakes Legislative Caucus is a nonpartisan group of state and provincial lawmakers from eight U.S. states—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—and two Canadian provinces—Ontario and Québec. CSG Midwest provides staffing services for the caucus.
Midwestern Radioactive Materials Transportation Project

Federal Waste Management in the U.S.

Radioactive waste comes from the nation’s nuclear power plants, from energy research facilities, and from production and use of medical isotopes. It also comes from the nation’s nuclear weapons and defense laboratories. Since the early 1950s, DOE has managed the nation’s radioactive waste, and the states have assumed some responsibility in dealing with waste within their borders. In the 1980s, a group of state and local leaders known as the Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future concluded that the nation was not meeting its obligation to manage and dispose of this waste. Congress in 1982 established PL 97-425, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA), which mandates that DOE identify a repository for the nation’s high-level and unspecialized radioactive waste and establish a process for selecting a site. In 1987, the state of Nevada rejected a DOE proposal for a waste repository in Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The NWPA was amended in 1996 by the Energy Policy Act (EPAct). EPAct specified that DOE would implement a new, consent-based process for determining the location of a repository by 2010.

Transportation

Implementing the Blue Ribbon Commission’s recommendations led DOE to establish the Administrative Panel in 1990. The panel is composed of governmental officials from states, tribes, and local communities in the vicinity of the Yucca Mountain site and is charged with helping DOE decide whether to site a repository in the Nevada desert. The panel’s findings are used in the site selection process, and are independently reviewed by DOE’s Office of Federal U.S. Nuclear Waste Projects and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). It also serves the states in their efforts to negotiate agreements designed to address their concerns and interests.

The Blue Ribbon Commission in 1982 made recommendations for the management and disposal of used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste that the federal government used to create a nationwide nuclear waste management strategy document is a “statement of Administration policy” and guidance for DOE. To help implement this strategy, DOE created the Radioactive Waste Management and Disposal Program. The Program’s mission is to ensure long-term storage and disposal of used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. To meet this objective, the Program oversees the development and implementation of a national repository concept – site selection, environmental review, and public and tribal consultation. DOE’s approach includes a nation’s first-in-kind, technologically advanced repository that has a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to nuclear waste management.

Transportation

Transportation is a vital component of waste management, allowing DOE to transport waste from power plants to repositories. It is also the last opportunity for DOE to reduce long-term radiation exposure to the public. DOE is responsible for implementing the NWPA, which requires DOE to transport used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to repositories.

Transportation

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WASHINGTON STATE SEN. SAM HUNT BRINGS DEDICATION TO FEDERALISM, CIVILITY TO HIS ROLE AS CSG WEST CHAIR

Washington state Sen. Sam Hunt, who was elected to the Washington Senate in 2016 after serving in the state’s House of Representatives since 2001, will serve as 2017 chair of The Council of State Governments West.

Hunt said a healthy partnership with the federal government, one that protects the principles of federalism, is key to the Western states achieving their policy goals and addressing their constituents’ concerns.

“We are actively involved in efforts to work with the new administration,” he said. “This is just one example of leadership and coordination CSG and CSG West can play.”

CSG West joined the Western Governors’ Association, the Conference of Western Attorneys General, the Western Interstate Region, and the Pacific Northwest Economic Region in sending a list of “federalism principles” to the president and vice president, outlining their willingness to cooperate with the new administration.

“By operating as authentic collaborators in the development and execution of policy, the states, local governments and federal government can demonstrably improve their service to the public,” he said. “Our organizations pledge that we will act as conduits to provide notice of relevant federal action to our respective members so that they may provide this administration with input regarding such action.”

As the 2017 chair, Hunt will host the CSG West 70th Annual Meeting in his home state, which has not hosted a CSG West conference in more than 20 years.

“One goal is to expose attendees to Tacoma and the rest of the state,” said Hunt. “I hope that the innovative ideas presented by business, community and state leaders will spark imaginations that will continue to keep the West at the forefront of governance and leadership. And of course, there will be opportunities to see Washington innovations in action and to soak up the beauty of Washington state.”

Hunt’s experiences as a teacher and state worker have greatly influenced his legislative priorities, which include supporting public-sector employees and maintaining a strong workforce. As chair of the House State Government Committee for 11 years, Hunt is proud of his efforts to expand the electorate by making it easier to vote: establishing electronic voter registration and making the state’s elections all vote-by-mail.

In 2015, Hunt was one of the first two recipients of the National Conference of State Legislatures’ Gabrielle Giffords Award for Civility in State Legislatures, along with his Washington colleague, Rep. Hans Zeiger. When asked whether he had any advice for other legislators, Hunt replied, “The most important thing is that one keep his or her word. The whole legislative process is about trust. It’s all about dealing openly with one another, and being able to exchange views without fighting. Everyone is here to make the world a better place; they just have different views about how to get there.”

Hunt attended Washington State University, where he was active in student politics. After graduating and becoming a teacher, Hunt served for five years on the Pasco City Council. After moving to Olympia to work for the state, he served on the North Thurston School Board.

Hunt has long been an active member of CSG and CSG West. He graduated from two of the organizations’ leadership development programs, CSG West’s Western Legislative Academy in 2002 and CSG’s Toll Fellowship in 2005, and chaired CSG West’s Future of Western Legislatures Committee from 2011 to 2014.

