

Washington State Sen. Sam Hunt Brings Dedication to Federalism, Civility to his Role as CSG West Chair



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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.

“Of all the legislative-related organizations, I find CSG to be the best for Western legislators,” said Hunt. “Attend 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.”

2017 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Border Legislative Academy
June 1–3 | La Jolla, California



CSG West 70th Annual Meeting
Aug. 15–19 | Tacoma, Washington

Leaders from across the West will convene in Tacoma to learn from experts, and share experiences and insights on policy issues relevant to the Western region, and nation, during the 70th CSG West Annual Meeting. Washington is a wonderful place to live and conduct business. Along with unparalleled scenic beauty, plentiful outdoor recreation, and vibrant cultural landscape, Washington is a global leader in technology, aerospace and green energy. It is the home of Microsoft, Amazon, Boeing, Costco and other cutting-edge companies that are leading innovators.

Legislative Council on River Governance
Summer/Fall | Oregon

The Legislative Council on River Governance is a cooperative association of legislators from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington who meet to discuss common interests and challenges along the Columbia River basin.

Legislative Service Agency & Research Directors Training Seminar

Summer/Fall | Anchorage, Alaska

The Legislative Service Agency/Research Directors Committee is a core CSG West program. Made up of the nonpartisan legislative staff directors of the West, the committee is dedicated to finding ways to deliver the best possible customer service to lawmakers in a positive and professional workplace environment. Western staff leaders convene each year for a training and professional development seminar.

EVENTS CONTINUED



Border Legislative Conference

Date and Location to be Announced

Through promotion of innovation and collaboration in key policy areas relevant to the region, the Border Legislative Conference has been the premier facilitator for binational state dialogue between legislators of the 10 U.S.-Mexico border states since 2002. The BLC fosters the development of shared solutions along the border region through joint consideration of common challenges and exchange of information.

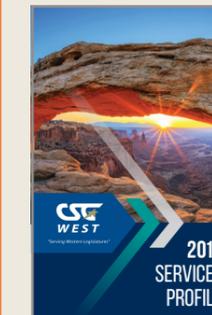


Western Legislative Academy

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.

PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES



Publications
2015–16 Biannual Report
Expected Release:
January 2017



Biweekly e-newsletter
Regional Roundup
csgwest.org/publications/newsletters.aspx

INITIATIVES



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.

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