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Ebb of the Flow
Drought, Climate Change, Population Growth
Contribute to Dwindling Water Supplies
By Mary Branham Dusenberry

2008 Toll Fellows
Meet the State Officials in This Year’s Program

Rethinking Death
States Form Commissions to Study Capital Punishment
By Jennifer Horne Boyter

Safe & Secure?
States Develop Innovative Programs to Address Homeland Security Needs
By Sujit M. CanagaRetna and Jeremy L. Williams
The specter of climate change and growing populations are adding to states’ concerns about having enough water in the future. Read about the actions some states are taking to deal with a potential water deficit on page 11, and learn more about conservation and other efforts at Capitol Comments.

States across the country are re-evaluating their laws on capital punishment. Read more about their actions in the story on page 28. Check Capitol Comments for information about new requirements on audiotaping or videotaping interrogations in death penalty cases.


To find the answer, log onto CSG’s Web site at www.csg.org!
Despite increased attention and scrutiny, many states continue to struggle with growing commitments in their underfunded state pension plans, which nationwide amount to $361 billion and growing. With payments clearly surpassing receipts, mainly due to health care expenditures, and with state elderly populations outgrowing other demographic groups nearly 4-to-1, states are increasingly shouldering an untenable responsibility.

According to the Pew Center on the States, state pension plan and health care payouts will approach $2.75 trillion over the next 30 years. State leaders are questioning the viability of such pension and health care plans, considering alternative offerings and pondering how to sell the continuation of such efforts to taxpayers.

To help state officials address the challenges of retirement systems, CSG will convene a special daylong forum in conjunction with its 2008 Annual Conference in Omaha, Neb. Join state officials, researchers and experts from the financial sector in this interactive discussion to foster a better understanding of the multidimensional problems, as well as real-world and salable solutions for helping your state weather this coming storm.

Watch for more information about this pension policy forum in State News, or visit www.csg.org to register for the conference.

Mark Shields Will Keynote Awards Luncheon

Nationally known columnist and commentator Mark Shields will be the keynote speaker at the CSG annual awards luncheon Dec. 6 in Omaha, as a part of CSG’s annual meeting.

Shields is best known for his work as moderator on CNN’s “Capital Gang,” where he debated policy issues with Robert Novak, Al Hunt, Kate O’Beirne and Margaret Carlson.

Since 1979, Shields has written his column on national politics for The Washington Post. His column is syndicated nationally.

Shields’ book about the 1984 presidential campaign, On the Campaign Trail, has been praised as funny, irreverent and insightful. As one reviewer wrote, “Mark Shields is the wittiest political analyst around, and he is frequently the most trenchant, fair-minded, and thoughtful.”

See Nebraska’s Innovative Practices

Get firsthand knowledge on Nebraska’s innovative practices on education, alternative energy solutions, technically integrated hospitals, and more. Among the tour options:

Landfill Gas Plant
The Omaha Public Power District is turning decomposing garbage into energy with a landfill gas plant at the Douglas County landfill. The amount of renewable energy produced by the plant will soon be as much as 6.4 million watts, enough power per year to provide electricity for more than 4,000 homes.

Wind Turbine Project
Through the power district’s wind turbine project, electricity is produced when wind turns the 200 foot high rotor, which moves the high-speed shaft in the generator. The turbine is expected to produce 1.7 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually, enough to power approximately 150 homes.

Educare Center
The Educare center is a $6 million state-of-the-art early childhood facility that provides all day, year-round care and education for economically disadvantaged children up to age 5.

Valmont Plant Tour
Valmont Industries has a long history of selling and servicing mechanized irrigation equipment throughout the world. The facility in Valley, Neb., is Valmont’s largest facility with 1,400 employees, and it exports to more than 90 countries. Valmont also has a network of manufacturing facilities in Brazil, South Africa, Spain and the United Arab Emirates, and distribution facilities in Australia and China.

Lakeside Hospital
Lakeside Hospital, which opened in 2004, is one of the world’s most technologically integrated hospitals. The hospital utilizes a platform of highly integrated technology to ensure patients get the safest care possible.
CSP, STATES ADDRESS FEDERALISM

Cover of April 1995 State Government News
Then-Lt. Gov. Argeo Paul Cellucci makes a point with President Bill Clinton at the White House.
In 1995, The Council of State Governments made history with a move to restore the balance of power between the states and Washington, D.C., and convene what was the first formal meeting of the states since the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

CSG held a Conference of the States in October 1995 to unite the states in taking charge of their own agendas to reverse decades of federal dictates, according to an article on planning the conference in the February 1995 issue of State Government News, now known as State News.

By the summer of 1995, resolutions to call for the Conference of the States had been adopted in 14 states—more than halfway to the goal of the 26 states needed to call the special convention.

And by October, history was in the making.

Power to the States

In the 1990s, public confidence in government had plunged to new lows as federal powers grew, according to an article in the November/December 1995 State Government News. The article cited a poll conducted that month by the Wirthlin Group, which showed 71 percent of the public had less confidence in the federal government than several years prior.

States were seeing the demise of the 10th Amendment, as then-Ohio Gov. George V. Voinovich put it. “We’ve seen the arrogance of a federal government that believes it can develop one solution and impose it on 50 separate states and countless communities across the country, despite the fact that the problems they were supposed to solve have only gotten worse,” he told State Government News.

Unfunded mandates from the federal government were costing Ohio big bucks. According to State Government News, Ohio taxpayers paid nearly $2 billion from 1992 to 1995 for the unfunded mandates, and cities spent 12 cents of every dollar on the federal dictates.

Situations like Ohio’s in the 1990s is why more than 140 state legislators, legislative leaders, governors and other officials representing 43 states gathered in Cincinnati for the Conference of the States to explore ways to unify their efforts to restore power to the states and the people.

Another article in State Government News put it like this: “Frustration with federal mandates and pre-emption of state authority played a large role in the states’ action.”

Then-Colorado Senate President Tom Norton told CSG’s magazine in 1995 that, “What we need is government that is closer to the people.” And a big part of that is giving some power back to the states, attendees at the summit believed.

Government can be returned to the people by restoring the balance of power between the federal and state governments, then-Nebraska Gov. Ben Nelson told the magazine. “We do that by making sure the government closest to the people can do its job,” he said.

To do that, delegates at the summit adopted four proposed remedies to the problem:

- An act to enhance the political safeguards of federalism and give states a more effective voice in congressional deliberations;
- A mechanism to provide the people of the states, through their legislatures, the power to require Congress to reconsider laws, specific provisions of laws or regulations that interfere with state authority;
- A mechanism that would allow the states to propose specific amendments to the U.S. Constitution, subject to ratification by Congress; and
- Statutory and/or constitutional reforms to address the problems of conditions attached to grants, regulations and mandates.

Delegates at the meeting agreed to carry on their historic work by conferring with their sponsoring organizations. Then-Ohio State Senate President Stan Aronoff told State Government News, “Now the real work begins. We need to carry it forward.”
For e-Communications, Lawmakers Should ‘Be a Geek or Get a Geek’

The Council of State Governments-WEST and the Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet at George Washington University recently released a new guide to e-communications for state lawmakers. CSG-WEST commissioned the report as part of its ongoing professional development program. Institute Director Julie Germany researched and wrote the report.

“Constituent Relationship Management for State Legislators” gives lawmakers tips on how to create a database management system to capture constituent information from e-mails, calls, visits and snail mail. The end goal is to have two-way conversations with constituents rather than sending out one-way information blasts.

The first principle of e-constituent relationship management is that “your office becomes less about you and more about your constituents.” The philosophy is derived from market-based customer relations. Just as retail businesses collect data about customers for future sales opportunities and design modifications, so must lawmakers practice one-to-one marketing to their constituents.

The report features case studies in e-communications as well as a series of practical Q&A’s. To paraphrase Phil Noble, founder of Politics Online, a company providing tools and strategies on using technology in the public sector, the message for 21st century lawmakers is this: “Be a geek or get a geek.”


Justice Center Releases Reports on Criminal Justice/Mental Health

The Council of State Governments Justice Center recently published three unprecedented reports addressing criminal justice and mental health issues.

“The Essential Elements of a Specialized Law Enforcement–Based Program” identifies 10 key components found in successful law enforcement initiatives to provide better outcomes in officers’ encounters with people with mental illnesses. This publication is the centerpiece of the Bureau of Justice Assistance Law Enforcement/Mental Health Partnership Program and was produced in partnership with the Police Executive Research Forum.

“Until now, there has been limited agreement at the national level about what was needed to successfully implement a specialized response,” said Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn, a Justice Center board member. “This guide will help law enforcement and their partners provide safe and effective responses to people with mental illnesses.”

The essential elements report is available for download at www.consensusproject.org. For more information, contact Laura Draper at ldraper@csg.org.

Another report, “Responding to People Who Have Been Victimized by Individuals with Mental Illnesses,” is the first national publication to detail steps policymakers, advocates, mental health professionals and others can take to understand and protect the rights and safety of crime victims when those accused of a crime are found not guilty by reason of insanity or are court-ordered to receive treatment in a mental health facility.

“Though states don’t always know how many victims are affected by a defendant’s transfer to a mental health facility, we do know that the impact of denying them access to information during release and other proceedings can be tremendous,” said Kansas Rep. Pat Colloton, a Justice Center board member. “This guide offers valuable guidance to state officials interested in enacting policies and procedures to ensure that victims’ rights, including the right to be informed, are protected in these cases.”


The publications were supported by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. For more information, contact Hope Glassberg at hglassberg@csg.org.

Free downloads of these reports will be available at http://justicecenter.csg.org.
Tools Aim to Help Governments Better Deliver Capital Projects

Due to tight budgets, states are increasingly under pressure to complete building projects faster, cheaper and safer. New tools available for state governments seek to assist in regulating the design, construction and renovation of buildings, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, public assembly, educational and health care facilities.

A new series of Guides and White Papers from the Alliance for Building Regulatory Reform in the Digital Age at FIATECH is now available to elected officials and the agencies that administer building regulatory as well as land use and planning programs. FIATECH is an industry consortium focused on the development, demonstration and deployment of fully integrated and automated technologies to deliver the highest business value throughout the life cycle of all types of capital projects.

The materials detail actions taken by state and local governments and technologies used to increase effective enforcement of building codes and land use and planning statutes reducing the amount of time it takes to move a building through the regulatory system by 40 percent to 60 percent by:
- Enabling jurisdictions to handle increased construction volume with very small increases in staff;
- Increasing state and local government revenues by getting buildings on tax records faster and enabling businesses to hire employees sooner; and
- Enhancing disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

To download the tools, visit www.natl-partnerstreamline.org.

Northeastern States Require Fresh Milk Label

Delaware in July joined a string of Northeastern states requiring a special fresh milk label that allows customers to tell the difference between local milk and ultra processed milk that can sit on the shelf for more than 100 days.

Rep. George Carey and Sen. Gary Simpson introduced the fresh milk legislation, and Delaware’s House Bill 470 was signed into law July 9.

“Buying a gallon of milk—of fresh milk—in the Northeast should not only supply a family with a high quality food, but also support our local, Northeast farmers,” said Simpson.

As of August 2008, New Hampshire consumers buying milk will also know if the milk they purchase comes from local farms, farms in neighboring states or far away.

New Hampshire Agriculture Committee Chair Rep. Jay Phinizy sponsored House Bill 1537 that in early August created a fresh New Hampshire milk label. The special label allows New Hampshire consumers to easily identify local milk in the dairy case.

“This legislation will benefit New Hampshire’s dairy farmers and consumers alike,” Phinizy said.

Vermont similarly requires a fresh milk label.

“When we learned how much milk is coming into the state, especially in fast food outlets, my colleagues and I on the Senate Agriculture Committee discussed the New Hampshire legislation and developed a Vermont Fresh Milk version, which was signed into law in April,” said Sen. Sara Kittell, chair of the Vermont Senate Agriculture Committee.