“One of all the legislative-related organizations, I find CSG to be the best for Western legislators,” said Hunt. “Attending a meeting, apply to attend the Western Legislative Academy or its national counterpart, Toll Fellows. CSG West is truly a nonpartisan organization where solutions are more important than party labels.”
The Legislative Council on River Governance, or LCRG, is a cooperative association of legislators from the Columbia River basin states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington who meet annually to discuss common challenges and share ideas and effective policies and practices. These issues may include water quality and availability, power generation, environmental protection, tribal relations, fisheries and state-federal relations. The 2016-17 LCRG chair is Oregon state Rep. Cliff Bentz.

Western Legislative Academy
Nov. 29–Dec. 2 | Colorado Springs, Colorado
Each year CSG West brings together a distinguished national faculty to offer the West's premier training experience for Western state legislators in their first four years of service. The goals of the Western Legislative Academy, or WLA, are to help newer legislators become more effective and to build stronger state legislative institutions. To that end, a faculty of outstanding academics, corporate, military and public trainers work with a small class of lawmakers who come from each of our 13 Western states. Members of the academy are selected on the basis of their dedication to public service, desire to improve personal legislative effectiveness and commitment to the institution of the legislature. For more information or to apply for the academy, visit csgwest.org/legislativeacademy/WesternLegislativeAcademy.aspx.
As Board Chair, John Wetzel Committed to CSG Justice Center’s Data-Driven Progress

"When state leaders engage with us, the opportunity to have smart, wide-ranging discussions on criminal justice in a meaningful way is really exhilarating."

Pennsylvania Corrections Secretary John Wetzel, who is widely recognized as a thought leader in corrections, will serve as the 2017 chair of The Council of State Governments’ Justice Center Executive Committee, a board he has been committed to since his state’s Justice Reinvestment initiative launched in 2012.

“We actually shut down the construction of a new prison on the faith that Justice Reinvestment would deliver a population reduction in a system that was growing by 1,500 inmates a year,” Wetzel said. “So, my faith in the Justice Center paid off.”

Wetzel, appointed Pennsylvania corrections secretary in January 2011 and reappointed in January 2015, presided over the first prison population reduction in Pennsylvania in more than four decades. In addition, he oversaw the restructuring of both the community corrections and mental health systems and the re-engineering of internal processes to yield a more efficient program delivery.

Justice Reinvestment is a data-driven approach that many states are using to improve public safety, reduce corrections spending, and reinvest savings in strategies that decrease crime and recidivism rates. Shortly after Pennsylvania launched its program, Wetzel was invited to a CSG Justice Center board meeting.

Wetzel said he “was just blown away by the caliber of people around the table and the depth of conversation. And I’ve been hooked ever since.”

With nearly 30 years of experience in corrections, Wetzel has held positions including corrections officer, treatment counselor, warden and training academy director. As warden of the Franklin County Jail in Pennsylvania for nine years, beginning in January 2002, Wetzel was credited with leading an effort that resulted in the transformation of their correctional system. Under his leadership, Franklin County saw a 20 percent reduction in its jail population while the crime rate declined.

Before he became chair, Wetzel served as vice chair of the CSG Justice Center Executive Committee. “When state leaders engage with us, the opportunity to have smart, wide-ranging discussions on criminal justice in a meaningful way is really exhilarating,” Wetzel said. “And to see the discussions at the board level translate down to the excellent staff of the Justice Center, to really good, strong outcomes that make America safer and better—I mean, who wouldn’t want to have that experience?”

One of the biggest justice-related challenges facing state leaders today is result of a “24-hour news environment where everyone wants outcomes immediately,” Wetzel said.

“The reality is good public policy, especially in criminal justice, is based on data—data that’s analyzed, data that tells a story and that really builds consensus,” he said. “What I’m describing doesn’t lend itself to overnight answers.”

The CSG Justice Center is currently working on Justice Reinvestment-related policy changes in six states: Arkansas, Georgia, Massachusetts, Montana, North Dakota and Pennsylvania. And the Justice Center continues to implement policy changes in past Justice Reinvestment states such as Alabama and Nebraska.

“Re-entry was once an afterthought, dismissed in order to focus on protecting the safety of the public,” Wetzel said. “Now, corrections leaders and elected officials understand it’s an integral part of preserving public safety. But beyond that understanding, there’s far more we need to do to ensure that when someone leaves prison or jail, they don’t come back. That will continue to be a foundational part of our work this year.”

Wetzel said he’s confident the CSG Justice Center can continue to find solutions and make progress. “We have a forum to use data to have real discussions on real-world problems,” he said. “That leads to real-world solutions.”
PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

A Five-Level Risk and Needs System: Maximizing Assessment Results in Corrections through the Development of a Common Language
Released: January 2017

Reducing the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jail: Six Questions County Leaders Need to Ask
Released: January 2017

Critical Connections: Getting People Leaving Prison and Jail the Mental Health Care and Substance Use Treatment They Need
Released: January 2017

Mentoring as a Component of Reentry: Practical Considerations from the Field
Expected release: February 2017

Cognitive Behavioral Interventions: A Comprehensive Curriculum for People in the Criminal Justice System
Expected release: February 2017

Hiring People with Criminal Records: A Toolkit for Engaging Employers and the Business Community
Expected release: February 2017

Strengthening Correctional Culture: Eight Ways Corrections Leaders Can Support Their Staff to Reduce Recidivism
Expected release: April 2017

Demonstrating Impact: Measuring Program Performance
Expected release: April 2017

The Multi-State School Discipline Convening Report
Expected release: June 2017

The National Clean Slate Clearinghouse
Expected launch of full site: August 2017

INITIATIVES

Justice Reinvestment is a data-driven approach to helping states reduce corrections and related criminal justice spending and reinvest a portion of savings in strategies that can help reduce recidivism and increase public safety.

