Eight fresh ideas

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States are looking at creative new ways of encouraging people to donate.

Trends in 2001 sessions

Education, health and budget actions dominated debate in this year’s

CSG recognizes state Web sites

The Eagle-E-government recognizes the importance of Web sites that provide services online.

More fresh ideas

Semifinalists

Educators, health professionals and government officials from across the country entered the CSG’s annual legislative innovation program.

CSG 2001 innovations awards

States hatch fresh ideas

CSG presents the 2001 winners in the country’s only state government

advertisement.
states hatch fresh ideas

CSG recognizes state Web sites

CSG activities and events, and those of affiliates and other organizations, are highlighted.

1. csg's 2001 innovations awards
2. States hatch fresh ideas
3. CSG recognizes state Web sites
4. CSG activities and events, and those of affiliates and other organizations, are highlighted.

conference calendar

Meetings and conferences of CSG, affiliates and other associations are listed.

excellence in action

CSG activities and events, and those of affiliates and other organizations, are highlighted.

inquiry line

How do state kindergarten programs differ?

by Alan Rosenthal

perspective

Reforming school finance by Ken SO. S

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States act on terrorism

More states have followed the lead of New York by passing anti-terrorism legislation in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Among states that have passed laws that increase the penalty for terrorism is Michigan, where a person convicted of possessing a chemical or biological weapon faces five years in prison and a $5,000 fine, while someone who causes a death with such a weapon faces life in prison and a $25,000 fine; someone who makes a false terrorist threat faces five years in prison and a $10,000 fine. Michigan is also considering proposals to make terrorism a separate felony, enable police wiretaps, criminalize fund-raising by terrorist groups, and increase penalties for false threats.

New Jersey has passed laws making it easier for families of Sept. 11 victims to get death certificates, relax unemployment eligibility and tax deadlines, and joining the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which allows states to come to one another’s aid. New Jersey is also considering proposals to increase the penalties for terrorism and terrorist threats, expand the state wire-tapping law, authorize guards at nuclear plants to carry guns, and require background checks for flight les- sons, increase penalties for the sale of false driver’s licenses and establish college scholarships for victims’ families.

Security chiefs named

Several states have created new committees to oversee and coordinate homeland security. One example is Maine’s Homeland Security Task Force, which has an inter-agency director, Gen. Wendell Gilbert as deputy for homeland security to chair the newly created state Homeland Security Advisory Council, which will assess state’s emergency preparedness.

Security chiefs named

Ontario premier steps down

Ontario Premier Mike Harris, the Ontario premier who led the province through the Sept. 11 attacks and the backlash that followed, has announced he will resign. He will formally step down as premier in March or April, but will continue to represent his riding of Niagara West. Harris decided to resign after a two-year separation, had pressured him to quit. “I did not feel that (leading the party for five more years) was what I wanted to do at this stage in my career,” he said. Harris’ main legacy is the “Common Sense Revolution” he led that balanced Ontario’s budget for the first time while cutting personal and corporate taxes. However, he was also criticized for shutting down hospitals and overhauling the school system.

Anti-terrorism proposals abound

Many states have created new anti-terrorism task forces or commissions, or given new orders to existing ones. Among them, California Gov. Gray Davis ordered the State Strategic Committee on Terrorism to evaluate the potential for a terrorist attack and the state’s readiness, and to make recommendations for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks. The Florida Legislature created two special committees on state security. The House committee will review the state’s laws and make recommendations for revisions to improve security, while the Senate committee made recommendations for new laws to better protect the state’s residents, infrastructure and economy.

Ohio Gov. Bob Taft formed the State Domestic Preparedness Council to assess disaster preparedness in the state and report back in 45 days. Indiana Gov. Frank O’Bannon created the Indiana Counter-Terrorism and Security Council to coordinate public-safety efforts and identify and prevent terrorist attacks. Louisiana Gov. Mike Foster created the Domestic Terrorism Advisory Committee on Sept. 21 to assess the threat of terrorism in the state and what the state needs to do to respond.

Nebraska Gov. Mike Johanns announced that the Domestic Preparedness Task Force, the State Emergency Response Commission and the Nebraska Bioterrorism Work Group will work together to ensure preparedness. New Hampshire Gov. Jeanne Shaheen established the Commission on Preparedness and Security to review the state’s readiness to respond to a terrorist attack and report by Nov. 27.

The New Jersey Legislature has passed the Domestic Security Preparedness Act of 2001, establishing and appropriating money for a nine-member task force to integrate planning and preparedness measures throughout the state. North Carolina Gov. Mike Easley created a task force to examine the state’s ability to deal with terrorist threats and devise a model plan for responding. Ohio Gov. Bob Taft formed the Interagency Task Force on Terrorism Preparedness to assess the state’s readiness to protect residents.

Anti-terrorism task force activated

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Internet tax ban expires

A moratorium on Internet taxes expired Oct. 1 after Congress declined to pass a two-year extension because it has not sorted out how state sales taxes should apply to e-commerce. While analysts said state and local governments are not likely to impose taxes immediately, that could change with an increasing need to raise money. Some lawmakers expressed concern that if tax officials began interpreting a variety of state and local laws as applying to the Internet, the economy could be further weakened. The moratorium, imposed in 1998, banned any tax that singles out the Internet. It did not address the issue of uncollected state sales taxes on e-commerce, estimated at $26 billion in 2000.
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North Carolina Gov. Mike Easley has proposed creating a new class of penalties for terrorism, increasing the punishment for people who possess or use chemical or biological weapons to 20 years in prison, and increasing the punishment to five to 10 years in prison for false reports or hoaxes. The Ohio Legislature is considering bills that would help state National Guard members, military reservists and veterans by exempting military income from the state income tax, increasing compensation for state workers in military service, and waiving professional-licensing fees for veterans.

And in Wisconsin, Attorney General Jim Doyle has proposed a series of anti-terrorism measures, including increasing the penalty for someone who commits, aids, or threatens a terrorist act, expanding wiretapping powers, and requiring people to get court approval before changing their names.

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In Illinois, Attorney General Jim Ryan has proposed anti-terrorism legislation that seeks to expand wiretapping authority for police, ease search-warrant guidelines in emergencies, freeze assets of suspected terrorist groups and make domestic terrorism a Class X felony.

In Montana, the Legislature is considering proposals to make terrorism a separate felony, strengthen the terrorist threat statement, expand the state wire-tapping law and authorize guards at nuclear facilities.

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### Security chiefs named

Several states have appointed retired or former high-ranking officials of homeland security, patterned after the federal post held by former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge.

“Hill a state hadn’t done this, it should,” former Pennsylvania Attorney General Patti A. B. Keanon appointed retired Col. Tim Daniel as special assistant for homeland security, a cabinet member who will lead the Missouri Security Panel. Former Pennsylvania Attorney General Patti A. B. Keanon appointed retired Col. Tim Daniel as special assistant for homeland security, a cabinet member who will lead the Missouri Security Panel.

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Other action on terrorism

States are taking a variety of actions to fight terrorism.

Several states, including Florida, Missouri and New Jersey, have called for or are considering holding special legislative sessions. Some states, such as Florida and Iowa, are seeking changes to the open-records law that allows access to government documents. Many state universities, including those in Indiana and Washington, have handed over to the FBI profiles of international students and people taking English as a second language -- records they normally guard closely.

Arizona has launched a 24-hour hot line for people to call with tips about potential terrorists; it had logged more than 600 calls by Oct. 10. California has also set up a database to track all terrorist threats and hoaxes in the state, and has launched hot lines for people to get information about anthrax threats and to report hate crimes against those of Arab, Muslim or South Asian descent.

Governor Angus King has requested federal funding for more National Guard troops at the Canadian border. Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura stopped re-leasing his schedule to the media for a week in October, citing security concerns, then began delivering it daily before to Capitol reporters. Missouri Secretary of State Matt Blunt reported for active duty in the U.S. Navy on Oct. 9. New Hampshire has stepped up patrols of the Portsmouth Harbor and Piscataqua River and has increased security at the Seabrook nuclear plant.

Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt assured residents they will be safe during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. “We have in our scenario planning every — at least what we thought was every — conceivable scenario since Sept. 11,” he said. “New ones are being developed. But we will be prepared.”

Finally, the National Governors’ Association is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to compile a database of public- and private-sector services and equipment that could be dispatched to help in an emergency in any state. At least 25 states have pledged everything from nurses and DNA technicians to placebos and backaches, said NGAs database coordinator Ann Beacham.

The strike affected many sectors of the state economy. Minnesota Zoos were closed, as were many drivers’ testing stations and motor-vehicle offices. Work on freeways was limited to emergency repairs only, and National Guard troops were called in to keep state hospitals, group homes and nursing and veterans homes running. Only prison guards and state troopers were not allowed to walk out.

At issue in the two-year contract talks were pay and health insurance. Both unions said the state’s annual raise offer of 2 percent was less than last year’s increase of 3 percent and below the inflation rate of 4.2 percent. The unions also disputed the state’s health-insurance plan, which raised the cost of family coverage from zero to $600 to $8,800 a year depending on the plan.

The strike was settled on Oct. 17, when AFSCME: representatives agreed to 3.5 percent pay raises and MAPE representatives agreed to 3 percent pay raises each year for the next two years. The states also trimmed the supplemental mental health benefits for those workers.

About 22,000 Minnesota state employees walked off their jobs Oct. 3, after union and state negotiators were unable to reach agreement on new two-year contracts. Strikers included members of Council 6 of the American Fed-eration of State, County and Municipal Employees, which represents 19,000 clerical, maintenance and custodial workers, the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, which represents 10,500 technical, accounting and management employees.