Legislators are milking similar legislation in Maine.

The Maine Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee held a hearing in May on a Maine Fresh Milk labeling bill, sponsored by House Chairwoman Wendy Pieh. The committee decided to use the Maine Quality Seal to indicate the product contains at least 80 percent Maine milk.

New York could be next to label local fresh milk.

“In New York we have the Pride of New York label for fruits, vegetables and dairy products produced here, but certainly more can be done,” said New York Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine. “Whether legislatively or through a policy change with New York State Ag and Markets, I plan to push my state toward labeling similar to what has been passed in New Hampshire and Vermont. It’s good for our state, our farmers and the Northeast.”
More than 5 Million Haven’t Claimed Stimulus Checks

In June, the Internal Revenue Service identified those people most at risk for not receiving a stimulus rebate check as being low-income seniors, disabled veterans and others with disabilities who aren’t required to file a tax return. Here’s the number of Americans by state who have not yet received their stimulus checks because they have not filed a tax return. Some people believe states are missing out on sales tax revenue and a boost to the local economy because these folks are not spending their rebate checks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of People Who Have Not Received Rebates</th>
<th>Total Value of Not Claimed Rebates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>615,135</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>439,654</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>414,482</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>405,968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td><strong>$1,685,319,300</strong></td>
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The specter of climate change and growing populations are adding to states’ concerns about having enough water in the future. States are taking action now to change the habits of consumers as well as to increase and manage current supplies of water.

By Mary Branham Dusenberry
Starting this month, some water customers in Riverside County, Calif., could face penalties for wasting water.

Those penalties could tack on a $100 surcharge after a third violation and up to $300 more each month after five or more violations. The Eastern Municipal Water District, in the Riverside County community of Perris, Calif., previously applied penalties under a local ordinance—originally adopted in 1991—only to commercial, industrial and institutional customers, according to a July newsletter from the district.

But times have changed, and California is dealing with drought conditions for the second straight year. So officials at all levels of government have had to take action.

In addition to the penalties, the water district has delayed some development projects this year until developers could show there’s a 20-year water supply to sustain the development, said Randy Record, a director with the water district.

“We always thought we had plenty of water to do whatever we needed to do, and that’s just not true,” Record said.

Changing Times

California and other states are learning that fact the hard way.

“We’re starting to see areas that historically have not really had to deal with drought and concerns about water supply are starting to—in part because of continued population growth,” said Heather Cooley, a senior research associate with the Pacific Institute, a think tank based in Oakland, Calif., specializing in water issues. In some areas, the infrastructure to store and move water from basin to customers is aging.

“And with climate change on the horizon these are all kind of increasing the tension and concerns about our water supply,” Cooley said.

Changing weather patterns and growing populations are adding to the burden many states—particularly those in the West—face with regard to water.

“I know there are still people who don’t believe that (climate change) is happening,” said Craig Bell, executive director of the Western States Water Council, an affiliate of the Western Governors Association headquartered in Denver. “We think there’s strong evidence that it is, and even if we didn’t, the things we’re advocating need to be done anyway.”

The council in June released a report that addressed challenges many western states face with regard to water supplies and made recommendations to address the needs of the growing populations in those states.

“If you just look at the growing population demands on water and trying to preserve our agricultural economy, and looking at our infrastructure … all these things in our view should be done regardless of whether you accept that climate change is occurring,” Bell said.

A 2003 Government Accountability Office report found that 36 states could face
water shortages, either regionally or statewide, within 10 years.

“Historically it has been more of an issue in the West, particularly in the Southwest, but areas across the U.S. are starting to deal with water supply constraints,” said Cooley.

That was evident last year in the southeastern United States, when Atlanta and areas surrounding it were locked in a battle over water. And again in the Great Lakes region, where officials were concerned water-starved regions of the country would look at the lakes for relief.

That concern, in part, was a driving force behind updating the Great Lakes Compact, which not only prevents diversion from the Great Lakes region, but also encourages conservation within the basin.

Sen. Neal Kedzie of Wisconsin, who worked on the committee to develop enacting legislation and penned a letter urging his state’s congressional representatives to support the compact, said it provides more protection to states in the region.

“The compact sets up, basically, a roadmap of how the waters are protected and how the states in the Great Lakes basin will consider potential diversions adjacent to the boundaries of the basin,” he said.

In short, that plan would prevent diversion of Great Lakes water to other water-starved regions of the country. A committee of the U.S. House of Representatives approved the legislation in July, and both presidential candidates support the plan, which must gain congressional approval before taking effect.

The concern about water sustainability also prompted the U.S. Geological Survey to recommend a full assessment of the country’s groundwater resources and availability, according to Kevin Dennehy, coordinator for the agency’s Groundwater Resources Program. The agency is conducting studies in eight areas to measure the amount of groundwater in principal regional aquifers, which store groundwater, but the agency needs to conduct a total of 30 studies to account for 94 percent of groundwater in the United States. Groundwater is used for agricultural irrigation as well as public drinking water for both rural and urban areas in the U.S. “In order to plan for the future, you first have to establish what your current reserves are,” Dennehy said. “When there’s a crisis, it’s almost too late to develop a plan.”

The water sustainability issue has been evident for decades in the West, several regional water officials said, but now states are scrambling to deal with the issue.

## States Take Action

California is among those states. In June, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a statewide drought and issued an executive order that, among other things, included $17 million in emergency drought grants for investment in conservation, according to Lester Snow, director of the state’s Department of Water Resources.

Schwarzenegger also set a goal of a 20 percent reduction in per capita water use by 2020, and Snow said the legislature is considering a bill that would codify that requirement.

“The governor has been on record for some time saying we need a comprehensive water solution for these problems instead of band-aids that get us by the current crisis,” Snow said.

The crisis this year is a major one. California is using most of its water storage just to meet basic demands and will end the year with one of the lowest storage carryovers in the past three decades. Snow said the state is looking at improving infrastructure to store and move water, increasing conservation and storing more water in wetter years. He said the legislature is considering a bill that would place a proposition on the ballot to fund those projects.

While the need for action has been evident for several decades, Snow said recent court actions that placed additional restrictions on the transfer of water, a better understanding of the ways seismic activity could disrupt movement of water in the system and the looming specter of climate change have created a greater sense of urgency to action.

“All of those things have come together to a point where people outside the water community … have a much better understanding that if action is not taken, we will have a major crisis on our hands,” Snow said.

That’s evident in the battle over water supply. The Colorado River Basin has been a point of dispute between the seven states in the basin—Arizona, California and Nevada in the lower division, and Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming in the upper division—for years, according to Herb Guenther, director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources. Last December, the states finalized an agreement that, among other things, addressed supplemental water supplies, weather modification such as cloud seeding to draw more moisture from the clouds, and conjunctive management of Lakes Mead and Powell in Nevada, he said.

“A lot of us fall into the trap of using the water resources we have, kind of borrowing from the future, especially when it comes to groundwater,” Guenther said. “It’s like overusing a credit card or overdrawing your bank account. Eventually you’re going to have to pay the piper.”

In Arizona, that could be a lot. Guenther said while growth has slowed due to the economy, his state is the fastest-growing in the U.S. And like residents in other states, Arizonans have been spoiled by cheap water. Across the U.S., Guenther said, people have used more water than what is naturally and artificially recharged.

## Creating Sustainability

Arizona has encouraged conservation for nearly 30 years, and just recently established a statewide conservation office to educate people about the need to conserve.

“You’ve got to use the water wisely,” Guenther said. “If you use it wisely, you’re going to not only have a sustainable supply for existing needs, but you’re going to accommodate future growth.”

In addition to conservation, Arizona is working to meet that growth through reuse of water, increased storage capacity and supplementing water supplies. But Guenther believes those options could be expanded.

Currently, the state treats wastewater to high standards, but pumps it back into the ground because of the “yuck factor,” as Guenther calls it. Many people don’t like the thought of using wastewater directly after treatment, he said. But Guenther expects the
A lot of us fall into the trap of using the water resources we have, kind of borrowing from the future, especially when it comes to groundwater. It’s like overusing a credit card or overdrawing your bank account. Eventually you’re going to have to pay the piper.”

—Herb Guenther, director
Arizona Department of Water Resources

Bell, with the Western States Water Council, said it will take all levels of government—state, federal and local—to resolve the problem. In fact, the council’s report— “Water Needs and Strategies for a Sustainable Future: Next Steps”—includes recommendations that government and private agencies can take to address the problem.

Among the 45 major recommendations in the report:

- States and the federal government should work together to develop drought preparedness and contingency plans;
- States should work with local officials to better integrate water and land use planning;
- State, federal and local agencies should increase efforts to investigate possible use of brackish water to meet future water needs, particularly in rural communities;
- States, in cooperation with federal and local governments as well as private landowners, should identify and prioritize future water resources infrastructure needs.

While many of the recommendations are long-term, water officials say the need to start addressing the problem is now.

“I think working together we can solve a lot of the water problems in the U.S., but if we wait too long it’s going to be much more difficult to deal with and probably be more expensive,” Guenther said. “Together I think we can solve the issues dealing with water, but what we really need to do is get out of our denial and start taking action.”

—Mary Brunhan Dusenberry is managing editor for State News magazine.
Henry Toll Fellowship Program
--- Inspiring Leaders

2008
John J. Abramson Jr. Virgin Islands

A leader—that’s what John J. Abramson Jr. is in his neck of the woods.

Since accepting the position of supervisor of the Virgin Islands Board of Elections in 1995, he has tried to make a more direct contribution to improving state government policies, procedures and programs.

“I created a development ideology and program to address financial inequities on the local level,” Abramson said of his “melting pot model.”

“In developing my philosophy for program development I decided to use a multi-model approach that is combining elements of various models to come to the appropriate blend specifically tailored to preserving the history, culture and moral/values of the Virgin Islands community.”

Other officials agree Abramson’s professionalism and leadership have allowed him to be effective and efficient.

“John elevated the presence of the agency from one that was only remembered at elections, to an active and relevant entity critical to the ongoing electoral process,” said Lt. Gov. Gregory Francis.

Abramson wants to go even further in his work and life in the Virgin Islands. “My personal commitment is to develop the Virgin Islands and all aspects of human life: spiritual, physical, economic, social and cultural,” said Abramson.

FAST FACTS: Graduate of American University’s Center for Democracy and Election Management, the Legislative Staff Management Institute at the University of Minnesota and the Election Center Professional Education Certification Program at Auburn University

Jennifer Davis Delaware

Jennifer “J.J.” Davis can manage money.

Davis, who works as director of the Delaware Office of Management and Budget, is responsible for the overall coordination and development of the governor’s annual $3.2 billion operating budget and more than $500 million capital budget.

As a former deputy secretary of education in Delaware—and a mother—Davis said she has developed a “keen interest in improving public education.”

“The old way of teaching is no longer relevant,” Davis said. “The classroom of the future will need to be more global and technologically advanced so we can continue to build on the foundation of our future: our children.”

Davis said her father, a career civil servant who worked as a legal counsel for the federal government, instilled in her the desire to work in the public sector.

“He consistently reminded me as I grew up the importance of giving back to the community and making a difference in people’s lives,” she said. “He truly believed one of the best ways to demonstrate your commitment to others was to work for the government. He also strongly valued hard work, dedication and a commitment to quality work through objective and critical analysis.”

FAST FACTS: Participated in a dual degree program at Penn State, which allowed her to receive a master’s of science in policy analysis and a bachelor of arts in political science • Led and managed the eventual creation of the Office of Management and Budget • Colleagues say she possesses contagious energy and infectious enthusiasm

Nicola ‘Nick’ Favorito Massachusetts

Members of the state pension system would be penniless without Nick Favorito, who, with the help of his staff, issues annual benefit payments of more than $1 billion to Massachusetts retirees and their families.

You could say he’s a favorite in his state.