Stepping Up is a national initiative to help advance counties’ efforts to reduce the prevalence of adults with mental illnesses in local jails. Since its launch in 2015 by The CSG Justice Center, the National Association of Counties, and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, more than 300 counties have signed on to the Stepping Up initiative.

The County Justice and Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Project uses qualitative and quantitative research to improve outcomes for people with mental illnesses in county justice systems throughout the country.

The Reentry and Employment Project is focused on uniting business leaders, policymakers, and practitioners from the corrections and workforce development fields to improve reentry and employment outcomes for people returning to their communities after incarceration.

The Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative is a program that provides intensive technical assistance to states and local jurisdictions to develop system-wide plans to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes for youth in the justice system.

The School Discipline Project is an ongoing effort to help policymakers and education leaders reduce suspensions and expulsions while improving learning environments, school safety and student outcomes.

Technical Assistance—The CSG Justice Center provides ongoing training and technical assistance through the National Reentry Resource Center to state and local juvenile justice systems that receive grant funding through the Second Chance Act and the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, as well as to the broader field.

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Navigating federal agencies can be a daunting task ...

The federal government is the nation’s single largest employer, with a budget of nearly $4 trillion and more than 2 million civil servants performing missions as diverse as providing for the national defense and combating cancer. Accordingly, it may be difficult to determine who to approach in order to engage in a productive dialogue on key issues.

This uncertainty may be heightened during a presidential transition. An incoming president is responsible for making more than 4,000 appointments, and key leadership positions are often left unfilled. Fortunately, however, each federal agency contains an intergovernmental affairs liaison office, which serves as a gatekeeper to the federal policymaking process and can be a key resource for assisting states in their communication with the federal government.

Intergovernmental affairs liaisons are an agency’s principal point of contact for communications with state and local officials. They interact with governors, state legislators, county officials and mayors on a daily basis and facilitate effective communications between governmental offices, exchange information with states and localities, and solicit feedback on federal initiatives and policy matters.

These liaison offices are essential in promoting constructive dialogue and partnerships across governments. They also play a key role in the policy process by ensuring issues are coordinated with the appropriate personnel with authority over the matter. It is important for state officials to foster strong, productive relationships with these liaison offices, as regular communications can form the cornerstone of an effective federal-state relationship.

CSG WASHINGTON, D.C., OFFICE

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CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

Office of House Speaker
Paul Ryan 202.225.0600

Office of House Minority Leader
Nancy Pelosi 202.225.0100

Office of Senate Majority Leader
Mitch McConnell 202.224.2541

Office of Senate Minority Leader
Charles Schumer 202.224.6542
CSG’S WASHINGTON, D.C., OFFICE serves as a resource to help facilitate effective communications between state policymakers and federal intergovernmental affairs liaisons. Here you will find contact information for intergovernmental affairs liaison offices in key federal agencies.

For more information on how state officials can better navigate the complex maze of the federal government, please contact us at 202.624.5460.

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What should newly-elected legislators arriving in state capitols for the 2017 session expect in their first year of legislative service?

Godfrey: “I just happened to do freshman orientation for the last 20 years. … We spend an entire day playing legislature, so they have an idea what the environment is going to be like, but also where the information is going to be coming from, the kind of things they’re going to have to digest and learn quickly. They usually come away feeling overwhelmed, but also quite happy with that kind of exposure.”

Davis: “What I would hope every one of them would understand is that no single party fully defines anyone on any legislative floor. We’re all compelled in most states to crowd under one of two political umbrellas, but not all Democrats think alike, and not all Republicans think alike. But it’s the collective wisdom that you’re looking for, not a single legislator’s opinion. … Thomas Jefferson reminded us that not every difference of opinion is a difference of principle.”

Was there a piece of advice you received early on in your legislative career that was particularly helpful to you?

Davis: “The best advice I can quickly recall … is that your first year is really a learning year, and you don’t really learn if your mouth is open a lot. Now, don’t be mute. Speak up. But you will learn a lot about process, about how to create public policy. … If you’ll sit and listen a lot that first year, you’ll learn a lot and you’ll come out a stronger legislator.”

Godfrey: “The most important piece of information that I got and that I continue to share is don’t make any promises you can’t keep. … The role of legislatures is to slow thinking down. We’re supposed to be deliberative bodies. … Take your time, think about it. Listen—and usually there’s more than two sides to an issue—before you make a commitment.”

We are meeting in historic Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Have the principles and values that make a good legislator changed over the years since our founding?

Godfrey: “We spend much more time legislating than those earliest legislators did, and we have the pressures that technology bring of instant information and the pressure to make a decision right away. … I think that’s a big difference in the 200 some odd years.”

Davis: “We encourage people to pick apart issues; don’t pick apart people. And, yet, still whether it be on the front page of the newspaper or other venues, we forget that principle and start going after individuals instead of issues. But I do think we are more similar than dissimilar. … Sometimes, in our desire to be loyal to our political caucuses, we’re not as loyal as we should be to the needs of our citizenry. … I get the sense that it wasn’t quite that way back then.”
How much of the work of state legislatures occurs within the committee context. What are the characteristics of a good committee member?

**Godfrey:** “Whether you’re a freshman or a veteran, you need to attend those (committee) public hearings and hear what the story is on any given issue and then be able to make a decision on it. … Then, having a real discussion—talk to your colleagues on the committee—get it worked out well in advance. … That winnowing process is important, so participate!”

**Davis:** “If you vote for the bill in committee then you should vote for the bill on the floor. … If you send the bill to the floor, and in the interim you gather new information or your point of view changes, you need to tell that chairman that your opinion has changed. … We rely on you; we have to trust the committee system.”