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Meanwhile, anthrax continues to threaten federal officials, postal workers and members of the media, states have not been immune. New York Gov. George Pataki was forced to vacate his Manhatten apartment building after anthrax was discovered there. No employees were sickened, but all, including Pataki, took the antibiotic Cipro.

Among the recommendations:
• Do not sniff, shake or empty the contents.
• Do not try to clean up powders or fluids.
• Put the envelope or package in a plastic bag, or cover with anything available.
• Leave the room, close the door or turn off the area.
• Wash your hands with soap and water. Do not touch your face or skin.
• Report the incident to the police.
• List all people who were in the room.

Information is available on CSG’s Web site, www.csg.org.

Other cuts or hiring freezes. Ohio Gov. Rob Taft ordered budget cuts or hiring freezes.

Meanwhile, the National Governors’ Association has appealed to the federal government for emergency assistance for states, including a stimulus package being considered by Congress, relief from some federal requirements and suspension of state matching requirements on highways, airport and other construction programs. The governors also are seeking more aid for laid-off workers.

Colorado’s 10,500 National Guard troops are on active duty, and California’s 3,500 Guard members have been called to active duty. California also plans to arm all 26,000 state employees.

Anthrax threatens states

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N.C. passes patients’ rights

North Carolina Gov. Mike Easley signed Oct. 18 what state officials called the toughest patients’ bill of rights in the nation. The law allows patients who have been denied services or treatment to take their case to an external review board, and gives them the right to sue their insurance companies in state court. “Too often, managed-care com-

Supreme Court refuses gun case

The Supreme Court refused Oct. 8 to hear a Louisiana dispute over whether cities can sue gun manufacturers for the cost of crimes, most notably the 2005 New Orleans flooding; cases were also pending in New York and Washington. The Supreme Court has previously refused to hear gun cases.

Ter rorist attacks hurt budgets

Many states, already facing tough eco-

Territorial disputes

Governors of Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, North Carolina, Ohio and Oregon, among others, have ordered budget cuts or hiring freezes. Ohio Gov. Bob Taft ordered budget cuts or hiring freezes this month. Michigan Gov. John Engler vetoed $3.5 billion from the 2002 budget and was consid-

States hardest hit by the Sept. 11 attacks.

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Territorial disputes
The Council of State Governments’ 2001 Innovations Awards

When you’ve tried the tried-and-true and nothing seems to work, then it’s time to seek out fresh ideas. That’s why each year The Council of State Governments selects eight of the best new state and territorial programs and policies to share with officials nationwide.

This year’s winners of CSG’s 2001 Innovations Awards are examples of how states are finding new ways to deliver better government while saving tax dollars.

“CSG’s Innovations Awards is the only comprehensive, national awards program that focuses exclusively on state programs and policies and selects winners based on evaluations by state government leaders,” said Dan Sprague, executive director of CSG.

CSG’s method of selecting the winning programs is truly unique, calling on the resources of the entire organization and relying on the expertise of state officials. After an initial review conducted by CSG policy experts of the hundreds of applications received, regional panels of state officials select two programs from each CSG region, representing states and territories in the West, East, South and Midwest, for an Innovations Award.

The Innovations Awards program is the pioneer of all such programs, having evolved from CSG’s Innovations Transfer program, which began in 1975. To bring even greater visibility to exemplary state programs and policies, CSG established the current Innovations Awards program in 1986. The program also facilitates the transfer of successful programs to other states.

Each winning program will receive its award in ceremonies at its own state capitol in early 2002. In addition, CSG is showcasing this year’s winners and the runners up in this issue of State Government News, as well as in other CSG publications and on CSG’s Web site, www.csg.org.

Congratulations to the 2001 Innovations Award winners from Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Washington, which emerged from more than 350 applications, and to the runners-up. As diverse as they are, this year’s winners share several traits — they make good use of public-private and state-local partnerships and provide better public service. — Elaine Stuart

Share the wealth
States and territories are invited to share their most creative and effective programs with others through CSG’s Innovations Awards program. Regional panels of state and territorial officials and staff will select next year’s winners on the basis of the following criteria: newness, creativity, effectiveness, significance, applicability and transferability.

For information on the program or to apply for a 2002 Innovations Award, contact James Carroll at (859) 244-8257 or jcarroll@csg.org, or visit CSG’s Web site, www.csg.org. Application forms will be available.

“It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.”
— U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis
New Jersey encourages local governments to cut costs and lower property taxes.

When former New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman convened a panel in 1998 to work on property-tax relief, she was the latest in a long line of state officials to take a crack at the problem. With more than 1,600 local governments, schools and fire districts supported by local property taxes, state residents had long struggled to find a balance between local control and high tax rates.

“A new approach was needed, one that offered real incentives to local governments for taking the at times difficult step of merging programs, sharing services and working cooperatively,” said Jane Kenny, commissioner of the state Department of Community Affairs.

The panel proposed a creative and effective two-pronged solution: the Regional Efficiency Development Incentive Program and the Regional Efficiency Aid Program, signed into law in 1999.

The programs encourage local governments to consolidate services where appropriate and to pass on the resulting savings to residents as property-tax relief. Local governments may apply for REDI funds to study the feasibility of consolidating a particular service, and to REAP to receive state aid for property-tax reduction.

The types of services considered for consolidation include emergency communications and dispatching, police patrol, animal-control services and beach-maintenance efforts. The biggest success has been the consolidation of fire departments in the Hudson County area. As a result, residents there typically save $215 in property taxes each year.

Local governments have submitted more than 100 applications for REDI funding as of August. REDI distributes loans and grants for local governments to conduct feasibility studies and covers startup, transition and implementation costs. REDI covers the first $15,000 and 90 percent of excess costs, with the local government providing a 10 percent match. Applications are accepted year-round and applicants are notified of funding decisions within 45 days of submission.

Communities that receive REDI funds are eligible to apply for REAP. The actual savings is determined by formulas developed by the Department of Community Affairs and by the Department of Education in instances where service consolidation involves school districts. Property-tax bills indicate the exact amount of savings resulting from REAP aid.

Homeowners are not the only ones to benefit. Tenants in buildings with five or more rental units also are eligible for relief. So far, taxpayers have received $16.6 million in direct tax credits.

The funding for these programs — REAP was launched with a $10 million appropriation and REAP is supported by a $25 million annual appropriation — is included as part of the state budget. No direct operating costs exist, other than the salaries of five full-time employees in the programs.

The approach of REDI and REAP differs from previous tax-relief programs in two ways. “First, it prompts local officials to make fundamental changes in service delivery that will lead to long-term property tax relief,” said Marc Pfeiffer, deputy director of the Division of Local Government Services. “Second, it demands that the savings brought about by sharing services be passed on to the taxpayers. REDI and REAP promotes innovation at the local level by prompting local officials to rethink the way they provide services.”

Other states struggling to reduce property taxes are likely to find inspiration in the New Jersey model. Because New Jersey ranks 22nd, or near the middle, in the number of local governments, its experience is relevant to other states.

However, some factors that facilitated New Jersey’s success might not exist elsewhere. “To the extent that local units in other states are not as dependent on the local property tax as New Jersey’s counties, municipalities and school districts, the use of property-tax credits may not be as great an incentive,” Pfeiffer said.

Also, in New Jersey, the municipality is responsible for the billing and collection of all property taxes. “If there are multiple units that levy and collect taxes on local property, this could complicate the apportionment and distribution of aid in a REAP-type program,” Pfeiffer said.

Applications for REDI this fiscal year are expected to increase by nearly 50 percent from last year, and the number of communities benefiting from REAP is expected to double. Kenny expects that the amount of property-tax relief provided by the program will come close to the maximum $25 million allowed by the legislation.

For more information about the REDI and REAP programs, contact Marc Pfeiffer, deputy director of the Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, at (609) 292-4584 or marc.pfeiffer@dca.state.nj.us.

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Adam Rich, publications manager, CSG Eastern Office
An innovative program promotes community-based efforts to protect and improve watersheds.

The department also made it quick and easy for local watershed groups to apply for grants from Growing Greener. Within three weeks of the program’s approval in December 1999, the DEP passed out $86.6 million in state funds, which had been matched by $127.1 million in local contributions, including private donations, in-kind assistance and local government funds.

“Other agencies thought we were nuts” to encourage rather than require matching funds, Hess said. “We thought there were enough groups with good local partnerships to generate the matching funds. Still, the amount of matching funds has exceeded our expectations.”

The department also made it quick and easy for local watershed groups to apply for grants from Growing Greener. Within three weeks of the program’s approval in December 1999, the DEP passed out applications at grant-writing workshops across the state. Groups could fill out a one-page, front and back, application or apply online. The DEP received more than 800 applications for the first-year grants by the February deadline and announced the winners April 18, 2000.

Although it streamlined the application process, the department has not sacrificed accountability for those who receive funds. With the help of county conservation districts, the DEP carefully screens applicants and requires recipients to attend grant-administration training. The department also assigns an advisor to every project to provide technical assistance and keep the project on track. More than 300 department staff serve as project advisors.

Administrative costs are capped at two percent. Eight full-time employees provide services to Growing Greener as well as several other grant programs. In addition, the department’s watershed managers, local watershed specialists and project advisors provide staff support.

Through Growing Greener, the DEP partners with numerous local officials, residents and grassroots organizations to tackle the commonwealth’s environmental concerns. Building effective partnerships is fundamental to success.