Since being appointed executive director of the state’s Employees’ Retirement System in 2003, Favorito has improved administration of the board through establishing a benefit verification program that has saved the commonwealth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In addition to providing critical leadership and policy direction, Favorito hopes to educate the community about retirement and public service.

“In my present capacity,” he said, “a primary challenge will be to continue educating both members and taxpayers on the advantages of the retirement system.” He also believes there is “diminishing knowledge and understanding among individuals in general about how the government process works.”

He’s seen this in his children’s current school curriculums. “The lack of education or knowledge seems to have affected the level of participation in public matters and has reduced the appreciation for public service,” he said.

In January 2007, Favorito was appointed a deputy treasurer and since then has proved to be a knowledgeable, trusted adviser. He is responsible for oversight of the Treasury’s Abandoned Property Division and Job Growth Initiative.

FAST FACTS: Cum laude graduate of Harvard and recipient of the John Harvard Scholarship Award • Parkway youth soccer coach
Andrew C. Fisk Maine

Andrew Fisk and his team help keep Maine clean. “Any effective contribution to government comes from the work of an effective team,” said Fisk. “I count some of my contributions to improving Maine state government—whether it is a detailed administrative change or broad policy initiative—as a result of working with a wide range of detailed colleagues and citizens.”

Since becoming director of the Bureau of Land and Water Quality for the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in 2003, Fisk has been responsible for a 134-person staff and implementation of the state’s environmental quality statutes. That includes changes to the state’s aquaculture leasing program that responded to the concerns of farmers, residents and environmentalists, while improving service and refining standards and requirements.

Under Fisk’s leadership, Maine has earned a reputation as an environmental policy innovator among the states; helping to serve as a model to others, said Ted Koffman, chair of the state’s Joint Committee on Natural Resources.

State Rep. Leila Percy, a 2005 Toll Fellow, agrees. “Andrew is good at thinking out of the box—bringing in unexpected stakeholders with different experiences and ideas about how the state can work with a wide variety of constituents and be successful,” she said.

FAST FACTS: Obtained his doctorate of philosophy from Rutgers University in 1995 • Volunteer lake monitor for Nahumkeag Pond • Received the Irene Bush Steinbock Award for the founding of the Cornelius deKiewiet Southern African Refugee Scholarship Fund • Enjoys sailing, dry-crack stone construction and beermaking

Rep. Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon Puerto Rico

Friends and colleagues describe Rep. Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon as unafraid, open-minded, hardworking and dedicated. As a public servant, she said her objective is to “help lead the people of Puerto Rico to the full enjoyment of their rights as American citizens.”

Puerto Rico Senate President Kenneth McClintock said Gonzalez-Colon is “committed to public service and to representation of the people; keenly interested in new developments that may affect the quality of public service and the rights of the people; respectful of institutions, but willing to shake them up when the institution is headed in the wrong direction.”

Gonzalez-Colon “has established a legislative and debating record that compares favorably with members of much longer service,” said 1994 Toll Fellow Jose Diaz. “She has maintained open and respectful communication with the labor sector and with industry organizations in what is normally a very polarized climate, and has demonstrated her ability to think and act independently with no need for grandstanding.”

Among her many legislative achievements, Gonzales-Colon led the approval of legislation petitioning Congress for action to establish Puerto Rico statehood, which is one of her continuing goals as a state official.

FAST FACTS: Currently working on her juris doctorate from Inter-American University School of Law • Author of Veterans’ Rights legislation • 2005 Robert J. Thompson Leadership Academy Fellow

Craig C. Hall Massachusetts

As chief financial officer of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, Craig C. Hall has amassed an impressive list of accomplishments.

“He has consistently proven his ability to lead and innovate, and has demonstrated his leadership potential in Massachusetts state government as a change manager and expert collaborator, through his expertise in the state-federal relationships,” said John F. Stokes, a friend, colleague and mentor.

Hall initiated a national collaboration with 36 sister councils across the country to improve reliability and validity in federal reporting of performance data. Under his leadership, the project has been nominated for several awards, including The Council of State Governments’ Innovations Award, the IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government, the CIO 100 Award and Harvard University’s Innovations in American Government Award.

Hall’s decision to contribute to the public sector was influenced by his family. His parents believed that government represented the best ideals. While Hall was in college, he was given the opportunity to be an intern for a state senator, which gave him firsthand experience in public policy and constituent issues and solidified his decision to pursue a career in state government.

“I believe together we can all make a difference,” he said.

FAST FACTS: Member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary • Obtained his MPA from Suffolk University • Recipient of the Commonwealth Citation for Outstanding Performance
Jeff Timperi Massachusetts

Like many in the field of homeland security, Jeff Timperi is faced with growing demands in the face of a shrinking budget.

“Our current challenge is that while federal homeland security funds decrease, our needs remain constant, or in some cases have increased,” said Timperi, acting director of Massachusetts’ Office of Public Safety and Security. “Funding decreases make no one happy, and decisions made as a result can be difficult.”

Timperi has worked in the area of homeland security, but his focus previously has been more narrow.

While with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Timperi worked to improve the state’s emergency preparedness planning with respect to special needs populations. One of his proudest achievements was the adoption of a set of guidelines for local boards of health on including special needs residents in their preparedness plans.

Although faced with difficult decisions on a daily basis, Timperi is happy with the path he has chosen and finds public service rewarding.

“Simply put, I wanted a job where I can make a positive impact in people’s lives and my community,” said Timperi. “Public service allows me this opportunity.”

FAST FACTS:

- Previously monitored the state’s Asbestos and Lead Program
- Active volunteer with Boston Cares
- Received a BA from Westfield State College and an MPA from Suffolk University

Rep. Toni E. Walker Connecticut

As a child, Toni Walker was taught that “promoting justice was one of the most important things a person could do with their life.”

And over the past six years as a state representative, Walker has set a priority “to serve the population of Connecticut’s citizenry that are often overlooked or forgotten.”

This moral, instilled by her father, is why she has committed herself to juvenile justice reform in Connecticut. By bringing together disparate agencies and organizations, Walker was able to draft legislation to increase the age of juvenile jurisdiction.

“Raise-the-age legislation has helped move 16- and 17-year-olds from the adult criminal court system to the juvenile system,” explains Walker. “Through this action, our youth will be offered specialized services that will help them put their lives back in order, and offender recidivism will be lowered.”

FAST FACTS:

- Serves on the Empower New Haven Education Committee
- Member of the Adolescent Parenting Council, the Women’s Leadership Forum, Executive Committee and the Domestic Violence Task Force
- Obtained a master’s of social work from Fordham University
Rep. Deborah Graham  Illinois

Deborah Graham was not new to public service when she decided to run for elected office. In fact, Graham spent nearly a decade helping others as a social worker and case manager before she won her first election. During her time with the Chicago Department of Planning and Development and with the nonprofit Inner Voice, Graham helped to match families with available housing. It was this experience as a social service worker that led Graham to run for office.

“One major fact that influenced my decision to enter public service was my background in the social service field,” said Graham. “As an elected official, I am able to direct funds to programs such as the Shelter Plus Care Housing, as opposed to asking for funds.”

Since taking office in 2003, Graham’s interests have spread beyond social service and housing needs to other policy areas that affect the Chicago community, particularly the lower income communities she previously served.

She also has advocated strongly for what she considers common sense gun control legislation, and has focused on making Chicago’s schools safer.

“Since the beginning of the year,” said Graham, “20 Chicago Public School students have been gunned down. My objective is to continue to push common sense gun control legislation to get the guns off the streets and out of the hands of criminals and at-risk youth.”

**FAST FACTS:** Received a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Robert Morris College. As a child she volunteered with her grandmother in area shelters.

Sen. Steve Lathrop  Nebraska

For more than two decades, Steve Lathrop was an advocate for the legal rights of workers, businesses and consumers. It was this fierce belief in the legal system that led Lathrop to run for Nebraska’s unicameral legislature in 2006.

“I entered public service to give back to my community,” said Lathrop. “I believe that each of us has a responsibility to share our talents and our time for the public good. Those of us with training in the law have a special responsibility when it comes to sharing our talents and our education with the people.”

Lathrop, who just completed his second year in office, has used his legal training, along with an ability to reach across party lines, to shepherd important liability and stem cell research legislation through the legislature. His work on the stem cell research compromise was particularly challenging and ended eight years of impasse.

“I met with the pro-life groups and the research scientists from (University of Nebraska Medical Center) and developed a solution to this longstanding dispute, which was embraced by these two diverse interest groups and the entire legislature,” said Lathrop.

Lathrop said he has been motivated to serve after seeing the brain drain and loss of experience that Nebraska’s term limit system has left.

**FAST FACTS:** Received a bachelor’s and juris doctorate degrees from Creighton University. Is the father of four girls. Has coached local youth soccer and softball teams for more than 10 years.

Rep. Bill Huizenga  Michigan

At a time when political partisanship divides government bodies at the state and federal levels, Rep. Bill Huizenga takes great pride in his ability to work across the aisle.

He credits this skill, along with his desire to enter public service, to his upbringing, in particular the model set by his father.

“At the risk of sounding cliché, watching my father serve as a city councilman for all of my childhood greatly impacted my understanding of public service,” said Huizenga. “Family discussions around the dinner table were lively, active and full of disagreement. This taught me early on that you can disagree with someone but still like and respect that person.”

Huizenga’s ability to work with colleagues from both parties has enabled him to make a mark in the Michigan legislature. Huizenga recognizes the challenges facing his state as the auto industry continues to decline and the state is forced to think outside its traditional manufacturing base as it builds new economic development efforts. Huizenga recently spearheaded a creative fix to Michigan’s need for economic expansion as he helped push efforts to bring the film industry to his state.

Having spent six years working for U.S. Congressman Peter Hoekstra, Huizenga hopes to build a career in public service beyond the Michigan House of Representatives. He plans to eventually run for state Senate.

**FAST FACTS:** Co-owner of Huizenga Gravel Company, a third generation family business. Has completed the Walt Disney half and full marathons. Is a father of five who enjoys hunting, traveling and reading.

Richard Leopold  Iowa

Richard Leopold has been focused on energy and environmental issues for more than two decades.

A trained ecologist, Leopold heads Iowa’s Department of Natural Resources and enjoys using his experience as a field biologist, land-use planner and policy executive to help improve the quality of life in Iowa.

Leopold’s efforts have helped Iowa take the national lead in alternative energy sources. While many associate Iowa with ethanol, Leopold said his state’s future is invested in several other energy sources. He has helped institute changes in Iowa’s water quality standards while also pushing wind production tax credits. These initiatives are partly responsible for Iowa’s current place as the national per capita leader in wind energy production.

In addition to the environment, Leopold is also concerned about Iowa’s work force needs. The state anticipates as many as 150,000 job openings in the next 10 years and Leopold believes his efforts play a role in meeting Iowa’s work force challenges.

“In studying employment trends of the younger educated work force, it is evident that this generation is relocating to areas supporting qualities of life they desire,” said Leopold. “Natural resources have not been historically considered within this trend in Iowa. I believe, and have taken leadership toward, creating an Iowa environment that younger families will want to live in.”

**FAST FACTS:** Is a recipient of the Boy Scout Eagle Award and World Conservation Award. Served for eight years in the Minnesota Army National Guard. Recently participated in the John F. Kennedy School of Government’s Driving Government Performance Program.
Sen. Ann Lynch Minnesota

Over the years, many aspiring Toll Fellows have credited family members for providing the examples that led to a career in public service. For Sen. Ann Lynch, that influence came in the form of a mentor found outside her family—former state Sen. Sheila Kiscaden. “My longtime mentor, former Senator Sheila Kiscaden, offered me continued opportunities to grow and develop,” said Lynch. “Her counsel and guidance was instrumental in giving me the courage to run for office. She helped me to see that my skills and experiences would be an asset for state government and public service.”