Can you tell me about a time when cooperation and compromise within a committee helped you achieve a goal you might not have otherwise accomplished?

**Godfrey:** “It happens often on the committee level. You’re really banging out the substance of bills and it’s good when someone raises an issue (with a bill). … We can fix it much more easily at the committee level than in the more formal floor debates. It’s essential to the committee’s mission.”

**Davis:** “A good committee meeting is one where the committee members are feeding off of each other—not to tear down a witness, but to understand an issue. If everybody would just listen to each other, regardless of the labels we have after our names on Election Day, you’ll learn a lot from each other. … I’ve learned by listening. Even now, I learn by listening.”

What do you have any tips for new legislators in mastering parliamentary procedure?

**Davis:** “The best advice I would give any new legislator is don’t worry about it. To be an effective legislator, if you’ll just sit and watch the process for a period of time, you’ll pick up all of the skills you’ll really need to do your job. … Don’t get too wrapped around the axle.”

**Godfrey:** “I am the parliamentarian (in the Connecticut House). … Bart’s absolutely right. Make a motion for the passage of the bill and don’t worry about the other stuff; I’ll take care of it from the chair, if I have to. … Understand the principles … but don’t get hung up on the other 472 pages of the Mason’s (Manual of Legislative Procedure).”

What motivates you in the morning?

**Godfrey:** “I love to get up every morning and go to work still. Yes, it’s interesting topics, it’s cutting edge—culturally, legally and in every other way. But I look forward to getting into the building and working with the people who are there as we share the common interests, we have senses of humor, we know how to get things done, we know how to build coalitions around issues, and that just makes it fun.”

**Davis:** “My wife and I, we have six children. All of our married children and grandchildren live in Idaho. I genuinely care about their future. … What drives me today probably isn’t what drove me when I first showed up, but today for me it’s the concern for the folks who are my family. … These are my friends and neighbors I represent.”

How do you balance it all—legislating, working and personal/family relationships?

**Davis:** “Long days, long weekends, and you have a lot of help. People are more than willing to help where they can. As a lawyer, I have judges who are as accommodating as they can be without adversely impacting the rights of the other side. … If you send the bill to the floor, and in the interim you gather new information or your point of view changes, you need to tell that chairman that your opinion has changed. … We rely on you; we have to trust the committee system.”

What drives you to continue serving as a legislator? What motivates you in the morning?

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What are some resources that newly elected state legislators should consider to help them in their new roles?

**Godfrey:** “In Connecticut, it’s the nonpartisan staff if they are looking for information. You need to ask for that preliminary information so you know which questions to ask. We’ve guided them to places like CSG’s Knowledge Center, which gives a nice background view of a lot of the very big issues that are being talked about in all of the states.”

**Davis:** “States talking to each other is healthy. The Council of State Governments is a classic example where legislators from all over the country can get together and learn about an issue, learn how states are handling it, saying to themselves … ‘I want to bring it home to my state.’ … States, being the laboratories of democracy, need to talk to each other and learn what’s going on inside each of their labs.”
The separation of powers among the three branches of government is fundamental to the American system of governance—a notion cited by some of the nation’s Founding Fathers as necessary to avoiding tyranny—yet, the development and implementation of policy often requires the efforts of all three. When a lack of understanding and trust exists among state officials across the branches, state policy and programs can pay the price.

As the only organization representing all three branches of state government, CSG, in 2005, established an Interbranch Awareness Working Group, which later became the Interbranch Affairs Committee, that seeks to foster collaboration and understanding among and between the branches of state government.

We asked the 2017 CSG Interbranch Affairs Committee co-chairs why interbranch cooperation is so important and how the states are helping to promote more multibranch approaches to public policy. Here’s what they had to say.

“Is a certain level of interbranch awareness and cooperation important for state policymaking?”

MOWER
“The more we understand and appreciate the perspectives of others—whether it is of individuals or other branches of government—the better we can carry out our own duties and responsibilities. This is true not just in state government, but in all aspects of life. As author Stephen R. Covey said, ‘Seek first to understand and then to be understood.’”

MINTON
“My tenure as chief justice of Kentucky has taught me that interbranch collaboration is essential to the efficient and effective operation of state government. Each branch is dependent upon the others to advance its interests and fulfill its responsibilities. Our citizens do not benefit when we operate in silos. … Our courts would not be able to protect neglected children without the assistance of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. And the Department of Corrections would find its prisons overpopulated without the cooperation of judges and pretrial officers. Similarly, a collaborative relationship with the legislative branch is necessary to ensure … funding for court programs.”

AKBARI
“If one were to explain policymaking to a class of students, the discussion would be akin to building a house—layer upon layer. First, the foundation is laid, which represents the seed of the policy that will require the input, development and cooperation of both members and staff in the legislative branch. It is an absolute certainty that the administration will accept, modify or deny the policy based on budgetary restrictions, history or positioning. A challenge to the policy could very well require a legal opinion.

Interbranch cooperation … is a process that is consuming yet necessary. The results, however, benefit the people, and that is the ultimate goal.”
2 What is at stake when there is a lack of understanding between the branches?

**MOWER**
“A lack of understanding between the principals of each of the branches leads to state government inefficiency and confusion at best and a disregard for constitutional outlined duties with a slide toward chaos and tyranny at its worst.”

**MINTON**
“Without a proper appreciation for the responsibilities and limitations of each branch, government leaders lack sufficient knowledge to successfully exercise their own authority.”

**AKBARI**
“Simply put, a lack of understanding among the branches results in one of two things: failed legislation or ineffective legislation.”