This summer, Hess visited projects in 29 counties, including Kettle Creek in Potter County, where the Kettle Creek Watershed Association is leading the first-ever attempt to clean up the popular trout stream. Volunteers, including anglers, environmentalists and local officials, are working together to restore the creek using natural stream-design methods.

“The Kettle Creek project demonstrates the spirit of Growing Greener — partnership,” Hess said.

For more information about Growing Greener, contact David E. Hess, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, at (717) 787-2814 or davidhess@state.pa.us, or visit www.GrowingGreener.org.

Cindy Lackey, Eastern regional coordinator, CSG Lexington
Indiana is helping to keep children in day care safe from pesticides and other chemicals. Recognizing that many childhood problems such as hyperactivity, learning disabilities and asthma are directly related to environmental hazards, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management has created the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program for Child Care Facilities. The program is part of the state’s commitment to giving all children, from birth to age 4, the opportunity to develop their greatest potential.

Many childhood behaviors, such as crawling on the floor, placing objects in mouths and playing in the dirt, expose children to environmental risks. Children are more susceptible than adults to problems in the environment. Because most brain development occurs before age 4 and 100,000 children are placed in child-care facilities each day in Indiana, IDEM has created the 5-Star program to recognize facilities that reduce health threats. Under the program, the agency rates the safety of facilities based on a 5-star system.

To find out whether the program was needed, IDEM surveyed several child-care facilities in various socioeconomic sectors across the state. When the agency asked directors and staff of the facilities about environmental hazards, it learned many of them had never received any training on these types of threats.

To get a rating from the program, child-care facilities must fill out an application and receive an IDEM staff person for an on-site visit. A review committee made up of representatives from IDEM, Family and Social Services Administration, state Department of Health, various child-care facilities, local health departments and parents then meet to decide how many stars the facility should get. After a facility receives star recognition, IDEM arranges for media coverage to let everyone in the community know a facility has gone above and beyond in providing a healthy environment for children.

The 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program not only recognizes safe facilities, it also provides assistance to facilities that need to make improvements. If a facility needs immediate on-site assistance, IDEM personnel visit and assess its situation.

Paula Smith, director of the Office of Planning and Assessment in IDEM, said one of the 5-Star program’s greatest strengths is that it costs child-care facilities virtually nothing. There is no application fee, and IDEM contracts with a laboratory to provide risk assessments. Brochures, videos and other promotional items about the program are provided to the facilities at no charge.

Since the creation of the 5-Star program, 66 facilities have earned recognition. All of them have implemented pest management using baits and traps rather than pesticides. Four are among the first in the nation to participate in a pilot program studying the effectiveness of such pest management at child-care facilities.

The 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program is also a model in terms of collaboration and partnership, both across state agencies and between the public and private sectors. Because IDEM does not license and regulate child-care facilities, it works with the agency that does, the Family and Social Services Administration. Other partners include parents, children’s associations, solid-waste-management districts and the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program is highly transferable to other states, Smith said. New legislation was not required to implement it. “Existing rules and regulations may be different in other states, requiring minor adjustments to the program,” she said. All promotional and informational materials are available from IDEM.

The program’s biggest impact, Smith said, is that children are becoming aware of hazards and telling their parents. “This program has educated chil-

Rachel Zietlow, policy analyst, CSG Lexington
Ohio has found a simple way to make money while ensuring its assets are invested equitably throughout the state. BidOhio, an online, competitive auction of interim funds in the state treasury, has produced more than $5 million in extra revenue since it began in October 1999.

“The purpose of BidOhio is to, No. 1, spread the money more equitably throughout Ohio’s banks. But secondly, while maintaining the same parameters of risk, we have earned a lot more money for the state,” said Ohio Treasurer Joseph Deters.

Like other states, Ohio invests its interim funds in short-term financial instruments, such as certificates of deposit, to earn revenue. Interim funds are fees, taxes, and the like that have been collected by the treasury but aren’t yet needed to meet state obligations. By making the bidding process “live” over the Internet, Deters and his staff have been able to make it more competitive, efficient, equitable and profitable.

The state contracted with Muni-Auction, now called The Grant Street Group, a Pittsburgh-based Internet company, to develop the necessary software and to operate the Web site. Once a month, banks can bid online for $42.5 million in funds. The banks can make multiple bids of up to $5 million each, and they can update their bids as often as necessary to remain competitive during the 30-minute auction. The state awards the funds to institutions offering the best rates of return on six-month CDs. The minimum bid rate is the equivalent of the current six-month U.S. Treasury Bill.

Going online has allowed more institutions to join the bidding process, which makes it more competitive. “What I found when I came into office was that most of the banks that were getting the money were near the Capitol, and the smaller community banks were not enjoying the deposits of the state,” Deters said.

When a bank wins a bid for interim funds, its loan-deposit ratios increase, which means the bank can lend more money to individuals and investors in the community. By spreading the funds throughout the state, the program has benefited more communities. The number of bidding institutions has increased from 7 to 57 in the past two years.

Since the more competitive process results in better interest rates and higher revenue for the state, the one-time startup costs of $25,000 to develop the initial program have been more than reimbursed. The Grant Street Group operates the site, and winning bidders pay the company a fee of 0.01 percent of the principal amount of the CD to cover ongoing administration costs. “The program is funded by fees the participating banks pay, so taxpayers aren’t paying for it,” Deters said. “The response has been overwhelming.”

Deters said the idea for the program came from Sue Hamilton, one of his staff members. “I think the most important thing in terms of the success of BidOhio is that officials really work to empower their employees to come up with great ideas like this, and move on them when they make sense,” he added.

More than 30 states have contacted the Ohio Treasury for information about BidOhio. Indiana, South Carolina, Texas, and Allegheny County, Penn., have already replicated the program and are conducting regular auctions.

Deters noted that online auctions will work best in states with large banking communities. “We have a very large and diverse banking community in Ohio, which encourages competition,” he said. “If that exists in a treasurer’s state, then BidOhio, or BidNevada, or BidIndiana — whatever it is — is going to be a big success.”

For more information about BidOhio, contact Sue Hamilton, investment coordinator, Treasurer of State, State of Ohio, 30 E. Broad St., 9th Floor, Columbus, OH 43266-0421, phone (614) 466-6546, fax (614) 466-2499.

Laurie Clewett, Midwestern regional coordinator, CSG Lexington
A growing problem in our nation’s criminal-justice system is the arrest and imprisonment of people who suffer from mental illness. The numbers are staggering. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, more than a third of a million offenders across the country suffer from some sort of mental illness. About 300,000 mentally ill inmates are currently in prison, most in state and local facilities. The strain these inmates place on an already-strained system is shocking, both in terms of cost and administrative difficulties.

Recognizing this strain on the corrections and criminal-justice systems, Florida’s 11th Judicial Circuit has established the Criminal Mental Health Project, a comprehensive program to identify and treat those arrested and imprisoned who suffer from mental illness. The program pulls together courts, corrections, law enforcement, mental-health agencies and health and human service agencies to address, with one voice and one program, the needs of this distressed population.

In the first step of the program, prebooking diversion, a Crisis Intervention Team made up of specially trained law-enforcement officers responds to calls involving people with mental illness. The team determines whether to take a defendant to a receiving facility known as a Crisis Triage Unit for evaluation, treatment and referrals. Previously, a mentally ill offender would have been placed in a jail and could have spent weeks there without proper mental-health services or medication for a noncriminal offense. By placing mentally ill defendants in a Crisis Triage Unit, however, officers can more effectively evaluate, treat and respond to their unique needs.

The next step, post-booking diversion, takes place within 24 to 48 hours of arrest. Mentally ill offenders held for misdemeanors are sent to community health facilities for treatment. Again, the Criminal Mental Health Project seeks to ensure mentally ill offenders are evaluated and stabilized, rather than ignored and possibly made worse by combining them with other, non-mentally ill offenders.

Next, mentally ill offenders are placed in an Adult Living Facility with intensive case management and treatment. This not only ensures their safety and that of the public, but also offers a continuum of care by providing appropriate living situation that is coordinated with the Department of Families and Children. Through such housing, the Criminal Mental Health Project can provide case management, medication and more for mentally ill people who previously had cycled in and out of the criminal-justice system.

Besides helping to provide housing for mentally ill offenders, the Department of Families and Children has also assigned a court case management specialist to the Miami-Dade County Jail Division to link misdemeanor offenders with substance-abuse services and the mental-health system. By collaborating with other agencies on an ongoing rather than case-by-case basis, the Criminal Mental Health Project can take advantage all services and options available for treating mentally ill offenders.

At any given time, the Miami-Dade County criminal-justice system houses about 800 inmates who suffer from serious mental illness. The average daily inmate population is about 6,800, meaning about 12 percent are mentally ill. These inmates cost more than double the national average to incarcerate — about $98 each per day, or $78,400 for Miami-Dade daily. Further, county authorities think at least 400 more inmates suffer from undiagnosed mental illness.

By establishing the Criminal Mental Health Project, Florida’s 11th Circuit has found an innovative way to address what has been a timeless, if not recognized, problem in the criminal-justice system. By identifying, treating and housing mentally ill offenders through a comprehensive, multi-agency approach, Miami-Dade County is promoting public safety, preserving the safety of the offenders, reducing overall costs to the taxpayer and ultimately saving lives.

For more information about the Criminal Mental Health Project, contact Steve Leifman, associate administrative judge, Miami-Dade County, Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building, 1351 N.W. 12th Street, Room 617, Miami, FL 33125, telephone (305) 548-5394, fax (305) 548-5552, e-mail sleifman@jud11.flcourts.org.