In particular, Lynch has used her professional background in strategic planning and operations management to work to improve Minnesota’s health care system. She has helped secure ongoing funding to develop a bioscience industry in conjunction with state universities. In addition, as vice chair of the Health and Human Services Budget Division, she has worked to reach a consensus on health care reform in the state—an ongoing process to which she is dedicated.

“Certainly all have agreed that health care reform is needed,” said Lynch, “but determining the route to get there is up for debate.”

FAST FACTS: Serves as chair for the Boys and Girls Club “A Chair Affair” Gala • Recipient of the American Heart Association’s “Legislator of the Year” Award in 2008

Judge Steven McCullough North Dakota

North Dakota District Judge Steven McCullough embodies the Toll Fellows program’s unique inclusion and desire to achieve increased integration among all three branches of government.

McCullough said he hopes to gain “a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the other two branches of state government” during the Toll Fellows program. “I hope as well to learn and understand more effective methods and techniques of interacting with officials from those other branches to the benefit of good government in our state,” said McCullough.

McDonald, one of only three district judges in the state, also serves as the judge for an Adult Drug Court in Cass County, N.D. He hopes his efforts with this court will help criminal defendants address chemical dependency issues in a manner that will reduce recidivism. McCullough also serves on the state’s Judiciary Standards Committee and has been involved in a multi-year effort to rewrite the ethics standards governing North Dakota’s judiciary.

McCullough said he finds his work rewarding and welcomes the opportunity to give back.

Rep. Helen Miller Iowa

Residents of Helen Miller’s Iowa House district recognized her leadership potential before she did.

Just two years after moving to the state, Miller found herself being encouraged from all sides to run for the state’s House of Representatives. Unsure that she was familiar enough with the state’s needs and pressing issues, she was hesitant but gave it a shot. Miller is now serving her fourth term.

Since taking office, Miller has championed the role that arts, culture and recreation can play in revitalizing Iowa’s economy and attracting new workers.

“Creativity is important for the recruitment of workers, retention of young people in the state, attracting tourists and economic development,” said Miller, who works closely with the state Department of Cultural Affairs. “Through my voice the legislature is more in tune to the need for art and culture as tools for economic growth and enhancement.”

While cultural avenues are important to her, Miller sees the need to explore all aspects of economic and work force development. She believes a key to success is focusing on Iowa’s underutilized populations—in particular baby boomers and prison inmates.

“It is my feeling that these baby boomers have resources, education and experiences that can help grow Iowa through work force entry, volunteerism and contributions to our tax base and economy,” said Miller.

FAST FACTS: Has served as the executive director of Iowa’s Young at Art organization • Has participated in several leadership programs including CSG-Midwest’s BILLD Program and the Fleming Leadership Institute in Washington D.C. • Is the mother of three
Aaron Otto Kansas

Since joining the governor’s office two years ago, Aaron Otto helped Kansas eliminate more than $1 billion in wasteful spending. That includes a $13 million reduction in pharmaceutical costs through the Kansas Pharmaceutical Collaborative, under which state and local governments have entered a cooperative agreement to purchase pharmaceuticals for state prison and local jail inmates.

As chief of staff and legislative liaison for Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, Otto leads Kansas’ Budget Efficiency Saving Teams. Otto attributes his success to working in a bipartisan manner. “We have been so successful because we have brought Republicans and Democrats together.”

Otto is involved in addressing a myriad of policy issues facing the state. He was instrumental in helping pass the Military Bill of Rights, which Sebelius credits with making Kansas one of the most military friendly states in the country. Otto has also closely followed the federal immigration debate.

“State governments will face some of the greatest impacts of this federal leadership void, and the volume and quality of services will be strained and unpredictable as a result, making immigration a key issue in Kansas and throughout the country,” he said.

Otto said his grandfather’s example of public service demonstrated how fulfilling it can be. "Fortunately, my work does not seem like a job, for I truly enjoy every aspect of it," said Otto.

FAST FACTS: Was working for the chief of Naval Operations in the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001 • Attended a summer session at the London School of Economics • Received the Distinguished Civilian Award from the Department of the Navy in 2004

Rep. Mark Owens North Dakota

Rep. Mark Owens and his colleagues in the North Dakota legislature are in an enviable position: A budget surplus in tough economic times.

While other states are faced with cutting costs and services due to tight budgets, North Dakota’s biggest challenge is not getting carried away with the surplus and continuing to be good shepherds of the state’s funds, Owens said.

He hopes his tax background provides a much needed perspective. “My experience with taxation structure and application will provide some guidance to the application of this surplus, and hopefully help prevent a recurring budget growth that would threaten the future of this state,” Owens said.

As a member of the state House since 2005, Owens decided to run for office because of the U.S. Constitution. He credits the “beauty and flexibility” of this foundational document with inspiring him to seek a career to help protect the basic rights established by the Founding Fathers.

Rep. Kim Koppelman, a 2000 Toll Fellow who is the current CSG chair, chairs a committee on which Owens is a member.

“He has impressed me with his principled, thoughtful, diligent approach to issues as critical as whether or how to amend our state’s constitution,” Koppelman said.

Owens said he plans to continue that service to North Dakota. “I have served my country from the beginning with military service for 20 years,” said Owens. “I know no other lifestyle than that of service, and public service allows me to serve those I have yet to even meet.”

FAST FACTS: Former officer in the U.S. Air Force • Founding partner of Meridian Environmental Technology Inc. • 2006 BILLD Fellow

Rep. Carol Pitts South Dakota

Rep. Carol Pitts was raised on a small family farm near Flandreau, S.D., but her life experiences have taken her to the other side of the world.

As part of her extensive career in nutrition and health services, Pitts spent two years serving as the wellness counselor for the WIC-Overseas Military Program, a position that took her family to Germany. Pitts’ military connection and service also included time with the U.S. Army, from which she received an honorable discharge in 2004.

Public service just seems right for Pitts, who credits a strong family example—one grandfather was a state legislator—with her life path.

“My grandparents took me with them to the capital and always ‘talked the talk,’” said Pitts. Her parents both served as county commissioners and her grandfather served on the city council.

Before being elected to the legislature, Pitts served as a county commissioner and local school board member. Since taking office, Pitts has focused on the two key issues she sees facing her state—fiscal management and the delicate balance between state authority and local control.

Pitts understands the concerns of her constituents with regard to taxes, and believes finding the right balance of revenue generation and service delivery is a challenge her state must address.

FAST FACTS: Is currently working on a doctorate in nutrition/sociology from South Dakota State University • Is the mother of six grown children • Is a dietician licensed in five states
Sen. Kim Benefield Alabama

State Sen. Kim Benefield has a servant’s heart.

“Few are called and even fewer answer,” said Benefield. “So many enter public service not to serve the public but to be self-serving; with that attitude we can never make the changes necessary to change our world. Helping others is the most rewarding thing in life.”

That philosophy took hold early in Benefield’s life. She was involved in 4-H in high school, serving as president of the high school club and as vice president and board member of the county organization. She attributes her activities with 4-H as her springboard into politics. Benefield is one of just seven women ever elected to Alabama’s highest legislative body. Near the end of her first regular legislative session, Benefield was nominated by Lt. Gov. Jim Folsom for a position on the Alabama Children’s Policy Council. This honor was confirmed by a unanimous vote of the state Senate. Benefield, who is known as a tireless worker, was also elected chairperson of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee.

Before being elected to the state Senate, Benefield served three six-year terms as Randolph County Clerk. She had worked for the clerk’s office for 13 years before being elected. In those early days, Benefield attended Jacksonville State University at night to earn an accounting degree.

FAST FACTS: Married for 34 years with one daughter and three grandchildren • Serves Zion Baptist Church as pianist and teacher of the Young Adult Sunday School Class • Treasurer of the Randolph County Baptist Association and active member of the PTA

Robert W. Ferguson West Virginia

Robert Ferguson, once a soldier, has found a new way to serve—this time serving the residents of West Virginia.

After serving 22 years in the U.S. Marine Corps—what he calls “a distinct honor”—in 2005 Ferguson was named secretary for the state’s Department of Administration.

“As a result of my service and the interaction with the finest of our country’s young men and women, I realized that serving in state government would be a natural extension of my commitment to the citizens of West Virginia,” said Ferguson.

He also had served as chairman of the West Virginia Tobacco Settlement Finance Authority, where he led the issuance of $911 million of bonds—the largest taxable tobacco securitization in the United States to date. This program has saved taxpayers $2.5 billion to date.

In his current position, Ferguson is still looking out for taxpayers. He has taken on many legislative battles in an effort, he says, to “move agencies to focus on their core competencies, reduce the size of government, and improve both functional and financial efficiencies.”

“Simply said, he (Ferguson) leads from the front and has demonstrated the ability that only true leaders possess—the ability to see beyond the moment and accomplish some of the most difficult missions in state government,” said West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin.

FAST FACTS: Awarded the Bronze Star Medal for actions during the Gulf War • Vice president of the National Association of State Chief Administrators CSG • Chairman of the State Personnel Board

Rep. Laurie Slade Funderburk South Carolina

Laurie Slade Funderburk is helping shape her state.

But at age 28, “I was intrigued by the challenge of it,” she said. Before then, she said, “the thought had never crossed my mind.”

Now in her first full term as a South Carolina state representative, Funderburk is touted as an up-and-coming state leader.

“She is one of South Carolina’s young leaders who has taken up the responsibilities of public service and become an active participant in shaping the goals of our state and our nation,” said Chief Justice Jean Hoefer Toal.

Funderburk is secretary to both the House Rural Caucus and the Sportsman’s Caucus and is a member of the South Carolina General Assembly Women’s Caucus and the South Carolina New Statesmen Society. She also serves on the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs committees.

Though she has had some success, Funderburk realizes that getting elected was only the start to a long race.

“The first hurdle, as I have come to know, pales in comparison to the challenge of making positive change in the lives of South Carolinians. This challenge is always before me, and one that requires constant effort and resolve,” said Funderburk.

FAST FACTS: Co-founder of the Kershaw Farmer’s Market • Recipient of the Silver Shovel Award from the Kershaw County Master Gardeners • Plays the piano, violin and oboe
Rep. Larry D. Hall  North Carolina

Rep. Larry Hall is fairly new to the political scene, but that hasn’t stopped him from making a lasting impression. “Although I have only been in elected office for two years, I have worked as a community advocate and volunteer for several issues,” said Hall. “That previous experience has proven invaluable in the legislature. I have worked to bring more citizens into the public policy formulation process through providing information to the community groups about pending or upcoming issues.”

His commitment, dedication and leadership were a few of the reasons he was elected president of his freshman class in the legislature. “His comments, insights and contributions have been invaluable to the drafting and decision-making process,” Rep. Deborah Ross, a 2005 Toll Fellow, said of Hall’s involvement on the Judiciary Committee. “Moreover, he has been able to handle difficult assignments thoughtfully and fairly.”

Hall serves on numerous committees including as vice chair on three—Financial Institutions, Ways and Means, and Homeland Security, Military and Veterans Affairs.

**FAST FACTS:** Obtained his juris doctorate from the University of North Carolina • Recipient of both the Marine Corps Reserve Medal and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal

Kathryn Hazelett  Arkansas

Giving back is in Kathryn Hazelett’s blood. Public service is a family tradition for her. “My family believed in giving back. The idea of making a difference where and when you could shaped my childhood,” said Hazelett. “When it came time to choose a career, I knew that I would end up in public service. I am so glad that I did.”

She was appointed director of policy for the Arkansas governor’s office in 2007. Since then, she has helped create a plan of attack to ensure that the new governor’s legislative package moves successfully through the legislature. “I think that the biggest contribution I have made to improving Arkansas’s government is helping that process go as smoothly as possible,” she said. That’s an important part of her job. “Kathryn crafts the agenda for legislative action, monitors state agency budgets, and is responsible for advising me on matters of policy from higher education to health care concerns to economic strategies,” said Gov. Mike Beebe. Colleagues describe her as both passionate and devoted to improving the lives of Arkansans. She “uses her talents daily to advance sound public policy,” said 2007 Toll Fellow Janie Huddleston. “Kathryn’s stamp is evident on Governor Beebe’s full policy agenda.”