3 What are some benefits of greater cooperation among the three branches?

**MOWER**
“State governments that put a priority on cooperation and consistency tend to fare better over time and their citizens are well served. One of the best things that a state can provide is certainty. Certainty that the courts will rule in a fair and impartial manner; that the legislative process will be open, transparent and consistent; and that the executive branch will follow the rule of law in interpreting and carrying out legislative and judicial directives while at the same time providing leadership and vision to an entire state.”

**MINTON**
“Cooperation and understanding among the three branches leads to a greater appreciation of the unique jobs we each have to do. Getting to know our counterparts on an individual basis also provides for an easier and more natural working relationship, which can lead to greater opportunities for collaboration.”

**AKBARI**
“Without a doubt, the benefits of interbranch cooperation and working together lie in stronger, more effective legislation.”

4 Can you share an example of how your state is improving interbranch relations?

**MOWER**
“One practice of Utah governors and leaders of the Utah Legislature over the years that has helped to increase understanding and enhance collegiality is standing meetings set in advance. These are held with the governor and the lieutenant governor and the leadership of the majority and minority parties and key staff each week throughout the legislative sessions. These meetings serve as a good time to address concerns and explore possible ways to resolve several complex issues or to at least identify which participants should be working on possible solutions.”

**MINTON**
“Over time, we have found places where the work of our branches intersect and their roles become intertwined. For the judicial branch, this is most pronounced in matters involving families and juveniles. These cases necessarily involve the courts and several executive branch agencies, including the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Education. Several years ago, leaders from each of these groups began meeting to identify and address these points of intersection. We continue to meet regularly and have found these collaborative efforts to be particularly meaningful for addressing the significant impact that the opioid epidemic is having on Kentucky’s families and children.”

**AKBARI**
“Representatives of (Tennessee) state departments, the governor’s staff, the attorney general’s staff and the Administrative Office of the Courts have worked together for a more efficient flow of the legislative process. We continue to improve on our communication and interworking.”

5 As the nation’s only organization serving all three branches of state government, how can CSG help move the needle forward in this area?

**MOWER**
“Oftentimes, there is a tendency to see the perspective coming only from the top of one’s silo. CSG helps participants to gain the perspective that comes from another’s position.”

**MINTON**
“CSG provides a forum for interbranch collaboration that no other national organization offers. The Henry Toll Fellowship is just one of the many unique opportunities presented by CSG. … As one of the few judicial branch participants in the program, I learned to work with representatives from the legislative and executive branches on the common issues facing our branches. And I realized there are opportunities to change the way the judiciary is perceived and to educate the other branches on the work we do.”

**AKBARI**
“CSG does an excellent job at present. Its Capitol Ideas publication does a remarkable job, as well as the work of its Southern Legislative Conference.”
Your CSG Roadmap

With each new season comes new challenges, new opportunities and new responsibilities for state officials. Luckily, CSG is here to help policymakers navigate the busy road ahead. Through CSG’s events, trainings and resource publications, our mission is to assist state leaders in delivering excellence in state government. Here’s a look at what we have in store for 2017.

FEB
- Application deadline for CSG Midwest/Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC) Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD)
- Spring deadlines for CSG’s national and regional leadership training programs are fast approaching. Make sure you visit your regional CSG website to find deadlines and application requirements for regional programs, and visit csg.org/tolls for details on the Henry Toll Fellowship, CSG’s national leadership training program.

APR 5
- April 5: Application deadline for CSG Midwest/Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC) Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD)

APR 20-23
- April 20–23: CSG Spring Business Meeting, Lexington, Kentucky
- Make sure you are receiving CSG newsletters and publications CSG offers a variety of informational resources straight to your inbox. Research briefs, federal updates, policy and regional-specific newsletters, and comparative data reports are a few of the materials available to you. Visit csg.org or contact your regional office for more information.

MAY 15
- April 23: Application deadline for the CSG Henry Toll Fellowship
- Register for CSG’s regional meeting Regional meetings offer a great opportunity to meet with your peers on specific issues unique to your state’s region. For more information on registration, locations and agendas, visit csg.org/regionalmeetings.

JUN 12-14
- June 12–14: The CSG 2017 Policy Academy series kicks off!

APR 28
- April 28: Application deadline for the CSG West Western Legislative Academy (WLA)

MAY 15
- May 15: Application deadline for the CSG East/ Eastern Regional Conference (ERC) Eastern Leadership Academy (ELA)

APR 23
- April 23: Application deadline for the CSG Henry Toll Fellowship

SPRING

Register for the CSG Spring Business Meeting
Members of CSG’s Shared State Legislation Committee and Leadership Council can register at csg.org/springmeeting.

Submit applications for CSG’s leadership development programs
Spring deadlines for CSG’s national and regional leadership training programs are fast approaching. Make sure you visit your regional CSG website to find deadlines and application requirements for regional programs, and visit csg.org/tolls for details on the Henry Toll Fellowship, CSG’s national leadership training program.

APR
- April 5
- April 23
- April 28

WINTER

Check your mail boxes and inboxes CSG kicks off the new year with a special issue of Capitol Ideas magazine and its weekly e-newsletter, The Current State. View past issues online at csg.org/capitolideas.

Look for CSG in your state capitol Our regional staff begin traveling to state capitols to answer questions about CSG and how we can support state leaders. Contact your regional office for specific dates and times.

Register for CSG eCademy webinar sessions CSG eCademy begins another year of webcasts on the latest policy issues at no cost. View the full schedule at csg.org/ecademy.

Review the CSG national Policy Academy schedule Beginning in June, CSG Policy Academy programs will provide state leaders customized training and a “deeper dig” on critical policy topics facing the states. Space is limited! A complete calendar is available at csg.org/policyacademies.