John Mountjoy, public safety and justice policy analyst, CSG Lexington
A new Web site acts as an online hub for state procurements.

States are constantly expanding their use of the Internet to simplify government procedures and better serve residents. Under the leadership of Gov. Parris Glendening, Maryland plans to provide 80 percent of its services online by 2004.

To meet this goal, the state Department of General Services launched eMaryland Marketplace in March 2000. The Web site, at www.emarylandmarketplace.com, is fast becoming the online hub for the state’s $6 billion in annual procurements. This site allows state agencies to buy quickly from private vendors. While it once took days or weeks to solicit bids and buy products and services, it now takes just minutes by using the online system.

“eMaryland Marketplace is one of the boldest undertakings in the state’s e-Government portfolio, and by using the Internet we are re-engineering time-consuming, paper-dominated procedures,” said DGS Secretary Peta N. Richkus.

In just 30 months, Maryland transformed its paper-driven state procurement system into the nation’s first statewide Internet-based, interactive system.

In 1998, Maryland issued a request for proposals for a self-funded procurement system that maintained the business rules and security standards required by public procurement regulations while remaining flexible enough to be used by all agencies in the state. The request also specified that participating agencies, universities, counties, cities, and certain nonprofit organizations would not require extra personnel or funds to maintain the system.

After a three-month pilot phase, the state signed a three-year contract with Science Applications International Corporation to provide eMaryland Marketplace as the one-stop procurement shop for state and local agencies. The program, which began with two state agencies, 12 bidding vendors and 20 users, has grown to include 61 state and local agencies, more than 900 bidding vendors and more than 400 trained users.

“The state has adopted eMaryland Marketplace and continues to increase its use of the Internet for procurement,” said William E. Culen, director of the DGS Office of Procurement and Contracting. “Our vendors are learning that this new technology provides an efficient means to improve their access to state procurement information. eMaryland Marketplace provides greater opportunities for small businesses, secures competitive prices for the state and enhances the efficiency and timeliness of the procurement process.”

eMaryland Marketplace was developed and continues to function at no cost to Maryland. The funding formula is simple. First, businesses that subscribe to the site’s interactive bidding service pay an annual subscription fee of $150 for basic service or $225 for premium service. Premium subscribers are notified immediately of bid opportunities in the categories they identify. Second, vendors may place their catalogs on the site and pay a $3.50 fee for each transaction.

The system’s integrator, SAIC, incurs all costs associated with the Web site and receives all revenue up to $5 million. After profits reach $5 million, revenue-sharing formulas provide money to the state. Although the state has yet to make any money from the marketplace, the site posted more than $10 million in contracts in its first year; as of Sept. 15, 2001, that figure had grown to more than $70 million.

Although the system has not made money for the state, it has saved agencies money. The state’s procurement organizations saw a reduction in average administration costs of $100 per order. One county saved $12,000 through 27 bid solicitations during its first month of participation.

eMaryland Marketplace already has been recognized as a leader in online procurement by the National Association of State Chief Administrators, civic.com, an online magazine for government e-commerce, and the International Electronic Government Conference and Exposition. The system is the first to offer bidding, contracting and purchasing functions along with the capacity for comprehensive reporting and auditing. It is also the first e-procurement program to include local governments in its startup.

In response to interest by others, Maryland has provided more than 20 states considering similar initiatives with a copy of its original request for proposals.

Moreover, eMaryland Marketplace continues to grow. The DGS plans to launch the eMaryland Connection program, which will provide additional access to the system by placing computer stations in DGS-operated buildings across the state. This will allow more vendors to take advantage of the e-procurement portal to bid on goods and services sought by state and local governments.

For more information about eMaryland Marketplace, contact Dave Humphrey, director of communications, Maryland Department of General Services, at (410) 767-4652 or dave.humphrey@dgs.state.md.us.

James Carroll, Southern regional coordinator, CSG Lexington
Idaho has a new way to help prospective small-business owners get the answers they need from government. The state has launched a new Web site, Small Business Solutions at www.idahobizhelp.org, to answer most questions a potential entrepreneur might have about local, state and federal regulations and permits.

The site is unique because it allows prospective owners to ask questions in common business language and matches terms with government lingo. It does this by using an interactive decision-tree called Business Wizard, designed by the state’s Reducing Idaho’s Bureaucracy group. The group, made up of business owners, agency heads and staff, has taken on a number of projects to improve services to Idaho’s business owners. In creating the Business Wizard, staff members played a key role by communicating questions asked by potential business owners to system designers, who incorporated their responses in the final product. A steering committee of agency heads provided oversight.

To use the Web site, potential owners must answer questions about the type of business; licenses, permits and special regulations; whether it will use employees or independent contractors; the type of business entity; and whether it will have an assumed business name. The database then provides a list of agencies, forms, publication numbers, phone numbers, Web sites and comments the potential owner may need in each area.

The site can help potential owners save a huge amount of time and energy, especially in a state that has a widespread and largely rural population. “One of the most frustrating things for starting a business is not knowing who regulates what,” said Marguerite Mason, director of the program. Instead of having to travel from remote areas of the state to Boise to visit many different agencies, potential business owners can find out up-front what licenses, permits and forms they need and how much these requirements will cost.

The Small Business Solutions site was funded in April 1999 and went online in July 2000. Startup costs were $120,000, and annual maintenance costs are $36,000, although the state actually pays less than that because $17,000 of that comes from the contribution of time by agency staff. A new feature is planned for mid-2002, when a list of potential funding sources for new businesses will be added to the information currently compiled by the Business Wizard.

The public use of the program is evident by the number of hits the Web site receives. In July 2001, for example, the site counted more than 132,000 hits and 4,000 user sessions, or 130 people per day. Users stay on the site for an average of seven to eight minutes. Thirty percent of Web sessions occur after normal business hours, and 11 percent take place on weekends.

“We hope that we are growing new businesses in the state, especially in the rural areas,” Mason said. “A rural legisla-
In 1996, the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, also known as the Welfare Reform Act, required states to create welfare-to-work programs. Washington responded by creating the WorkFirst program to help welfare recipients move as quickly as possible into the job market.

Many welfare recipients, however, were not being helped by conventional work-transition strategies. Some could not find jobs because they had limited education, a poor work history or difficult family situations. Others who did find jobs lost them for reasons such as spouse or partner abuse, poor work habits, lack of communication skills, lack of education, substance abuse or undiagnosed mental, physical and learning issues.

To help these hard-to-employ welfare recipients gain confidence and skills so they can find work, Washington created Community Jobs. The program, administered by the state Office of Trade and Community Development, provides transitional employment for welfare recipients who have had difficulty finding and keeping work by placing them in jobs at one of the work sites, often a nonprofit agency, contracted from around the state.

Once in the program, participants work 20 hours per week for nine months at the state minimum wage, currently $6.50 per hour. Caseworkers in Community Jobs help participants find ways to reduce their debts, reinstate their drivers’ licenses and plan career ladders, among other things, so they are ready to work. Most participants (93 percent) also choose to receive life-skills and vocational training, where they learn skills such as parenting and budgeting, receive training in areas such as nursing and first aid, or obtain high-school equivalency and associate of arts degrees.

The idea, said Julie Wilson, managing director of Community Jobs, is to foster success by providing beneficial work experience, life skills, job training, frequent contact, and individually tailored career plans, mentoring and support.

“The Community Jobs program philosophy is that participants should determine their long- and short-term goals, both personally and professionally,” Wilson said.

The initial startup cost for Community Jobs was $3.8 million, not including wages. Current annual operational costs are $13.8 million, including wages. Since May 2001, Community Jobs has enrolled more than 5,505 people. The program has expanded to help people who have reached their lifetime welfare-assistance limit, and serves teen-age welfare recipients by teaching important work skills while emphasizing an education.

Since its inception, Community Jobs has expanded to provide job placements in the private sector and apprenticeships with the state labor council, thus broadening career prospects for participants by opening doors that were once closed. These opportunities help establish long-lasting positive outcomes by moving participants into permanent jobs at higher wages, all while saving the state money in wage subsidies.

A recent evaluation by the Economic Opportunity Institute and the Northwest Policy Center at the University of Washington confirmed the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation found that 67 percent of Community Jobs participants obtain unsubsidized employment and 85 percent successfully complete nine months of work in the program.

Community Jobs is the first and most advanced of its kind in the United States, Wilson said. It continues to be an excellent model for serving people with difficulty in getting and keeping a job, and was the first program funded by the state and operating statewide.

While most states could start a program like Community Jobs, some states may have trouble finding adequate funds to provide similar services. However, the return is worthwhile, as seen in the number of Community Jobs participants who have obtained permanent employment and left the welfare system in Washington. “Community Jobs continuously evolves to optimize success for participants,” Wilson said.

The program’s uniqueness, particularly its use of wages, intensive support and nine-month duration, initially made it hard to sell to partner agencies. The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, one of four agencies that oversees the program, worked diligently to smooth out administrative issues and educate officials, first by sharing anecdotal success stories and later by gathering statistical proof of the program’s success.

For more information about Community Jobs, contact Julie Wilson, managing director, at 128 10th Ave. S.W., P.O. Box 42525, Olympia, WA 98405-2525, phone (360) 725-4147, e-mail juliew@cted.wa.gov.
SAFE Homes is a statewide program in Connecticut that addresses the special needs of youth who are experiencing their first out-of-home placement. It offers an immediate safe haven for children and provides stability for future placement by helping the Department of Children and Families decide future living arrangements. For more information, contact Kristina Poly at (860) 550-6421.