**FAST FACTS:** Granted the Frank R. Douglass Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Law • Attended the University of Edinburgh to study international tax and commerce law • Received her juris doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law

Sen. Glenn Hegar  Texas

Glenn Hegar is not only the youngest member of the Texas State Senate, he is also a sixth-generation Texan who farms on land that has been in his family since the mid 1800s. In January 2008, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst appointed Hegar vice chairman of the influential Sunset Advisory Commission. That was the first time a freshman member of the Texas legislature has been appointed to such a leadership position.

And Hegar hasn’t stopped making waves. Hegar also serves as vice chairman of the Committee on Government Organization, and is a member of the powerful Committee on Natural Resources, the Committee on Nominations and the Committee on Criminal Justice. In recognition of his service to Texas, Hegar was recognized as one of the Best Legislators and the Rookie of the Year for the 80th legislature, by Capitol Inside, a Web site renowned in Texas for providing key legislative news. He has also received the Badge of Honor Award from the Texas Municipal Police Association and the Star for Rural Texas from the Texas Farm Bureau.

“In Texas, we like to say that he (Hegar) truly is a rising star on the political scene,” said Gov. Rick Perry. “I expect Texans will be hearing more about Senator Hegar in the future.”

**FAST FACTS:** Father of three children: Claire, Julia and Jonah • Served in the House of Representatives from 2003 to 2007 • Member of the Katy Performing Arts Society

Rep. Julia Howard is not your average grandmother. She’s serving her 10th term in the North Carolina House of Representatives. And with years of experience, Howard didn’t lose her strong ideals along the way.

She’s a firm believer in equality and fairness, which influenced her decision to enter public service. “Each man, woman and child should be offered the same opportunities and in all situations, win or lose, walk away believing they have been treated fairly,” she said. “I grew up in a male dominated society, where the elitists dominated. I learned early on that it would take hard work, determination and education to succeed.”

And that kind of determination has made this grandmother a seasoned political veteran. “Rep. Howard demonstrates the highest ethical standards and is known for perseverance with difficult assignments,” said Speaker of the House Joe Hackney. Howard is currently serving as chair on the Legislative Ethics Committee and vice chair of the Insurance Committee, as well as assignments in Finance, Public Utilities, Rules, Calendar and Operation of the House, Legislative Services, and the Joint Legislative Committee on Economic Development Oversight. She previously served as both majority and minority house leader.

**FAST FACTS:**
- Author of the North Carolina Welfare Reform legislation
- Mother of two and grandmother of six
- Former Sunday school teacher and youth counselor

**Rep. Joni Jenkins Kentucky**

One of Rep. Joni Jenkins’ favorite sayings is this: “Now is not the time to assign blame; now is the time to find solutions.”

And you can’t blame her for the motto—it seems to be working pretty well.

This model has served her well in the Kentucky General Assembly, where on many occasions she has been able to facilitate the process of bringing people together to form a consensus.

Jenkins has always been involved in public service, but decided to run for office when she became frustrated with the representation of her middle to lower income district. Taking a little bit of her own advice, she decided to work hard to do something about it.

“I felt like leaders were pandering to the fears and prejudices of the district and not achieving progress for the district or the state,” said Jenkins.

**FAST FACTS:** Chair of the Licensing and Occupations Committee • Involved in the Metro United Way, Family and Children First, and several mental health organizations • Jewish Hospital and St. Mary’s Healthcare Foundation board member

**Appellate Judge David Lewis Oklahoma**

Judge David B. Lewis made Oklahoma history. Lewis was the first African-American in the state to serve on the state Court of Criminal Appeals. Not only that, Lewis has served in the Oklahoma judiciary for more than 17 years, during which time he was very involved in improving the public perception of the courts as well as the state courts’ efficiency.

And his colleagues recognize his efforts. “Judge Lewis has committed his life to improving Oklahoma’s court systems and Oklahoma communities,” said Oklahoma Lt. Gov. Jari Askins, a 1997 Toll Fellow.

Rep. T.W. Shannon also acknowledges Lewis’ continued service.

“He is a firm believer in improving Oklahoma’s court systems and Oklahoma communities, and he has been a valuable asset to the state and its citizens,” said Shannon.

**FAST FACTS:**
- Recipient of the Trail Blazer Award from the University of Oklahoma Black Alumni Association
- Mentor for Lawton Public Schools and Leadership Lawton-Fort Sill
- Board Member for the Black Achievers Program

**Rep. Anastasia Pittman Oklahoma**

Oklahoma Rep. Anastasia Pittman wears many different hats. She is a mother, a daughter, a church and community activist and a member of the Seminole Nation, to name a few. She is the granddaughter of the late Jazz Hall of Famer C.E. Pittman, Juanita Pittman, Mary Lee Thurman-Taylor, and Seminole Freedman Rayfield (Tom) Barkus.

Encouraged by her family, friends and community, Pittman saw an opportunity to serve and took it. Her previous exposure to the legislative process and to what effective government institutions can accomplish also played a key role in her decision to seek elected office. She had worked as a Senate media specialist, committee staffer and legislative assistant.

“Thanks to her tireless efforts on the part of her community and the state of Oklahoma, Pittman has been praised by her colleagues as a valuable asset. “She is a tireless advocate of those least enfranchised in our community; from the mentally ill, imprisoned, poor and fragile,” said fellow Rep. Jeannie McDaniel. “She leaves no stone unturned in her efforts to improve the quality of life for our most needy. The only limit to her work is the number of hours in a day.”

**FAST FACTS:**
- Teaches representative democracy at local middle and high schools
- Founder of Magic Star Foundation Inc.
- Is the mother of one daughter and one foster son
Rep. Sherry Appleton  
**Washington**

Public service and the inner workings of government were not new to Sherry Appleton when she joined the state legislature. Appleton served eight years on the Poulsbo City Council, where she has lived for 22 years. So, deciding to run for office was an easy choice. “I first decided to run for elected office—city council—when an imbalance of power threatened my community, my neighborhood and even my home,” she said. “I’ve always believed that the concept ‘justice for all’ was sacred, and I’ve never been one to sit by while people with power were mocking that ideal.”

Appleton was appointed commissioner with the Washington State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commissioner on Civil Rights and is a member of the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

**FAST FACTS:**
- A mother of five, grandmother of 12, and great-grandmother of six
- Previously worked as a contract lobbyist

Rep. Maxine T. Bell  
**Idaho**

Maxine Bell has repeatedly gained the approval of her Idaho constituents—and along with her international experience, she’s gained approval from countries far away from home.

Her approval is apparent in the praise of her colleagues as well as her 20 years of service in the state’s House of Representatives.

“Her dedication, expertise and involvement have made her a role model for incoming legislators,” said Speaker Lawrence Denney. “She always brings a sense of humor and graciousness to her responsibilities as a legislative leader that makes citizens feel more comfortable in her committee, and staffers feel appreciated for the work they do,” said Jeff Youtz, director of the Idaho Legislative Services Office.

Bell’s experience is not confined inside the borders of the U.S., either. She has also had significant international experience, and participated in a trade mission to China, Japan and South Korea. She gained more international experience when she worked with farmers in the Ukraine to teach women how to organize, lobby and do business planning. During that effort, she taught a number of workshops to a variety of different groups. She also assisted in fundraising efforts to build a cannery in the Ukraine. Such extensive world travel is a gift for Bell, a retired farmer and school librarian who was born in Utah.

**FAST FACTS:**
- Retired farmer and school librarian
- Co-chair of the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee
- Mother of one son, Jeff

Rep. Marcus Conklin  
**Nevada**

Marcus Conklin worked for two years to pass a “Right to Shelter” law to help Nevada minors.

Then he decided to run for the Nevada House of Representatives. “At the time, minors in Nevada could not receive medical or social services without parental consent,” Conklin said of the law that eventually passed in 2001. “During that experience of drafting and lobbying, I developed an appreciation for the importance of negotiation in the legislative process. I decided I could be most effective in bringing about change as a member of the legislature.”

Continuing work on the issue after helping pass the law, Conklin was a founding member and chairman of the board of the Nevada Partnership of Homeless Youth.

**FAST FACTS:**
- Received the Frank Serro Senior Student Athlete of the Year in 1992
- Obtained a master’s degree in economics from the University of Nevada and a master’s in political science from Midwestern State University

Rep. Sara A. Gelser  
**Oregon**

Sara Gelser’s background fighting for the disabled was one of the driving factors behind her decision to run for Oregon’s House of Representatives.

“When my oldest son was born with a developmental disability, I watched with dismay as I saw opportunities closed to him because of his differences,” she said. “I entered public service because I believe that every person regardless of disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, nation of origin, income level, etc. should have access to opportunities to succeed.”

Gelser’s advocacy of children’s issues doesn’t end with disabled children. During the 2007 session, Gelser helped to pass Karly’s Law, which will improve child abuse investigations statewide, and a Medicaid waiver bill that will allow children with severe disabilities to grow up in their family homes rather than foster care or nursing facilities.

**FAST FACTS:**
- Founder of four
- Publisher of the FG Syndrome Family Alliance (FG Syndrome is a multiple congenital anomaly/mental retardation syndrome)
- Recognized by the Oregon Nurses Association as one of four Rising Stars in the Oregon Legislature

“I wanted to develop policies that work for the people who need them, that empower people to be independent, and which put limited resources to the best possible use for the people who need them most,” said Gelser.

In 2007 Gelser was recognized with a Champion award by the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, and received the Sylvia Mann Capper Award in recognition of her work on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. She was also elected by her peers to the Leadership Team in her freshman term.
Elaine Harvey takes her role as an advocate for women seriously, especially in light of the gender imbalance in her legislature. In her state, she’s a minority in the legislature. Just 23 percent of Wyoming’s legislators are women this year. And in the House, just 17 of the total 60 members are female—and Harvey is one of them. “I believe that women bring a needed and necessary perspective to the legislature and other branches of government,” she said. “Less than one-fourth of the Wyoming State Legislature are women. This imbalance does not adequately reflect our citizens.” Other colleagues acknowledge her commitment. “She has a great desire to motivate more women to be involved in their government, helping them build a better life for themselves and all citizens of Wyoming, whether that is working with citizen lobbyists or with leadership training,” Rep. Rosie Berger, a 2007 Toll Fellow, said of Harvey’s help on the Wyoming Women’s Legislative Conference. Born and raised in Wyoming, Harvey also serves as a member on the House Mineral, Business & Economic Development Committee and the House Labor, Health and Social Services Committee. FAST FACTS: Received the Wyoming Public Health Association Politician Award in 2005 • Children’s Resource Center Board of Directors • Friends of Big Horn Lake Charter Member

Lindsey Holmes has made strides during her freshman term in the Alaska legislature. “I’m proud of my role on the House Judiciary Committee, the ‘workhorse’ committee where bills are vetted and improved,” she said. “I am the only freshman on the committee.” In her first term she was also able to pass groundbreaking legislation on domestic violence to increase penalties for repeat offenders and add thousands of dollars to the public safety system. Holmes attributes her role in public service to her mother, whom she lost to cancer when she was 16. “Through all those years she served on local boards and committees, and was helping run a gubernatorial race when she died,” said Holmes. “She taught me the importance of giving back to the community, and instilled in me a love for my state and for public policy. “When my mother died the legislature passed a resolution in her honor and it proudly hangs in my legislative office, as she was my inspiration in selfless public service,” said Holmes. FAST FACTS: Received her juris doctorate from the University of Chicago and a master’s degree from Stanford • 2003 recipient Anchorage Chamber of Commerce’s “Alaska’s Top 40 Under 40” Award

When Rakesh Mohan came to the United States in 1976 to pursue a doctorate in chemistry, he began to read books about the great public servants—Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King Jr. to name a few. He soon realized their common ties—and that inspired him to enter public service. “They believed in individual rights and social equity, two core values of the American political system that guide our leaders in shaping public policies, legislation and judicial review,” said Mohan. Since 2002, Mohan has been director of Idaho’s Office of Performance Evaluations. During his tenure, Mohan directed his office to study key issues including a current comprehensive review and audit of the state’s Department of Transportation. Those efforts garnered Mohan and his office the 2006 Excellence in Evaluation award from the National Conference of State Legislatures. In addition, NCSL has recognized the office with five Impact Awards and three Notable Documents Awards during the past five years. FAST FACTS: Member of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Committee (NLPE) Executive Committee • Received his master’s in public administration in 1990 from the University of Kansas • Member of the U.S. Comptroller General’s Advisory Council on Government Auditing Standards
Wayne Niederhauser believes a senator should be accountable to the people—that’s his pledge. “I believe in policies that strengthen family and property rights, save taxpayer dollars, and hold the government accountable,” said Niederhauser.