With each new season comes new challenges, new opportunities and new responsibilities for state officials. Luckily, CSG is here to help policymakers navigate the busy road ahead. Through CSG’s events, trainings and resource publications, our mission is to assist state leaders in delivering excellence in state government. Here’s a look at what we have in store for 2017.
July 9–12: CSG Midwest/MLC Annual Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa

July 28: Application deadline for CSG South/Southern Legislative Conference (SLC) Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills (CALS)

July 29–Aug. 2: CSG South/SLC Annual Meeting, Biloxi, Mississippi

Get your copy of The Book of the States!
The Book of the States has been the reference tool of choice for states since 1935, providing relevant, accurate and timely information, answers and comparisons for all 56 states, commonwealths and territories of the United States. Available online at csg.org/bos or in hard copy by contacting CSG directly.

Aug. 11–15: CSG Midwest/MLC Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD), Minneapolis, Minnesota

Aug. 13–16: CSG East/ERC Annual Meeting, Uncasville, Connecticut

Aug. 15–19: CSG West Annual Meeting, Tacoma, Washington

Aug. 25–30: CSG Henry Toll Fellowship, Lexington, Kentucky


Register for the CSG 2017 National Conference
Mark your calendar and plan to join state leaders from across the country at the CSG 2017 National Conference in December. For more information visit csg.org/2017nationalconference.

Oct. 14–18: CSG South/SLC Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills (CALS), Little Rock, Arkansas

Review the agenda for the CSG 2017 Interstate Compacts Summit
The National Center for Interstate Compacts is a policy program developed by CSG to assist states in developing interstate compacts. For more information visit csg.org/ncic.

Nov. 29–Dec. 2: CSG West Western Legislative Academy (WLA), Colorado Springs, Colorado

Dec. 14–16: CSG 2017 Interstate Compacts Summit, Las Vegas, Nevada
Ask anyone what a contract is and they likely will tell you.
But ask what an interstate compact is, and it may be a different story.

But that’s starting to change, said compact experts and administrators who gathered at the National Center for Interstate Compacts’ Summit of the States on Interstate Collaboration, Dec. 12–13 in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.

According to Rick Masters, an attorney who specializes in interstate compacts and who serves as special counsel to CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts, compacts are simply contracts between states to solve interstate challenges.

It’s a solution that has its origins in the U.S. Constitution itself, which provides in Article I, Section 10 that, “No state shall, without the consent of Congress … enter into any agreement or compact with another state.”

Masters said the development of the Compacts Clause was intended by the founding fathers to limit the ability of states to work together to challenge the fledgling federal-style government. “While the Compact Clause was written in the negative,” he said, “it restores the states to the sovereignty that they had but for the limitations placed on the states by the Constitution.”

And for much of the nation’s history, compacts remained a little-used tool for states to solve interstate issues. But increasingly states are turning to compacts as a mechanism to solve multistate, even national, issues—something The Council of State Governments’ National Center for Interstate Compacts, or NCIC, has helped to foster since 2004.

The Evolving Use of Compacts

From their humble beginnings as a means to resolve boundary disputes between the original colonies, interstate compacts are now in place to solve such complex issues as the interstate transfer and supervision of adults and juveniles on probation or parole, the interstate placement of children through adoption, emergency management and response efforts, and passenger rail improvements.

“We have more and more compacts and the subject matter of these compacts has expanded,” said Ann Bowman, professor at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University and one of the few researchers across the country who studies interstate compacts. “If you can get more and more states to agree, you’re moving into national policy without getting the federal government involved.”

According to NCIC Director Colmon Eldridge, there are more than 200 state-to-state, regional and national compacts in existence today, with most states belonging to on average a dozen compacts.

Attendees at the Summit of the States on Interstate Collaboration had the opportunity to hear from representatives of several compacts, who shared lessons learned at various stages of the process.

The Education Commission of the States, the operating body of the Compact for Education, was established in the mid-1960s to help states collaborate to strengthen education policy at the state level.

“We’re a 50-year-old interstate compact. We represent all the states,” said Matt Jordan, director of strategic initiatives for the Education Commission of the States.

The commission works to address complex issues in education policy by serving as a conduit to share resources and expertise with state education policymakers in the legislative and executive branches on issues such as teacher recruitment and retention, school choice, accountability, and financial aid and higher education.

“Our real value is … good, timely information, but more importantly (states) learning from each other,” Jordan said.
The power of learning from one another extends to compacts themselves. Take, for example, the Nurse Licensure Compact, administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, which is currently working to replace its existing compact with a revised version, based on lessons learned along its own journey and from other compacts, as well.

“Isn’t it often you see a compact being replaced and improved,” said Jim Puente, director of the Nurse Licensure Compact, “but that’s precisely what we’re doing.”

“The very nature of an interstate compact mechanism to meet the needs of the American people.”

Colmon Elridge, director National Center for Interstate Compacts

New Frontiers
Compacts, such as the Nurse Licensure Compact, represent a new frontier in the compacts world, according to Elridge.

“The push toward licensure portability and license reciprocity represents a new chapter in consumer-focused care as well as creates new opportunities for practitioners in a host of disciplines,” said Elridge. “In an era where federal decision-making is at a standstill, CSG is pleased to partner with health care providers, state policy and lawmakers, and others … using the interstate compact mechanism to meet the needs of the American people.”

Other occupational compacts include the EMS Licensing Compact, Medical Licensing Compact, and the Physical Therapy and Telepsychology Licensing Compacts, which are being assisted by the NCIC.