The Maine Parents as Scholars Program provides money and support to low-income parents so they can receive postsecondary education necessary to help them get self-sustaining employment. Families who are eligible for welfare may apply to this program. For more information, contact Judy Williams at (207) 287-3106.

The Massachusetts Access to Jobs Initiative provides a statewide transportation service and subsidy for up to 12 months to people moving off welfare and into the workforce. The program has successfully provided transportation to these people so they can work, and it serves as the new transportation element of welfare reform in the state. For more information, contact Margo C. Blaser at (617) 348-5855.

The Special Projects Unit of New Jersey seeks to collect taxes from unregistered out-of-state transient and itinerant businesses operating in the state. The unit is made up of four teams of investigators who use all statutory authority granted to them to obtain tax compliance. For more information, contact Tom MacDonald at (609) 633-3646.

New Jersey EASE (Easy Access Single Entry for Senior Service) is a partnership between the state and counties designed to create local single-entry systems for senior-citizen services. Each county designs its own system with technical assistance from the state. The systems provide core services to senior citizens such as information, outreach and care management. For more information, contact Barbara Fuller at (609) 292-7874.

The Corporate Emergency Access System provides New York businesses with a voluntary system for issuing police-recognized credentials to essential employees, allowing them to access their workplace during emergencies. Government officials can activate the system, enabling businesses to perform critical functions during times of local or regional emergencies. For more information, contact Edward F. Jacoby Jr. at (518) 457-2222.

New York Energy $mart increases energy efficiency by promoting solutions for the private sector in areas such as energy-market competition, consumer education, and research and development. It also emphasizes technologies that protect the environment and provides affordable energy to low-income households. The program is paid for through a charge on the electricity transmitted and distributed by the state’s investor-owned utilities. For more information, contact William M. Flynn at (518) 562-1090.

The Vermont Marketing & Promotional Partnership is a group of 10 state departments that have entered into a joint, three-year contract to market their products and services collaboratively. The group uses a single advertising agency, call center and technology-development firm. The program covers many areas, including Internet technology, market research, advertising and outreach. For more information, contact Sybil Chicoine at (802) 828-3671.

Florida’s Satellite Centers Initiative produces satellites of elementary schools that operate in business, government and community agencies. They offer fifth-grade students a place to complete academic courses while working with employees who act as supervisor-mentors. For further information, contact Tom Zutell, director of the Office of Education and Community Partnerships, at (850) 487-8555.

The Elder Ready Communities and Elder Friendly Businesses program of Florida brings together county and city leaders, a network of groups and agencies involved with the elderly, local and faith-based organizations, private businesses and government agencies. Together they plan and design infrastructures that serve the whole community while allowing elders to age with dignity, security and purpose in elder-friendly environments. For more information, contact Gema G. Hernandez, secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs, at (850) 414-2000.

Created to better protect Florida’s dining public and reduce the number of food-borne illnesses, the Risk-Based Food Safety Inspection Program is based on the federal Food and Drug Administration’s Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points system of regulating food-service establishments. The program identifies the risks and hazards within certain food-service processes. For further information, contact Diann S. Worzalla, special programs administrator, at (850) 922-8850.

Maryland’s Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation initiative is a statewide, incentive-based, comprehen-
sive effort to discourage “sprawl.” It uses the state’s $21 billion budget as an incentive to encourage less costly, more environmentally sensitive and better-planned growth. For more information, contact John W. Frece, Office of Smart Growth, at (410) 260-8112.

The Reaching for the Stars program of Oklahoma provides recognition and financial incentives for child-care providers who voluntarily meet quality criteria. It was designed to improve the quality of child care, increase access to care for low-income families and provide parents with a method for evaluating care. For more information, contact Nancy von Bargen, division administrator, Oklahoma Department of Humans Services, at (405) 521-3561.

The Precious Cargo Program of Texas works to ensure the safest possible traffic environment for schools located along or adjacent to state highways. The program’s goal is to address potential traffic problems before they occur by encouraging school administrators and others who may be involved in building new schools to ask the Texas Department of Transportation for help with traffic-control planning at the earliest stages of construction. For more information, contact Emily Margrett, evaluation specialist, Quality Management Branch, TxDOT, at (512) 486-5469.

The Texas Information Technology (IT) Academy is a collaborative effort between state government and the private sector to help the state recruit, train and retain information-technology workers while also expanding the private IT labor pool in Texas. The Texas IT Academy provides intensive training to people with non-IT backgrounds; in return for their training, participants commit to two years of state employment. For more information, contact Billy C. Hamilton, chief deputy comptroller, at (512) 463-4002.

The Virginia Commonwealth Competition Council was created to ensure state government is competitive in cost and effectiveness. The council’s mission is to provide a permanent forum for continuous improvement so that government does not have to reinvent the “competitive government” wheel with each administration or passing fad. For more information, contact Phil Bomersheim, executive director, at (804) 786-0240.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in collaboration with the State Board of Education has begun work toward providing every child in the welfare system with a stable structure of support so each young person can succeed in the classroom. The Illinois Educational Access Project combines all school systems at every level to ensure the best possible learning environment is achieved. For more information, contact Mark Cole at (815) 753-6018.

Illinois’ Family Option: Permanent Planning for HIV Families is a four-step process that helps mothers and other caregivers plan for the death of a single mother infected with HIV. The process addresses topics such as education, planning, legal issues and after-care. This program is a first step in addressing the needs of these children who will enter foster care when their parent dies. For more information, contact Elizabeth Monk at (312) 328-2285.

The Illinois Department of Human Services created the Coordination Rewards Illinois Babies to help reduce the number of children with very low birth weight, reduce infant mortality from high-risk groups, and streamline health costs for poor families. Illinois’ two largest programs, Women, Infant and Children and Family Case Management, are now combined with this program. For more information, contact Michael R. Larson at (217) 782-5946.

Through the Domestic Violence/Substance Abuse Task Force, Illinois brings substance-abuse and domestic-violence professionals together to address the critical lack of coordinated services and treatment for clients with co-occurring issues. The task force has established an annual conference on these issues, published a manual of “Best Practices” and implemented four demonstration projects. For more information, contact Carol Brigman at (217) 524-6034.

Illinois’ Mental Health and Juvenile Justice Initiative links agencies serving children to better serve those in the juvenile-justice system who suffer from mental illness. Normally, delinquent children are prohibited from receiving treatment. This program helps expedite the treatment needed by children in state custody. For more information, contact Gene Griffin at (312) 814-4963.

The Illinois Urban Systems of Care Program links agencies that provide social services and mental-health treatment to families in the Chicago Housing Authority. This system helps remove barriers that prevented families from receiving help in the past, such as lack of transportation, unemployment and gang warfare. For more information, contact Peter Nierman at (773) 794-4895.

The Illinois Interagency Committee on Employees operates the Internships for College Students with Disabilities Program in an effort to bolster the number of disabled workers in state government. This program links college students that have disabilities with state agencies for brief internships. At the end of the internships, the agencies are encouraged to hire these workers. For more information, contact Audrey Crimson at (312) 793-2406.

The Indiana Department of Corrections created the Women’s Prison “Offender-Mother Summer Day Camp” to provide incarcerated mothers with quality time with their children. State employees from various agencies, volunteers and even inmates without children collaborate to offer this annual, five-day camp. For more information, contact Dana Blank at (317) 639-2671.

The Employer Partnering in Child Support program was created to link employers across the country with the Iowa Child Support Recovery Unit. This collaboration has helped children in the state obtain much-needed financial support from non-custodial parents. For more information, contact Nancy Thoma at (515) 281-5647.

Iowa citizens and state employees now can share ideas and success stories with state agencies to improve customer service through the Reconnecting Iowans with their Government program. Gov. Tom Vilsack hopes the program will boost morale of state employees and eventually change attitudes by focusing on what government does right. For more information, contact Mary Milz at (515) 281-3322.

Kansas created the Workforce Planning Program to study future economic trends, enabling the state to adjust its workforce to meet the changing demands of the economy. By linking several agencies, the Department of Personnel Services developed a multiphase strategy to streamline the human-resource process. For more
information, contact Bobbi Mariani at (785) 296-6750.

Through Kansas’ Project 2000—Putting the Customer First, a revitalized Department of Revenue streamlined taxpayer filing requirements while improving customer service. The tax-operations division split into four main units — channel management, customer relations, compliance and enforcement — while the revenue department was able to reduce its workforce. For more information, contact Tim Blevins at (785) 296-3973.

People with learning disabilities often have a hard time finding and keeping jobs. The Kansas TANF Learning Disabilities Initiative screens welfare recipients in an attempt to diagnose and treat learning disabilities that prevent them from finding permanent employment. For more information, contact Sandra Hazlett at (785) 296-6750.

Under the Michigan Prison Build Program, inmates build components for use in the construction of Habitat for Humanity homes. Once an inmate is released, the state works with Michigan contractors to employ those who have gone through the prison build program. For more information, contact Bill Martin at (517) 373-1944.

The Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry created a statewide database of children’s immunization records that authorized users may access anywhere in the state. This database will help alert officials if any area has a decrease in immunization, and it will inform the public of places where vaccines are needed. For more information, contact Bob Swanson at (517) 335-8159.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights streamlined procedures to provide faster, better and expanded service to residents through the Problem Resolution Process. This process allows for a more timely response to the civil-rights concerns of clients. This initiative has eliminated a backlog of 4,300 cases in two years. For more information, contact Nanette Lee Reynolds at (517) 334-9335.