He recently sponsored a Transparency in Government Act, which led the Americans for Taxpayer Reform to name him a “Friend of the Taxpayer.” And that was just during his freshman term as senator.

FAST FACTS:
- Married with five children
- Enjoys bicycling and outdoor activities
- Received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accounting from Utah State University

In 2003, Jay Rodne was an activated U.S. Marine Reservist serving in Kuwait and Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We take so much for granted in this country and yet our freedoms and our quality of life have been attained at a price,” he said. “I believe service is an integral aspect of citizenship and from my experience in Iraq, I was inspired to return to the United States and commit to a life of public service.”

He took that call of duty when he was elected to the Washington state House of Representatives in 2004. During his tenure, Rodne has been elected assistant floor leader for the 2005–2007 biennium and selected to serve as ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee.

“Jay’s character and breadth of experience have enabled him to become a highly effective legislator who is admired and respected by his colleagues from both sides of the aisle,” said Attorney General Rob McKenna.

As a result of his work, Rodne was also appointed to the Attorney General’s Task Force on Open Government.

FAST FACTS:
- Member of the Transportation, Judiciary and Financial Institutions committees
- Graduated cum laude from Gonzaga University School of Law
- Father of one son and one daughter

Carol Williams has made history in Montana. During the 2007 legislative session she was elected majority leader, becoming the first woman in Montana to hold that post.

But the Senate isn’t Williams’ first venture into public service. Before entering the Senate, she served in the Montana House of Representatives, and in the 2000 election she was a candidate for lieutenant governor.

She currently serves on the Senate’s Finance and Claims, Law and Justice, Public Health and the Local Government committees and is the chair of the Senate Rules Committee.

“I have been a community activist and professional volunteer most of my life. I found it an easy transition to being a candidate and an elected official,” Williams said of her career in the public sector. “The major factor in deciding to run was a family ethic of public service that I learned from my father as a child,” said Williams.

Williams’ accomplishments are not limited to state government. She was the executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based international women’s organization, Peace Links. During her tenure with the organization, she developed and implemented a series of educational and environmental exchanges with women from around the world. In 1995 she was a delegate to the United Nations conference on the Status of Women in Beijing.

FAST FACTS:
- Received the Western Montana College Alumni of the Year Award 1990
- Married to former Congressman Pat Williams
- Sponsored legislation to fund the Children’s Health Insurance Program

The Henry Toll Fellowship Program helped me to grow personally and professionally. With each and every workshop I was connecting my heart and my head. This experience has rekindled my spirit and my soul, reminding me why I originally wanted to be in public service.

—Cristine McCombs—2006 Toll Fellow
On April 2, Glen Edward Chapman walked out of prison in Raleigh, N.C., a free man after 14 years on death row for the 1992 murders of two women.

Prosecutors had dropped all the charges against him, one year after a North Carolina judge granted him a new trial citing withheld evidence; lost, misplaced or destroyed documents; the use of weak, circumstantial evidence; false testimony by the lead investigator; and ineffective assistance of defense counsel.

But Chapman isn’t angry about the years he was wrongfully imprisoned.

“I’m tired, but not angry. I see no need for it. You can’t go back and give somebody 15 or 16 years back. I did my crying the first couple of years I was there,” he told a Raleigh television station.

He also said he would miss some of the friends he had made while on death row. He believes some of them are also innocent. “I wouldn’t be surprised. The question is, is somebody going to do anything about it? I was lucky,” he said.

Chapman’s story is not uncommon—and it’s causing many states to re-examine the way their criminal justice systems handle capital punishment cases.

“The large number of exonerations from DNA evidence has shown us wrongful convictions happen far more often than previously thought. Consequently, it is extremely important that states take a clear look at the potential for wrongful convictions in any crime, but especially in death penalty cases,” said Stephen Saloom, policy director at the Innocence Project, a New York City-based organization that works to exonerate people who have been wrongfully convicted.

Since 1973, 129 inmates have been released from death row after being exonerated, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. From 1973 to 1999, an average of 3.1 death row inmates was exonerated per year, and that number has increased to five exonerations per year since 2000.
In Illinois alone, more inmates have been exonerated than have been executed—13 compared to 12—since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

Leading the Way

Those troubling statistics in Illinois led then-Gov. George Ryan in 2000 to declare a moratorium on executions in the state. Ryan explained in a statement that he had “grave concerns about our state’s shameful record of convicting innocent people and putting them on death row. And, I believe, many Illinois residents now feel that same deep reservation. I cannot support a system, which, in its administration, has proven to be so fraught with error and has come so close to the ultimate nightmare, the state’s taking of innocent life.”

He then appointed a Commission on Capital Punishment to study the administration of capital punishment in the state “to determine why the process has failed in the past, resulting in the imposition of death sentences upon innocent people.”

After two years of comprehensive research and analysis of the state’s capital punishment system—from the initial police investigation through the trial, appeals and post-conviction review—the 14-member commission made more than 80 recommendations. Many commission members favored abolishing the death penalty in Illinois, but concluded that if the state retained capital punishment, the system would need to be reformed.

The commission recommended, among other things, creating a statewide panel to review prosecutors’ request for the death penalty; banning death sentences of the mentally retarded; significantly reducing the number of death eligibility factors; videotaping interrogations of homicide suspects; and controlling the use of testimony by jailhouse informants.

In 2003, the Illinois legislature approved sweeping death penalty reforms that incorporated many of the commission’s recommendations. The comprehensive legislative package made changes to police procedures regarding disclosure of evidence, created pretrial hearing to help determine the credibility of jailhouse informants, established a system to fire police officers who lie, and prohibited the death penalty for people with an IQ lower than 75.

The law also changed what would qualify a murder as a death penalty case and created a pilot project to change police lineup procedures. In addition, the law made it easier for the Illinois Supreme Court to overturn a death sentence if justices thought it was not called for in a particular case.

The legislature also passed a law to require the audiotaping or videotaping of homicide interrogations and confessions. Electronic recording of custodial interrogations has emerged as a popular and powerful innovation for state criminal justice systems, especially in homicide cases.

Lake County State’s Attorney Mike Waller, who served on the Illinois Commission, lauded the legislature’s actions to implement the recommendations. He cited the requirement that judges and attorneys have special training and be certified in death penalty cases as a positive step. He also praised the mandatory recording of custodial interrogations, because “it removes any issue of what happens during interrogations.”

Several other states have followed Illinois’s lead in passing legislation to require electronic recordings of interrogations.

Thomas Sullivan, who served as co-chair of the commission, praised the legislature for passing several of the panel’s recommendations, but lamented the fact that several key recommendations have not yet been implemented. This includes recommendations related to eyewitness identifications, “which provide much of the risk of wrongful conviction,” he said.

In addition, Sullivan urges the legislature to reform the process by which cases are selected for capital punishment in order to ensure both geographic and racial proportionality in application of the death penalty.

“The death penalty is more likely to be sought and imposed in cases where the victim was white and when the cases were prosecuted in rural, rather than urban, counties,” he said.

Wrongful Convictions Haunt States

Illinois isn’t alone in recognizing the need to make change. At least 10 other states have formed commissions to study wrongful convictions. These commissions are also tasked with making recommendations on how the criminal justice system can provide safeguards and making improvements in the way the criminal justice system carries out its responsibilities in the death penalty process, from investigation through the trial, appeal and executive review.

“Given our understanding that wrongful convictions can and do happen, state commission inquiries into the causes of wrongful convictions and possible remedies are extremely important,” Saloom, of the Innocence Project, said.

Through extensive research and analysis of exonerations, the state commissions have identified many of the primary causes of wrongful convictions as:

- eyewitness misidentification;
- the unreliability of jailhouse informants;
- the withholding of potentially exculpatory evidence;
- carelessness or misconduct in crime labs in processing evidence;
- prosecutorial misconduct or errors; and
- poor legal representation of defendants, especially those using public defenders.

To combat these factors, the commissions have made numerous recommendations for decreasing the possibility of wrongful conviction and execution. In some cases, the state commissions have recommended abolishing the death penal-
On Death Row

- As of Jan. 1, 2008, 3,309 inmates were on death row in 36 states and the federal system, according to the Death Penalty Information Center
- 1,115 people have been executed in the United States since 1976
- Texas has executed the most people (409), followed by Virginia (102) and Oklahoma (87)

New Jersey Abolishes Death Penalty

The New Jersey Death Penalty Study Commission, created by the legislature in 2006, spent a year studying the state’s capital punishment system. It concluded that “there is no compelling evidence that the New Jersey death penalty rationally serves a legitimate penological intent,” such as deterrence; that the cost of the death penalty outweighed the costs of life in prison without parole; and that the risk of mistakenly executing an innocent person outweighs the benefit of executing the guilty. The commission recommended the state abolish the death penalty.

And in December 2007, the legislature did just that, making New Jersey the first state to repeal the death penalty since it was reinstated nationwide in 1976. Gov. Jon Corzine commuted the sentences of the eight prisoners on death row to life in prison without parole. This included Jesse Timmendequas, the repeat violent sex offender who kidnapped, raped and murdered 7-year-old Megan Kanka, who is the namesake of Megan’s Laws now in effect in all 50 states.

New Jersey Sen. Raymond Lesniak, who sponsored the bill to abolish the death penalty, believes lawmakers most likely would not have passed the legislation without the work of the commission.

Lesniak said family members of murder victims also provided another compelling reason for the appeal.

“For the most part, they felt that the death penalty process, with its many appeals, was excruciatingly painful to them,” he said. “They wanted to do their grieving privately, on their own terms, and could not do that while the appeals process was still ongoing and they were being subjected to media attention.

And while the cost of maintaining capital punishment was not a determining factor in the legislature’s decision to abolish it, ending the practice could save the state money. Lesniak said the death penalty has cost the state more than $250 million since 1982, when it was reinstated in New Jersey. This includes the costs related to more complex prosecutions, additional costs for public defenders, the large number of appeals, and the maintenance of death row. During that time period, no prisoners were executed.

States Study Death Penalty

Commissions in other states have stopped short of recommending the death penalty be abolished and instead recommended a series of actions to prevent the possible conviction and execution of innocent people.

The California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice released a 116-page report June 30 on the state’s capital punishment system, describing it as dysfunctional and calling it broken. It concluded that the state would save hundreds of millions of dollars if capital punishment was eliminated and replaced with life sentences without the possibility of parole.

The report also highlighted many problems with the state’s existing capital punishment system, including the failure to adequately fund defense counsel for poor people facing death sentences, a decades-long appeals process, and the risk that innocent people will be sentenced to death. The report presented three options for change: Spend hundreds of millions of dollars to reform the current death penalty; drastically narrow the state’s death penalty to a smaller number of crimes; or replace the death penalty with life sentences without the possibility of parole.