Jeff Litwak, adjunct professor at Lewis and Clark Law School in Oregon and counsel to the Columbia River Gorge Compact Commission, co-authored with Masters the second edition of The Evolving Use and Changing Role of Interstate Compacts, published in 2016, which explores emerging opportunities and challenges facing the compacts community.

According to Litwak and Masters, among the problems facing a number of compacts is a lack of clarity in their development. “Vagueness in compacts is a very bad idea,” said Masters, because it can result in disputes and litigation.

A lack of case law pertaining to compacts only compounds this problem. “Most compacts don’t have a body of law big enough for courts to know what the obligation is,” said Litwak. “What we’re seeing is that the U.S. Supreme Court is being much more focused on applying express terms to compact cases.”

National Challenges, State Solutions
For state policymakers, interstate compacts represent a mechanism that provides state, rather than federal, solutions to regional or even national problems.

“It’s simply a way for states to cooperate on an issue that crosses state lines without waiting for the federal government to jump in,” North Dakota state Rep. Kim Koppelman told attendees at the summit.

Bowman agreed, suggesting the notion of states as “laboratories of democracy” is often enhanced when they work together through compacts.

“Innovation works individually,” Bowman said, “but it also acts collectively.”

The original compact, which provides reciprocity for the recognition of nursing licenses among its 25 member states, was first implemented in 2000. When the drafting of the compact was underway in the 1990s, very few states required criminal background checks for nurses, said Puente, and the compact established reciprocity without a requirement for background checks of nurses. Today, all but 10 states require criminal background checks, creating a serious hole in the compact’s framework, he said.

“The very nature of an interstate compact relies on uniformity,” said Puente. “You can’t have every state doing its own thing.”

In revising the compact, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing has solicited input from its entire membership—not just the current compact member states—and has drawn on lessons learned from other compacts to draft what Puente called a “platinum model” for the revised Nurse Licensure Compact.
Sure, you know the high quality of CSG.org, where you can find current and archived issues of *Capitol Ideas*, the latest policy briefs and announcements of upcoming events. But did you know how easy it is to connect with CSG through social media?

Here are just a few ways to get social with CSG:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Platform</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Like The Council of State Governments’ Facebook page to get announcements and top news from the states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>Follow @CSGovts on Twitter for instant, up-to-the-tweet access to what’s happening in state governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Link with The Council of State Governments on LinkedIn for organizational news and to connect with a network of the nation’s top state officials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>Tune into CSG’s YouTube channel, CSGovts, to view webinars and videos from CSG’s national conferences. Don’t worry if you missed it the first time—it’s all right here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSG eCademy</td>
<td>Tune in to CSG eCademy webcasts, where you’ll hear from experts across the country on the high priority issues facing the states. Find upcoming webinar announcements on the CSG eCademy page. Miss a webinar? Not to worry! They’re always available in the CSG Knowledge Center and on our YouTube channel, CSGovts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitol Comments</td>
<td>Follow our blog, Capitol Comments, at the CSG Knowledge Center for insights and analysis of state government news. Like what you’re reading? Share it with your friends on your social media page.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SPECIAL ISSUE | CAPITOL IDEAS
THE CSG FAMILY TREE

AFFILIATES

CSG is often called a family of state officials, and we are honored to count state legislators, judges and agency directors among our network of members. But our family tree doesn’t end there. Through affiliation with CSG, 10 national organizations of state leaders—from probation and parole officials to state trade directors—share ideas and combine efforts to accomplish mutual goals. Affiliates contribute specialized expertise, information, resources and issues to the overall mission of CSG, and in turn, CSG offers a mechanism by which affiliates may tap into CSG’s products and services, and a forum for bringing issues to a broader, collective audience of state leaders.

BIG 7

The Council of State Governments is also a proud member of a network of nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations that represent state and local governments, known as the Big 7. In addition to CSG, the group is comprised of the following organizations.

» International City-County Management Association (ICMA)
» National Association of Counties (NACo)
» National League of Cities (NLC)
» National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
» National Governors Association (NGA)
» U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM)

Together, these organizations advocate for state and local governments at the federal level, speaking with a collective voice to strengthen the critical role of states and municipalities in our federalist system of governance and to advance solutions to the challenges we share.
Whether a first-time elected official or a veteran policymaker, all members of The Council of State Governments share in common a distinguishing characteristic. By their very nature, state elected and appointed officials have demonstrated leadership—in their professions, in their communities, in their aims to strengthen their states.

CSG is made of leaders.

But leadership is a quality that must be cultivated continually—tended to and tested in an effort not only to maintain it, but to make it grow. And that’s part of what distinguishes CSG.

CSG is committed to helping leaders grow. Here are a few opportunities we hope you’ll consider to grow as a leader through CSG.

**CSG HENRY TOLL FELLOWSHIP**

Aug. 25–30, 2017 | Lexington, Kentucky  
APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 23, 2017

Each year, the CSG Henry Toll Fellowship, named in honor of CSG founder Henry Wolcott Toll, brings together a group of rising state leaders to Lexington, Kentucky, for an intense week of leadership training. Participants are encouraged to both evaluate and adapt the way they interact with each other and the world around them—setting aside titles, politics and party lines. Designed to help state officials from all three branches take an introspective look at how they view themselves as public servants, colleagues and community members, the program provides a unique experience unlike any other in the nation.

The CSG Henry Toll Fellowship targets outstanding rising state government officials from all three branches of government. Elected, appointed and merit officials may all apply. The Toll Fellowship is designed as a “graduate” level program complementing leadership development programs offered by CSG’s regional offices. It is, therefore, suggested but not required that applicants first complete their respective regional program.