The Region 10 Quality Assurance Project was designed and piloted by Minnesota’s Quality Assurance Commission as an alternative licensing system that incorporates a person-driven, value-based program that significantly enhances the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. For more information, contact Cindy Ostrowski at (507) 876-3011.

Nebraska started the Warner Institute for Education in Democracy to help educate students on the importance of a representative democracy and its role in our society. The Internet-based program provides seven learning projects geared to provide students and teachers throughout the state with a better understanding and appreciation of representative democracy. For more information, contact Tracy McKay at (402) 471-2788.

The Student Accountability Information System (SAIS) is a unique real-time system that connects K-12 schools, districts and the Arizona Department of Education and tracks school enrollment, academic and fiscal information. Its standardized formats provide instant, accurate and secure information over the Internet to school-funding agencies. For more information, contact Steve Holzinger, development project manager, at (602) 542-7394.

Under the Arizona Privatized Lease-to-Own program, a private-development team finances, designs, constructs, operates and maintains state office buildings on the Arizona Capitol Mall. The private developer leases the new office buildings to Arizona at a rate below current state appropriations for leasing private office space; the state then owns the buildings at the end of a 20- to 25-year lease. For more information, contact Robert C. Teel, assistant director, Arizona Department of Administration, General Services Division, at (602) 542-1920.

GS Smart® (pronounced “G-S Smart”) is an efficient, open, and organized financial marketplace for state and local governments in California to make installment purchases. This Internet-based program allows transactions to be completed quickly and conveniently by eliminating the length and complexity of the previous financing process. For further information, contact Patrick Mullen, GS Smart® manager, at (916) 327-2600.

MyCalifornia provides a framework for enterprise development in state government and gives online access to government information and to a suite of new applications ranging from buying a fishing license to renewing vehicle registration. The portal is central to the state’s ability to deliver higher levels of customer service through e-government — that is, to make doing business with government easier, less expensive, more flexible and faster. For more information, contact Arun Baheti, director of e-government, at (916) 445-1176.

The MALAMA A’o O’i program of Hawaii was launched to solve the problem of replacing old, dilapidated furniture in schools because the state has no funds to do so. Inmates under the supervision of the Hawaii Department of Public Safety refurbish chairs and desks for the Hawaii Department of Education with materials provided by the Hawaii Department of Accounting and General Services. For more information, contact Lynn McAuley, correctional industries administrator, at (808) 488-4883.

The Oregon Lifespan Respite Care Program is a system of community-based networks that serve families and caregivers who seek a temporary break from the intensive demands of providing ongoing care to a loved one. Access to respite resources allows families to help themselves, thereby reducing stress, preventing abuse and neglect, and decreasing the risk of out-of-home placement. For more information, contact Debbie Bowers, respite administrator, at (503) 945-6815.

The Plant Operation Support Consortium is an innovative, self-sustaining program that combines technology and operational savvy to enhance stewardship of public facilities and serve as “resource central” for Washington state government. A small core staff supports a family of public-facilities managers, providing solutions, project management expertise, resource brokering, procurement assistance and a broad array of engineering and architectural assets for overworked facility staff. For more information, contact Bob Mackenzie, Plant Operations Support, at (360) 903-7257.

Consumer Health Services was created to establish a simple, unified and up-to-date food-safety system for Wyoming. Its primary objectives are to keep up with current science, create a single food-safety agency, and form a partnership between state agencies of public health and agriculture. This program brings together public-health and food-science tools to combat food-borne illness. For more information, contact Laurie Leis at (307) 777-6587.
CSG recognizes state Web sites

The Eagle E-Government Awards highlight states that best provide services over the Internet.

BY ED JANAIRO

Georgia, Minnesota, North Carolina and North Dakota are among the award-winning states in The Council of State Governments’ Second Annual Eagle E-Government Awards program.

The Internet is drastically changing the way state governments do business. Because of these changes, states can reach out to more people and deliver better service to constituents and businesses. CSG’s Eagle E-Government Awards program identifies outstanding e-government initiatives each year and highlights how the states are successfully meeting the growing demand for online government services.

A recent report by the Council for Excellence in Government, a nonprofit organization that promotes good government, shows that 73 percent of Americans think our leaders should make e-government a domestic priority. The Eagle E-Government Awards program is unique in that it focuses on all three branches of state government and relies on a panel of judges who are practitioners in state government.

The judges are elected state officials, state government staff and CSG’s private-sector associates, so the choice of winners reflects the expectations and demands that state government officials and other users have of e-government. The selection of winners also reflects the judges’ belief that Internet technology can make state government more accessible and relevant to the lives of its constituents.

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The Best Legislative Branch Web site award went to the North Dakota Supreme Court (www.court.state.nd.us). This site has a fully searchable database that contains nearly a decade’s worth of opinions. A unique feature is the use of hyperlinks in online published opinions, allowing the visitor to easily access related legal sources. Other judicial branch sites winning an Eagle Award are the Arkansas judiciary and Utah state courts sites.

North Carolina’s NC @ Your Service (www.ncgov.com) took the Best State Portal award. This site, which won many awards, employs a citizen-centered design and was lauded for its easy navigability and access to services and information. Its wide range of functions and ability to be personalized make the site suitable for use as a home page by any North Carolinian. The state portals MyCalifornia and New Jersey Home page also received Awards of Excellence in this category.

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Sites were judged on several criteria including ease of use, design, accessibility to the public, technological innovation, and how effectively it streamlines government and delivers better customer service. Judges also reviewed the sites to determine whether they had features essential for good e-government, such as state officials’ contact information, foreign-language translations, a help page, a search function, a site index, an alternative text-only site and other features that make it accessible to the disabled.

More information about the Eagle E-Government Awards program and links to the award-winning sites can be found at www.csg.org/eagle.

Ed Janairo is a technology analyst at The Council of State Governments.
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BY ED JANAIRO
Budget battles

In 2001, many states faced their worst fiscal problems in a decade, fueling contention between residents. The economic downturn and massive layoffs in various sectors after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks only added to states’ budget woes.

Seven states missed their statutory or constitutional deadlines for passing budgets. California, New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

In a July 26 ceremony in California that Republican lawmakers shunned, Democratic Gov. Gray Davis signed the budget into law, 26 days past deadline.

Minnesota came within a day of a government shutdown June 30 before a special session agreed on budget and tax bills. The new budget transferred responsibility for funding schools to the state and provided $1.5 billion in property-tax relief. In addition, Minnesota taxpayers received $700 million in sales-tax rebates in August. However, 23,000 Minnesota workers went on a 14-day strike that ended Oct. 14 when they won better pay and health benefits.

New York lawmakers passed a pared down version of Gov. George Pataki’s budget Aug. 3, four months after the state’s April fiscal year ended. On Aug. 17, the governor sued the Legislature, contending it illegally deleted his formula for spending Medicaid and school funding. Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver responded, “We have a right to modify his proposals.”

To solve the budget crisis, the New York Assembly and Senate in October approved the greatest expansion of gaming in the state’s history. The legislation allows six Indian casinos, slots at horse racetracks and the multi-state Powerball lottery to operate in the state. “We desperately need revenue. It doesn’t give me any great pleasure in what we’re doing,” Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno said of the measure.

New York was not the only state to turn to gaming. To implement a constitutional amendment approved by voters in November 2000, South Carolina lawmakers approved a state lottery sold as a way to raise money for college scholarships and scheduled to start Jan. 7, 2002. California approved a law allowing residents to bet on horse races over the Internet and by telephone. The Nevada Legislature approved a study of Internet gambling. West Virginia approved video gaming to fund raises for teachers.

North Carolina legislators ended their longest-ever session Sept. 26 after enacting a $620-million tax increase, including higher sales and income taxes.

In Tennessee, legislators turned down Gov. Don Sundquist’s request to adopt an income tax. In an anti-tax protest inspired by talk-radio hosts, several thousand people stormed the state Capitol in Nashville during a July 12 legislative budget vote. The General Assembly enacted its longest recent session when it override Sundquist’s budget veto. The governor objected to the Legislature balancing the budget by using $560 million, or four years’ worth of tobacco-settlement funds, in one budget year. “It is hard to convince people that we need more taxes when the state has more than a half-billion dollars of tobacco-settlement money collecting dust in a bank,” Lt. Gov. John Wilder said.

Besides Tennessee, several other states including Michigan, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin, used tobacco money to help balance the books. According to an August report by the National Conference of State Legislatures, states are spending only 5 percent of their funds from the 1998 settlement on tobacco-related programs. The organization found that slightly more than a third of the $21 billion allocated from the tobacco settlement since 2000 has gone toward health care.

In Wisconsin, the Democratic Senate and the Republican Assembly agreed July 26 on a budget that increased the cigarette tax as reflected in their State-of-the-State messages at the beginning of 2001 sessions. Funding for public schools also was at the heart of many budget battles. Legislatures increased state aid to public schools in more than 30 states in 2001. In addition, at least 20 states approved pay raises for teachers.

Legislatures also passed measures aimed at increasing school accountability, dealing with student testing, enhancing teacher quality and recruitment, and improving early childhood learning.

Eight states that enacted new anti-tax measures throughout the year, while at least 20 approved pay raises for teachers. Legislatures also passed measures aimed at increasing school accountability, dealing with student testing, enhancing teacher quality and recruitment, and improving early childhood learning.

Tight budgets generated debate over education funding. Legislatures and governors in Alabama, Arizona, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, New Mexico, North Carolina, Vermont and Virginia all struggled over school finances.

In Alabama, legislators spent a lot of time on education cuts but authorized $110 million in bonds to soften the impact. Settling a battle that pitted kindergarten-12 schools against higher education, the Alabama Supreme Court ruled June 29 that the two sectors would have to share education cuts.