Similar commissions are underway in Maryland, Tennessee, Arizona, Pennsylvania and North Carolina, but Saloom said studies are not enough.

“While it is extremely important that states conduct these inquiries, it is not enough for a commission to simply identify potential causes of wrongful conviction, nor to simply recommend remedies that can minimize that potential situation,” he said. “Ultimately, states must actually fully implement the recommended reforms and remain open to the possibility that even with the reforms in place, wrongful convictions will still inevitably occur.”

State Courts Re-evaluate Capital Punishment

In other states, courts have led the way on death penalty reform.

For example, in January 2008, the Nevada Supreme Court issued new standards for representation of indigent defendants who rely on public defenders, including those facing the death penalty. These standards are intended to provide defendants in death penalty cases with highly qualified counsel.

The new guidelines recommend that a defense team in capital cases should...
consist of no fewer than two attorneys and contain at least one member qualified to screen individuals for the presence of mental or psychological impairment. The court also recommended funds be made available for increased training for public defenders in capital cases, that workloads of the attorneys be maintained at a level that allows them to provide their clients with high-quality legal representation, and that counsel should be adequately compensated to reflect the complexity and “extraordinary responsibilities” of death penalty representation.

Saloom said state commissions and associated reforms regarding wrongful convictions are “critically important to enhance the quality of justice and perhaps as importantly, to help the public maintain confidence in the criminal justice system.”

Sullivan of Illinois described the importance of this effort: “While we may differ on the wisdom and effectiveness of capital punishment, all should insist that the death penalty be imposed only through an accurate, fair and just system.”

—Jennifer Horne Boyter is senior public safety and justice policy analyst for the Council of State Governments.

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**Ending the Death Penalty**

While New Jersey is the only state to abolish the death penalty, other states have considered ending the practice.

- **Nebraska:** In 2007 a bill to repeal the death penalty came just one vote short of clearing the single-chamber legislature.
- **New Mexico:** The House in 2007 approved legislation to repeal the death penalty.
- **Montana:** The Senate in 2007 approved legislation to repeal the death penalty.
- **Maryland:** A bill to end the death penalty was defeated after a tie vote in a Senate committee in 2008.
After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, states took advantage of increased federal funding to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

But those days could be long gone, according to a new report by The Council of State Governments’ Southern Legislative Conference.

Although the funding from the Homeland Security Grant Program to the states increased 755 percent from the 2002 to 2003 fiscal years, largely due to the terrorist attacks, that grant program—operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security—is now declining.

The decline began in 2004, when appropriations fell by 20 percent—from $2.9 billion to $2.3 billion—from that year to 2005. Funding fell again between 2005 and 2006 fiscal years, from $2.3 billion to $1.7 billion, a 29 percent drop. Grants to the states remained static between the 2006 and 2007 fiscal years.

State and local governments are the first line of defense in preparing for and responding to homeland security emergencies, but funding is becoming more of a challenge. States now have less federal help to pay for homeland security needs.

Add that declining grant funding to the dismal fiscal situation many states are facing, and the challenge to adequately fund homeland security and emergency management programs becomes even more daunting.

In response to dwindling federal homeland security funds, states have found it necessary to devise and implement a range of innovative emergency management programs to enhance their security and response capabilities. All 50 states have created specific departments or agencies to address homeland security and emergency management needs in order to more adequately utilize federal funding and implement programs that protect residents from natural disasters and terrorist threats.

The Threat

Disaster preparedness is an essential yet complicated responsibility of states. States must be ready for a variety of threats—including weather-related disasters such as hurricanes and floods, other natural disasters such as earthquakes, energy-related disasters such as blackouts as well as nuclear power plant problems, and a variety of terrorist threats. But preparedness levels are not what they should be, according to two reports ordered by the 2006 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act.

The studies conducted in 2006 found that almost all levels of government needed improvement in preparation for catastrophic events. Only about 20 percent of all state emergency management operations plans, and 10 percent of all municipal emergency management operations plans, were rated as sufficient. The reports also found that emergency preparedness programs of 29 of the 75 major U.S. cities were not sufficient in at least one area.

Health care is just one example. For instance, wait times in hospitals, particularly emergency rooms, increased dramatically between 1997 and 2004, according to a 2008 study by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. In 2004, the study found, patients waited approximately 36 percent longer than they did in 1997 for a given procedure. And, patients awaiting treatment for ailments such as heart attacks or strokes waited in emergency rooms more than twice as long in 2004 than they did in 1997.

Funding could very well have something to do with how prepared states are for the next emergency. For example, although the threat of bioterrorism remains a serious concern for states, federal funding has fallen significantly in the last several years. During the latter half of 2006, the Department of Homeland Security called for the “fundamental modernization” of disaster plans, including bioterrorism preparedness, the first time such an action has been taken since the Cold War. Most importantly, the agency required the coordination of state and municipal programs with federal initiatives. But at the same time bioterrorism funding has dropped, on average, 8.4 percent. In some states, such as New Hampshire and Maine, bioterrorism funding has dropped more than 13.5 percent.

States gained praise for their efforts in a December 2007 report by Trust for America’s Health, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to making disease prevention and public health awareness a national priority. The report, “Ready or Not? Protecting the Public’s Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism,” also encouraged the federal government to increase public health and disaster preparedness funding. The report concluded that based
on President Bush’s fiscal year 2008 budget, “federal funding for state and local (disaster) preparedness will have declined by 25 percent in (three) years,” a startling development given that states must ensure continued improvements in these areas.

**States Make up for Lost Funding**

States are responding to the challenges of preparedness in the wake of ebbing federal funding. Some states have developed programs to increase interoperability among sub-grantees, enhance performance measures, produce effective spending practices, leverage additional funding from federal sources, and encourage cooperation with neighboring states and among agencies within their borders.

In Illinois, for example, the state developed a Terrorism Task Force as a comprehensive effort to integrate ideas, planning and actions regarding homeland security and emergency management objectives into a common purpose and plan. The homeland security strategy involves more than 70 agencies and illustrates an effective strategy for the coordination of planning and response, apportionment of responsibility, and collaboration of efforts for achievable homeland security and emergency management goals in the state.

“Members of the task force understand that domestic preparedness in response to major events is a priority of the highest magnitude and, to that end, maintain an all-hazard approach to preparedness,” said Andrew Velasquez, director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. “The task force continues to build upon a strong foundation of established working partnerships among federal, state and local entities, their private and nongovernmental partners, and the general public toward the facilitation and coordination of resources.”

North Dakota has taken a very active stance with regard to pursuing interstate cooperation. For instance, the state used Department of Homeland Security funding from the 2007 fiscal year to establish the North Central Regional Fusion Center Information Sharing System to enhance intelligence and information integration. Fusion centers are centralized entities utilized for sharing information and intelligence among federal, state and local governments. North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Minnesota have facilitated the creation of a collaborative communication environment supplemented with Web-based mechanisms.

In Kansas, state officials established an innovative program, Crisis City, an area encompassing approximately 36,000 acres used for air and ground training of emergency personnel. The driving force for initiating Crisis City was to provide a variety of emergency response agencies the ability to work together in a cooperative spirit and thus determine how to integrate the needs of emergency management responders, public safety officers and the National Guard into realistic training and exercise facilities. The state will eventually be in a position to lease the facility to other states and local governments, a development that has the potential to generate additional revenue for Kansas.

North Carolina provides an example of how states can effectively integrate public health measures into homeland security and emergency management planning. The state Division of Emergency Management’s Homeland Security Branch works closely with the public health sector to incorporate public health emergencies into its homeland security planning and funding.

“The North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services, Division of Public Health, and Department of Health and Human Services were all involved in the development of the State Homeland Security Strategy, and are active partners in the annual development of Homeland Security Grant Program investment justifications,” said H. Douglas Hoell Jr., director of the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

Such programs demonstrate the states’ dedication to protecting residents despite
rising public safety concerns and shrinking grant funding.

The Solution

Several states emphasized in the SLC study the importance of proper funding to the successful operation of their homeland security programs.

According to David Miller, state administrative agent at Iowa’s Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, additional funding would begin to address the “need to both sustain what has already been built while also trying to improve efforts at the local, regional and state levels.”

And, according to Bill Chornyak, deputy director of Kansas’ Office of Emergency Management-Homeland Security, “[C]ash strapped local governments and state government would benefit tremendously from additional Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) or other federal funds.”

As noted in the report, the role of the federal government in relation to the states remains paramount to homeland security and emergency management funding and planning. As these needs continue to fall under the responsibility of the states, it is urgent for that role to be clear so that actual security can be realized. Likewise, the role played by local governments, and the interface between state and local governments, must be equally understood and orchestrated.

Many state officials expressed concern that the United States has failed to reach such a level of coordination and planning in many critical areas, particularly in the realms of border security and response to public health needs in the event of an emergency. Given the severity of the breaches in homeland security in recent years and the billions of dollars in federal grants disbursed to cities and states since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks for the purpose of improving preparations for catastrophes, the inadequate levels of preparedness in many states and regions is cause for concern among lawmakers and other state officials.

These goals are unlikely to be fully reached without further federal aid for programs, but states also must strive to make the best use of the funds they are afforded, the SLC report concluded. Although subsidies may be limited, potential for innovation is not. It is incumbent upon states to learn from each other, prompt conversation among interstate agencies, and provide programming for the most vital areas of homeland security and emergency management, wherever and whenever possible.

However, it behooves the federal government to evaluate and discuss with state and local governments, such as those of major metropolitan areas, what responsibilities fall into their hands, and which should be placed on state and local governments, according to the report. Furthermore, the report concluded if states are required to develop and operate programs upon which the livelihoods of their citizens depend, then these programs must be adequately funded and supported.

—Sujit M. CanagaRetna is senior fiscal analyst and Jeremy L. Williams is a policy analyst at The Council of State Governments’ Southern office, the Southern Legislative Conference.

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<th>State</th>
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Note: Additional grants—generally smaller—not included in Table 1, also were awarded to several U.S. territories and protectorates and account for any discrepancies reflected in the totals.
Five Northeastern Governors Attend ERC Annual Meeting

The National Lieutenant Governors Association is moving this year to showcase the tremendous potential of the office of lieutenant governor.

“Lieutenant governors across the nation provide critical leadership to effectively confront the challenges before their states,” said Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, who was elected NLGA chairman during the organization’s annual meeting July 23–25 in Buffalo, N.Y.

Other members of the leadership team for this year include Virginia Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling, vice-chair, and Maryland Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown, treasurer.

“It is a tremendous honor to be selected by my colleagues to lead the NLGA in times that call for bold vision and innovative collaboration in our bi-partisan work,” said Lawton.

Attendees discussed a forecast for the economy, managing the cost of chronic illness, the state of the steel industry, tourism and the arts, public-private partnerships in parks; and urban renewal.

Attendees also made site visits to urban windmills, the Department of the Interior’s water conservation project and a brownfield area. They discussed wind energy development, turning brownfield land into a state park and continuation of NLGA Great Lakes policy work.

Members approved six policy resolutions addressing issues of providing better health care for all, supporting the establishment of an international education policy, providing low-cost laptops to children, establishing a national military family relief fund, supporting a public awareness campaign for arts education, and urging support of Arts and Humanities Month.

The full text of these resolutions is posted at www.nlga.us. Twenty-five of the nation’s lieutenant governors are active on NLGA’s executive and operational committees. Committee rosters may be viewed at www.nlga.us.

NLGA is an affiliate of The Council of State Governments.

What happens when you put five Northeast governors in a room to talk about the economy?

More than 450 public and private sector officials found out Aug. 11 as The Council of State Governments’ Eastern Regional Conference held its 48th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum. The meeting, held in Atlantic City, was the largest gathering of state and provincial leaders from the Northeast and eastern Canada.

The meeting focused primarily on ways states and provinces could work together to solve economic challenges.