The list of Toll Fellow alumni is long and distinguished. Past Tolls have achieved great success including serving as governors, secretaries of state, chief justices, speakers and in the U.S. Congress.

For more information and to apply for the CSG Toll Fellowship, contact tolls@csg.org or visit csg.org/tolls.
CSG REGIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

CSG EAST/EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

EASTERN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY


APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2017

Named for Pennsylvania state Sen. Robert J. Thompson—a beloved state and local government leader whose 30-year career was a model of personal and professional integrity, fairness, optimism and humility—the Robert J. Thompson Eastern Leadership Academy, or ELA, annually brings together as many as 30 state and provincial officials from the 18 Eastern region member jurisdictions. This select group of state officials, from all three branches of government, receives training to enhance their leadership and communication skills from a variety of experts in media, education and government.

Held in partnership with the Fels Institute of Government, ELA is a unique opportunity to learn with the best and the brightest from across the region.

The ELA is designed for legislators, as well as legislative staff, executive branch and judicial branch officials, primarily in the early-mid stages of their government careers.

For more information and to apply, please visit csg-erc.org/leadership-academy/.

CSG MIDWEST/MIDWESTERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

BOWHAY INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, OR BILLD

Aug. 11–15, 2017 | Minneapolis, Minnesota

APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 5, 2017

Each summer, 37 lawmakers from the 11 member states of CSG Midwest and its affiliate members gather for a unique five-day educational experience, the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development, or BILLD. Named in honor of the first director of CSG Midwest, the late James Bowhay, the Bowhay Institute is the only leadership training program designed exclusively for Midwestern legislators. BILLD helps newer legislators develop the skills necessary to become effective leaders, informed decision-makers and astute policy analysts. The program offers a unique opportunity for lawmakers to improve their leadership skills and explore the issues of the day with nationally renowned scholars, professional development experts, and legislative leaders and colleagues from across the region.

In addition to its focus on leadership training, covering topics such as conflict resolution and negotiation, BILLD includes policy sessions on issues ranging from education and corrections to health care and economic development.

The BILLD program is conducted by CSG’s Midwestern Office in cooperation with The Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Fellowships are awarded on a competitive, nonpartisan basis by a steering committee of legislators from the region.

For more information and to apply, please visit csgmidwest.org/BILLD.

CSG SOUTH/SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS, OR CALS

Oct. 14–18, 2017 | Little Rock, Arkansas

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JULY 28, 2017

The Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills, or CALS, seeks to create skilled, educated and confident state leaders by developing and enhancing core competencies that play a vital role in the service of public officials, in both professional and personal arenas. CALS prepares emerging and mid-career legislative, executive and judicial branch state leaders for their roles in state government. Through activities and instruction focusing on the leadership program’s four central components—communication, conflict resolution, consensus building and critical decision-making—CALS scholars have an opportunity to reinforce and refine these crucial skills.

To be considered for a scholarship to attend the 2017 CALS program, candidates must submit:

- An application form
- A cover letter expressing why the applicant should be considered as a candidate for the CALS program
- Two letters of recommendation from state government colleagues
- A biographical summary

For more information and to apply for the CALS leadership program, please visit slcatlanta.org/CALS.

CSG WEST

WESTERN LEGISLATIVE ACADEMY


APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 2017

Each year CSG West brings together a distinguished national faculty to offer the West’s premier training experience for Western state legislators in their first four years of service. The goals of the Western Legislative Academy, or WLA, are to help newer legislators become more effective and to build stronger state legislative institutions. To that end, a faculty of outstanding academics, corporate, military and public trainers work with a small class of lawmakers who come from each of our 13 Western states. Members of the academy are selected on the basis of their dedication to public service, desire to improve personal legislative effectiveness and commitment to the institution of the legislature.

The WLA reinforces CSG West’s mission to provide opportunities for Western state legislators to share good ideas across state borders.

For more information and to apply for the WLA program, please visit csgwest.org/legislativeacademy/WesternLegislativeAcademy.
CSG Policy Academies provide state leaders customized training and a “deeper dig” on critical policy topics facing the states. If you are interested in attending, please visit [csg.org/PolicyAcademies](http://csg.org/PolicyAcademies) for more information. Space for each academy is limited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous and Connected Vehicles: What’s Next for the Industry &amp; State Policymakers</td>
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<td>June 12–14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicaid, 101</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>June 28–30</td>
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<td>Cybersecurity and Privacy</td>
<td>Seattle, Washington, or Palo Alto, California</td>
<td>Aug. 21–23</td>
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<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>Sept. 13–15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Pensions and Retirement Security</td>
<td>Lexington, Kentucky</td>
<td>Oct. 4–6</td>
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<td>Workforce Investment: Funding and Trends</td>
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In 2015, 12.7 percent of U.S. households were food insecure, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That represents 15.8 million households or 42.2 million people—including 6.4 million children—who lacked consistent access to adequate food that year.

Since 2011, members of The Council of State Governments, in partnership with Outreach Inc., have worked to reduce food insecurity in the states through the CSG Campaign Against Hunger food packaging events at CSG regional annual meetings and the CSG National Conference. At the 2016 CSG National Conference in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, CSG members turned out to package more than 36,000 meals for donation to the Virginia Peninsula Food Bank.

CSG thanks the following individuals who teamed up with us in the fight against hunger in Virginia!
Save the Dates!

CSG NATIONAL & REGIONAL MEETINGS

CSG 2017 NATIONAL CONFERENCE
Las VEGAS
DEC. 14–16
Mandalay Bay Convention Center

Registration is now open! www.csg.org/2017NationalConference