Maine Gov. Angus King finally won legislative approval for his proposal to pay for laptop computers for all students in 7th grade. The state set aside $30 million for the first-in-the-nation plan. By October, however, the state faced a deficit, causing some to question whether the program can be funded.

Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura won approval for comprehensive reform shift...
Budget battles

In 2001, many states faced their worst fiscal problems in a decade, fueling contentious sessions. The economic downturn and massive layoffs in various sectors after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks put pressure on state treasuries. Among the measures states passed in 2001 were more funding for schools, prescription-drug aid, expanded children’s health programs and voting changes.

Two states—Minnesota and New York—were among those that addressed budget cuts with new tax proposals. Minnesota came within a day of a government shutdown June 30 before a special session agreed on budget and tax bills. The new budget transferred responsibility for funding schools to the state and provided $1.5 billion in property-tax relief. In addition, Minnesota taxpayers received $700 million in sales-tax rebates in August. However, 23,000 Minnesota workers went on a 14-day strike that ended Oct. 14 when they won better pay and health benefits.

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increasing public-school costs from local property taxes instead of local taxes to fund schools in times of property tax shortfalls. In Missouri, teachers and school employees for the needy exist in more than 25 states and territories. States addressed prescription-drug costs. In other action, 19 states improved mental-health or substance-abuse laws or programs this year to provide health insurance, according to a 2001 survey by the Children’s Defense Fund. New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. Prescription-drug programs for the needy exist in more than half the states. In a bit of good news for states, the Bush administration Sept. 18 approved Florida’s law requiring drug manufacturer grants to provide discounts if they want their products included on a list of preferred drugs for recipients of Medicaid, the joint state-federal health program for the poor. However, the drug industry has used to stop the Florida program. The drug industry also appealed lower court decisions upholding Maine’s first-in-the-nation prescription-drug program, which allows the state to negotiate for lower drug prices on behalf of its residents, and to impose price controls if negotiations don’t work. Montana and South Dakota, who plan to formulas to fund schools in times of fiscal problems threatened other medical-system cuts in 2001. In California, 44 states. However, the drug industry has sued to stop the Florida program. The drug industry has used to stop the Florida program. The drug industry also appealed lower court decisions upholding Maine’s first-in-the-nation prescription-drug program, which allows the state to negotiate for lower drug prices on behalf of its residents, and to impose price controls if negotiations don’t work.

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Idaho gave teachers pay raises and raised the minimum pay to $25,000 annually. Two. Now, the state is working on a plan to raise teachers' pay by $7,000 to match the Southeastern average.

New Hampshire legislators dismissed Gov. Jeanne Shaheen’s proposal to improve school funding, saying they could not help pay for schools, and instead made permanent the statewide property tax for schools and raised the minimum pay to $28,000 a year.

In New Mexico, Gov. Gary E. Johnson vetoed a comprehensive education reform proposal that included teacher raises, saying it was too expensive.

North Carolina Gov. Mike Easley praised the Legislature for passing tax increases that will provide $25 million to reduce school class sizes and raise teachers’ pay.

Ohio’s new school-finance system got clear ance from the state Supreme Court in a 5-2 decision that ended a decade-long court fight. The Court ruled that additional spending of $800 million over two years would decrease disparities between rich and poor districts.

Vermont legislators debated for months the changes to the state’s 1997 law that established a statewide property tax instead of local taxes to fund schools. The problem of how to adjust aid formulas to fund schools in times of falling enrollments puzzled legislators in Montana and South Dakota, who plan to take the issue up again in 2002.

Teachers and tests

While many states approved raises for teachers, Hawaii teachers won 20 percent raises after staging a two-week strike in April that kept 183,000 children out of school. Mississippi teachers staged sit-downs to press for higher pay, while the Legislature remained deadlocked over school finance. Iowa will base pay on performance rather than just tenure, and increase the minimum salary for teachers to $28,000 a year.

Prescription drugs

Of the $881 billion states spent in fiscal 1999, $238 billion was for prescription drugs, Medicaid alone accounted for a 9 percent rise in state spending in the past year. This makes states watchful for rising costs of prescription drugs. At least 16 states addressed the rising cost of prescription drugs this year by passing laws or programs to aid the poor and elderly. Those acting included California, Florida, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. Prescription-drug programs for the needy exist in more than half the states.

In a bit of good news for states, the Bush administration Sept. 18 approved Florida’s law requiring drug manufacturer s to provide discounts if they want their products included on a list of preferred drugs for recipients of Medicaid, the joint state-federal health program for the poor. However, the drug industry has used to stop the Florida program. The drug industry also appealed lower court decisions upholding Maine’s first-in-the-nation prescription-drug program, which allows the state to negotiate for lower drug prices on behalf of its residents, and to impose price controls if negotiations don’t work.

Expanded health care

While all states have State Children’s Health Insurance programs, at least 16 states improved or expanded these pro grams this year to help low-income families who do not qualify for Medicaid. Arizona, Texas and Wisconsin streamlined their SCHIP programs to enroll more children. Reform was needed in Arizona, where 25 percent of children lack health insurance, and 39 percent of children in Vermont have health insurance, according to a 2001 survey by the Children’s Defense Fund.

Medical use of marijuana is not allowed under federal law, after a May 14 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit. However, the Court did not overturn laws in eight states allowing medical marijuana. Despite the Court’s decision, the Nevada Legislature passed a law in June to allow approved patients to smoke marijuana for medical reasons. Nevada voters had approved an initiative calling for the action.

New Hampshire passed a bill that allowed maintenance plans were protected under new laws in New Jersey, North Carolina and West Virginia. Similar laws protect patients in 44 states.

In move that affects 37,000 low-level drug offenders in the state each year, California imple mented a voter-approved measure July 1 that makes nonviolent drug offenders eligible for treatment rather than jail. Voters in Arizona mandated a similiar program in 1996. The Oregon Legislature became the first law-making body to pass a measure in 2001 providing treatment for drug offenders who are drug naive to jail. “In dollars and effective ness, I saw a huge savings for getting folks out of prison and investing in edu cation,” said Oregon Sen. Ryan Deckert, who sponsored SB 914.

States in the Northeast, Southeast and West passed measures to control mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile virus. The virus can cause an inflammation of the brain in humans and lead to death. Other states took action to prevent the accidental release of toxins in the environment. Oregon banned thermostats, thermometers and other products containing mercury, which can cause birth defects and other health problems.

Punch cards banned

Irregularities in Florida’s voting proce dures and equipment that delayed the outcome of the 2000 presidential election led states to examine electoral systems and equipment.

Florida, Maryland and Georgia approved sweep ing reforms, including opposition to punch card equipment. Other states enacted laws or approved rules that seek to avoid problems revealed in Florida. Because punch-card machines in Florida had failed to clearly register votes on the 2000 ballot. However, the Court did not overturn laws in eight states allowing medical marijuana. Despite the Court’s decision, the Nevada Legislature passed a law in June to allow approved patients to smoke marijuana for medical reasons. Nevada voters had approved an initiative calling for the action.

A new Nevada law established a statewide standard for recounting punch cards to count votes. Florida, Georgia and Pennsylvania passed bills that define what constitutes a vote on a punch-card ballot. Colorado, Kansas and Washington clarified rules for recounts. Iowa and Oregon appropriated money for the creation of a state-wide voter-registration database, but budget problems forced Oregon to withhold spending for its system.

Fiscal problems threatened other reforms as well. Georgia lawmakers passed legislation requiring a uniform, statewide voter identification, but failed to fund the effort. Idaho’s proposed voter-approved tax to fund school construction was defeated. In a move that reversed the passage of a ballot initiative requiring a uniform, statewide system for recounts. Iowa and Oregon appropriated money for the creation of a state-wide voter-registration database, but budget problems forced Oregon to withhold spending for its system.

Other items

California was rocked by soaring elec tricity prices and power outages in early 2001. The state intervened in electricity markets and spent $11.3 billion to keep electricity flowing. The flow of money from the state’s landmark law to deregulate electricity markets. The law’s price freeze on retail electricity and sky-high wholesale power costs wrecked the creditworthi ness of the state’s major utilities, which had been forced to sell off their power supplies. In a move that reversed the state’s deregulatory law, the California PUC suspended retail choice Oct. 1.

In response to the California power crisis, Nevada repealed its 1999 deregulatory law, and Arkansas and New Mexico delayed deregulation for up to five years. However, Illinois, Maryland, New York, Tennessee and Arizona continued to move toward deregulation. Other states kept deregulatory laws on the books.

Owners of cell phones have been challenged in court at press time, among them plans in California, Colorado, Georgia, Oregon, Texas and Maryland.

With budget problems likely to intensify in coming months, states face difficult choices. Arizona, Georgia and Texas are dealing with growing demands for state services, rising health costs, larger unemployment rolls and increased anti-terrorism efforts.

Elaine Stuart is senior managing editor of State Government News.
Giving life

States are looking at creative new ways of encouraging people to donate their organs.

By Trudi Matthews

Medical advances over the past two decades have enabled many people suffering from life-threatening diseases to return to productive lives through organ and tissue transplants. Yet one of the unrecognized tragedies in the United States is the number of people who could be helped by an organ or tissue transplant, but who never receive one because a donor’s wishes are not honored when he or she dies.

Indiana Rep. Peggy Welch knows firsthand how easy it is for grieving family members to override the wishes of a deceased family member. As a registered nurse and a board member of the Indiana Children’s Organ Transplant Association, she knows of instances in which family members went against a deceased person’s express wishes and refused to allow donation.