In addition, Peter Hart, a nationally recognized pollster and political analyst, delivered a keynote speech on the upcoming presidential election, while Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter presented an address on the urban agenda. And John Dickson, the director of the Office of Public Diplomacy Bureau of Western Hemisphere for the U.S. Department of State, led a discussion on the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Delegates also addressed key border security issues between the U.S. and Canada and how those issues impact commerce.

“I want to thank New Jersey State Assembly Speaker Joseph Roberts and Senate President Richard Codey for co-hosting our meeting,” said Alan Sokolow, CSG/ERC director. “In our country’s challenging economic climate, it is vital that our legislators work together to promote regional priorities at the federal level.”

Officials also took part in interactive workshops such as finding financial resources for transportation and infrastructure needs, promoting renewable energy, reviewing updates on health insurance reform, and developing prevention strategies to bullying and bias in public schools.
The downturn in the national housing market and the subsequent increase in foreclosures and instability in the financial markets is impacting on state economies. This article is one in a series that highlights CSG Trends’ publications, which will focus on various public policy issues facing the U.S. today.

By Jennifer Burnett

One in nearly 200—that’s how many U.S. households received a foreclosure filing in just the first quarter of this year, according to RealtyTrac, a Web site that tracks foreclosures.

The unprecedented number of foreclosures represents one of the most visible components of the housing meltdown. Foreclosures have also been among the primary targets of recent state action, including stricter regulation of mortgage brokers and loan originators, more counseling and education for current and potential homeowners, and increased penalties for mortgage fraud.

The shaky housing market and the foreclosure crisis have also contributed to the already grim economic outlook for states.

For many states, the upcoming fiscal year may prove to be one of the most economically challenging in several decades. According to the spring 2008 Fiscal Survey of the States, a joint report from the National Association of State Budget Officers and the National Governors Association, the number of states experiencing revenue shortfalls has increased in the 2008 fiscal year. In 2007, eight states reported lower than expected revenue collections. In 2008, that number grew to 20 states. In July, the National Conference of State Legislatures reported that states face $40.3 billion in budget deficits for the upcoming fiscal year.

The latest foreclosure figures posted by the Mortgage Bankers Association National Delinquencies Survey show the rate of homes going into foreclosure and the percent of loans in the process of foreclosure are at their highest point in 29 years.

In the first quarter of 2008, RealtyTrac reported one in every 194 U.S. households received a foreclosure filing. Foreclosure filings across the nation in the first quarter of this year were up 23 percent over the previous quarter and increased 112 percent from the first quarter of 2007, according to RealtyTrac.

Although foreclosure rates are up for all types of loans, most of the increase in the national rate continues to be driven by subprime loans. A subprime loan is generally defined as one that does not conform to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac guidelines and are often offered to those with poor credit his-
tory or unreliable income. Subprime loans are usually higher risk loans and are often accompanied by high interest rates and large fees. Some subprime loans are predatory loans, although not all subprime loans can be classified as predatory.

Subprime loans and adjustable rate mortgages increased dramatically during the recent housing boom and are now a significant contributing factor to foreclosure rates. Adjustable rate mortgages are loans whose interest rates may change, usually in relation to the Treasury bill rate or the prime rate. These loans often start with a lower interest rate than a traditional, fixed rate loan and then adjust to a higher rate—making a homeowner’s mortgage payment often significantly higher each month when the loan adjusts.

Subprime loans and subprime adjustable rate mortgages specifically represent a disproportionate number of foreclosures. In a June 2008 press release, Jay Brinkmann, vice president for Research and Economics for the Mortgage Bankers Association, said, “...while subprime ARMs represent 6 percent of the loans outstanding, they represented 39 percent of the foreclosures started during the first quarter of 2008.”

There is some good news, however, according to Brinkmann, “About 20 states had drops in their number of foreclosures started, including Michigan, Ohio and Indiana where problems have been the most severe for the last several years.”

The steps states are taking now to ease the impact of increasing foreclosure rates will shape the oversight and regulation of mortgage lending practices in the future, which may help to preempt a predicament of this magnitude from reoccurring.

—Jennifer Burnett is a senior research analyst with The Council of State Governments.

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**Trends in America  Housing Crisis**

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

The condition of the nation’s housing market, including foreclosures and the steps states are taking to address these issues, is the subject of September’s issue brief. Visit www.csg.org to read this issue brief.

**Fast Facts:**
- California, Arizona, Nevada and Florida continue to lead the nation in the number of foreclosure starts in the first quarter of this year, according to RealtyTrac.
- Foreclosure filings across the nation in the first quarter of this year were up 23 percent over the previous quarter and increased 112 percent from the first quarter of 2007, according to RealtyTrac.
- California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill into law July 8 that he and legislators say will force mortgage lenders to talk with homeowners before foreclosing, give tenants more time to vacate foreclosed property and help prevent neighborhood blight, according to The Mercury News of San Jose.
This calendar lists meetings as designated by CSG’s Annual Meeting Committee. For details of a meeting, call the number listed. “CSG /” denotes affiliate organizations of CSG. Visit www.csg.org for updates and more extensive listings.

September 2008

Sept. 8–11 CSG/National Emergency Management Association—NEMA Annual Conference—Portland, OR. Contact Karen Cobuluis at (859) 244-8143 or kcobuluis@csg.org.

Sept. 8–11 Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS) Annual Business Meeting—Palm Springs, CA. Contact Barno Saturday at (859) 244-8235 or bsaturday@csg.org.

Sept. 20–24 CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills (CALS)—Norman, OK. University of Oklahoma and the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center. Contact Lori Jones-Rucker at (404) 633-1866 or jones-rucker@csg.org.

Sept. 25–27 XVIII Border Legislative Conference—Santa Monica, CA. Contact Edgar Ruiz at (916) 553-4423 or eruiz@csg.org.

Sept. 27–Oct. 2 CSG—Henry Toll Fellowship Program—Lexington, KY. Hilton Suites at Lexington Green. Contact Krista Rinehart at (859) 244-8249 or krinehart@csg.org.

December 2008

Dec. 4–7 CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration—Annual Conference—Omaha, NE. Contact registration at (800) 800-1910 or registration@csg.org.

Dec. 8–11 National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Treasury Management Conference & Exposition—Addison, TX. Contact Adnée Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or ahamilton@csg.org.

Fall 2008

CSG/State International Development Organizations—SIDO China Market Research Missions. Contact Chris Whatley, Director of International Programs, at cwhatley@csg.org or (202) 624-5460.

May 2009

May 16–19 CSG 2009 Spring Conference—Coeur d’Alene, ID. Contact registration at (800) 800-1910 or registration@csg.org.

July 2009

July 10–14 CSG/Midwestern Legislative Conference—15th Annual Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD)—Madison, WI. Fluno Center of Executive Education. Contact Laura Tomaka at (630) 925-1922 or ltomaka@csg.org.

August 2009

Aug. 9–12 CSG/Midwestern Legislative Conference—64th Annual Meeting—Overland Park, KS. Contact Cindy Andrews at (630) 925-1922 or candrews@csg.org, or visit www.csgmidwest.org for more information.

Aug. 15–19 CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—63rd Annual Meeting—Winston-Salem, NC. Contact Elizabeth Lewis at (404) 633-1866 or visit www.slsatlanta.org for additional information.

Aug. 22–24 CSG/Southern Governors’ Association (SGA) Annual Meeting—Williamsburg, VA. Contact Liz Purdy Porter at (202) 624-5897 or sga@sso.org.

October 2009

Oct. 5–8 CSG/WEST Annual Meeting—Santa Fe, NM. Contact Cheryl Duvauchelle or Lolita Urrutia at (916) 533-4423 or csgw@csg.org.

November 2009

Nov. 12–15 CSG 2009 Annual Conference—Palm Springs, CA. Contact Registration at 800-800-1910 or registration@csg.org.

July 2010

July 31–Aug. 4 CSG Southern Legislative Conference—64th Annual Meeting—Charleston, SC. Contact Elizabeth Lewis at (404) 633-1866 or elewis@csg.org.

August 2010

Aug. 8–11 Midwestern Legislative Conference—65th Annual Meeting—Toronto, ON, Canada. Contact Cindy Andrews at (630) 925-1922 or candrews@csg.org. Visit www.csgmidwest.org for more information.

Other meetings have value to state officials. Purchase a meeting listing by calling (800) 800-1910 or by e-mailing sales@csg.org. Announce your meetings to thousands in the state government market through an advertisement or a Web listing.
Although the federal government tends to get more attention, state officials are often on the front lines of cutting-edge trends and issues. On the other hand, sometimes in the community of state governments, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

In print since 1958, *State News* (formerly *State Government News*) has chronicled many of the changes … and continuities. Here’s what we reported on:

### 40 years ago—September 1968

**President Calls for ‘Partnership’ With States**

President Lyndon Johnson told governors during the 1968 National Governors Conference that states must initiate programs to serve the needs of the people and thus serve as partners with the federal government, according to an article in the September 1968 *State Government News*.

Johnson and other speakers during the 60th annual meeting urged an increased role for the states as partners with the federal government. Johnson said at the time if states don’t act, the federal government would be forced to step in to resolve problems. The former president said there were times when “responsibility was passed to the federal government by default.”

Then-Gov. John A. Volpe of Massachusetts, the conference chairman, said the growth of federal programs at the time had made the states’ role “more crucial than ever.” He credited the growing involvement from governors for the realization by federal officials that national programs wouldn’t work without involvement of the governors and states.

### 25 years ago—September 1983

**Addressing Science, Math Education Needs**

North Carolina began offering a special place for students gifted in science and math, according to an article in the September 1983 *State Government News*.

The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics opened in 1980 as a public, residential and coeducational high school for juniors and seniors gifted in those subjects. The school, located in Durham, was created by legislative action in 1978 with strong backing of then-Gov. James B. Hunt Jr.

Students attending the school were required to take three units of science, two of mathematics, two of English, as well as American history, physical activity and electives during the two years they were at the school, according to the article. Charles R. Eilber, director of the school, said North Carolina was “proving that educational excellence is possible, practical, adaptable to most communities, and, best of all, an idea whose time has come.”

**Update:**

Math and science education is still a concern in the United States. The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics serves as the model for 18 other schools across the United States, but there’s more.

States are focusing on ways to improve science and math education. Eight states—Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Rhode Island and West Virginia—have formed commissions to set and achieve stateside science, technology, engineering and math—or STEM—education goals. Ohio created a STEM Learning Network to focus on areas critical to effective STEM education, including teacher training, specialty public school programs and college scholarships. The public-private partnership was created to work with public schools and universities to increase the state’s talent in those fields.

Learn more about what states are doing to improve education in science and math, as well as engineering and technology, in an upcoming Trends in America brief from The Council of State Governments.

### 10 years ago—September 1998

**States Say Feds Overstep Authority**

States were upset with a federal requirement to gather 178 pieces of information on welfare recipients and their families as part of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act.

Laura Nelson-Green, then deputy director of consultancy and planning for the Indiana Department of Organizational Development, said the requirements “will stifle flexibility and development of new programs.”

The plan called for states to gather and report far more information to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services than states needed to carry out the law as it was written by Congress.

State officials and advocacy organizations said the law would force states to maintain two definitions of family, one for federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families reporting purposes and one for state needs. That creates more work for state staff, some said.

“When additional requirements are placed on the states, it takes away staff and money from the core purpose of the law, which is to help families to self-sufficiency,” Larry Goolsby, a senior policy association of the American Public Welfare Association at the time, said.

He agreed with states that the regulations were more detailed and complex than what was covered under the law.
You are invited to exhibit at

The Council of State Governments

75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION—ANNUAL CONFERENCE

State executive, legislative and judicial officials from across the country will come together in Omaha to help CSG commemorate 75 years of sharing capitol ideas. You won’t want to miss this opportunity to get your message to these key decision-makers. Complete expo kits are available online at www.csg.org. For more information, call (800)800-1910 or email karnold@csg.org.