That is why Welch sponsored legislation that requires family members to honor a deceased loved one’s wishes concerning organ donation. “Living wills and other documents are not worth the paper they are written on, if doctors and family members can override the decision,” Welch said. “If you want to be an organ donor, your decision should be honored.”

Nationwide there is a shortage of donor organs, which means only a fraction of those on the waiting list receive an organ. “There are more than 77,000 men, women and children on the waiting list for an organ, and there were only about 23,000 transplants last year,” said Lynn Wegman, director of the Division of Transplantation at the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. About 15 people die each day waiting for a donated organ.

Underlying the shortage of donated organs and tissues is the disparity between how many people say they believe in donation but how few transplants happen in real-life. Figures from a national Gallup survey indicate that 85 percent of Americans support organ donation. Yet studies show that only about 50 percent of families consent to donating a loved one’s organs when given the opportunity.

In recent years, states have accepted the challenge of increasing awareness about donation and improving donation procedures. Ohio passed legislation in 2000 that provided funds for a media campaign, reorganized its donation advisory committee and created a donor registration program. More than 77,000 people are on waiting lists for an organ, but only 23,000 get one last year.

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Other practices from states

States are often at the forefront of providing leadership, structure and support for organ and tissue donation. Some examples of extraordinary state initiatives include:

• Pennsylvania’s Act 102, published in The Council of State Governments’ 1997 Suggested State Legislation

• Illinois “Live and Learn” legislation, passed in 1993

• Kentucky’s “Trust for Life” legislation, enacted in 1992

• Virginia Transplant Council, established 1986

• Former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson established an annual Gift of Life Medal ceremony for families of organ donors in 2000

• Michigan Secretary of State’s Office honored with a 2000 CSG Innovations Award for its Organ and Tissue Donor Registry Enrollment Program
Giving life

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BY TRUDI MATTHEWS

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Pennsylvania’s Act 102, published in the Council of State Governments’ 1997 Suggested State Legislation, requires hospitals to routinely notify organ procurement organizations of all deaths and impending deaths so families can be offered the option of donation. The 1994 law created an Organ Donation Advisory Committee and a donation awareness trust fund financed by voluntary contributions obtained through state tax returns and applications for driver’s licenses or identification cards. New Jersey and Delaware passed similar laws in 1995 and 1996. Between 1994 and 1999, organ donation in the eastern half of Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware rose by 59 percent, compared to a 14.6 percent increase nationally.

Illinois’ “Live and Learn” legislation, passed in 1995, raises $2 million annually for organ- and tissue-donor education through vehicle title and transfer fees. Under the leadership of then-Secretary of State, now Gov. George Ryan, Illinois established a statewide advisory panel to coordinate education activities, including the “Life Goes On” multimedia campaign. Current Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White has sponsored special conferences to increase awareness, developed materials to encourage donation in minority communities, and established a Web site and 24-hour computerized donor registry. More than 5 million driver’s licenses and identification holders are in the state’s donor registry, and organ donation has risen 54 percent since 1993. Kentucky’s “Trust for Life” legislation, enacted in 1992, allows citizens obtaining a driver’s license to contribute $1 to an organ-donor awareness fund administered by circuit court clerks. By 1999, 50 percent of Kentuckians with a driver’s license had contributed $3 million had been raised, and organ donation had increased 62 percent.

The Virginia Transplant Council, established by Virginia’s General Assembly in 1986, has contributed to the development of legislation requiring Virginia hospitals to establish donation protocols, has developed a statewide educational curriculum for health and driver education students, created promotional materials for Department of Motor Vehicle branch offices, and has established a donor registry.

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Former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson established an annual Gift of Life Medal ceremony for families of organ donors held at the Executive Residence; distributed flyers in state employee paychecks to encourage them to become organ and tissue donors; signed a law allowing for paid leave of absence for state employees who serve as living donors (30 days); paid bone marrow donors (5 days); signed a law requiring driver-education classes to spend at least 30 minutes on organ and tissue donation; and proclaimed May 1-5, 2000, as Life Planning Week in support of an initiative by the State Bar of Wisconsin, the State Medical Society of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association and Gunderson Lutheran Medical Center to help the public with advance planning, including organ and tissue donation.

The Michigan Secretary of State’s Office was among eight state programs honored with a 2000 CSPI Innovations Award for its Organ and Tissue Donor Registry Enrollment Program. The program offers a convenient method for Michigan residents to become registered organ donors. Through prepaid postcards and Internet sign-up, Michigan residents can add their name directly to the Gift of Life’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry Enrollment Program. The program offers a convenient method for Michigan residents to become registered organ donors. Through prepaid postcards and Internet sign-up, Michigan residents can add their name directly to the Gift of Life’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry Enrollment Program. The program offers a convenient method for Michigan residents to become registered organ donors. Through prepaid postcards and Internet sign-up, Michigan residents can add their name directly to the Gift of Life’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry Enrollment Program.
continued from page 28

registry, a computerized record of organ donors available any time to authorized personnel. Ohio’s new legislation also designated donor cards and driver’s licenses as binding legal documents for donation.

Since the legislation was passed, Ohio’s Second Chance Trust Fund Advisory Committee has been busy working with Department of Health and Bureau of Motor Vehicles personnel. The committee oversaw an opinion survey of Ohio residents regarding donation, developed a strategic plan donation in the state and is currently developing rules for the donor registry.

“In Ohio’s opinion survey we found that nearly 95 percent of respondents said they believed in organ donation and that if a loved one wanted to donate, they would comply with the decision,” said Barb Petering of the Ohio Department of Health. “Therefore, the donor registry was an important component of informing families of their loved ones’ wishes.”

In addition to efforts in Ohio and Indiana, states have used a number of other initiatives in recent years to encourage donation:

- At least 16 states have established donation advisory boards or committees, including Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.
- Twenty-three states have enacted laws requiring emergency personnel to search at the site of an accident for emergency personnel to search at the site of an accident for
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donor registries and is planning

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a national forum on the issue. “Almost all states give residents the option to consent to donation on their driver’s licenses, but most states do not have access to that information,” said Wegman. HRSA is looking at state donor registries and how they are being implemented — whether there is online registration and access, how registries across states might be linked and how to capture the information about donation from motor-vehicle records.

As director of the Division of Transplantation, Wegman has had a bird’s-eye view of organ-donation policy at the state level and has seen what works. “Awareness and education is a key part of encouraging donation,” said Wegman. “People who consider donation and who discuss it with their family are more likely to become donors.” State leaders can play a key role in helping to raise awareness, educate the public about donation and improve donation rates in their states.

Forty states have passed legislation that officially created state donor registries. These include Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Virginia. If a deceased person is a candidate for organ or tissue donation, authorized personnel are able to access the donor registry.

(For further information on donor registries and how they operate, see the report Analysis of State Actions Regarding Donor Registries at www.organdonor.gov/aspehealth.html.)

Thirty-nine states have enacted laws that treat an indication of intent to donate by donor card or driver’s license as an advance directive that requires no further consent. Although this is the case in most states, hospital personnel usually still request permission from the next of kin before proceeding with donation.

Since time is of the essence in donation, acting quickly upon a decedent’s wishes might increase donation by reducing the time spent locating and obtaining consent from next of kin. In recent years, some states, such as Indiana and Ohio, have passed legislation that strengthened the language regarding intent to donate to do away with the need to get the approval from the next of kin.

At the federal level, officials are also working to increase awareness of the importance of donation and to develop sound donation strategies. Tommy Thompson, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was a vocal advocate of organ and tissue donation as governor of Wisconsin. In his new role, Thompson has urged more governors and states to get involved in recognizing donors and their families.

Thompson has also encouraged corporations and state governments to help educate the workforce about the need for donation through his Workplace Partnerships for Life initiative. He is working with Congress to create a national Gift of Life medal to honor donors and their families. A model driver’s education curriculum on donation is in the works as well.

The Health Resources and Services Administration has studied best practices regarding donor registries and is planning

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resouces

to help address the critical shortage of organ donors, CSG has joined with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Conference of State Legislatures and other organizations to provide timely information to public officials on organ and tissue donation. A forthcoming publication on organ donation for state officials called State Strategies for Organ and Tissue Donation: A Resource Guide for Public Officials brings together what CSG, HHS and NCSL have learned about innovative state approaches to increasing donation and saving lives.

For more information on this publication, please contact Trudi Matthews, senior policy analyst at CSG at (859) 244-8157 or tmatthews@cs.org.
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 14-17</td>
<td>State Legislative Leaders Foundation Emerging Issues Program “America Unplugged!: Meeting the Energy Demands of the Future”</td>
<td>Las Vegas NV, University of Nevada/Las Vegas</td>
<td>Contact Evlaine Corrigan at (702) 299-1238 or (800) 532-3375 or <a href="mailto:sfleet@aecom.com">sfleet@aecom.com</a>, <a href="mailto:sfleet@capco.net">sfleet@capco.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2002</td>
<td>NSC Midwestern Legislative Conference 27th Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Fargo, ND, Holiday Inn. Contact Michael McCabe at (605) 881-0102</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2002</td>
<td>American Probation and Parole Association 27th Annual Training Institute</td>
<td>Denver, CO — Adam’s Mark Hotel. Contact Kris Chappell at (303) 244-8204 or <a href="mailto:kcchappel@csg.org">kcchappel@csg.org</a> or see <a href="http://www.appa-net.org">www.appa-net.org</a></td>
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<td>May 2002</td>
<td>National Association of State Treasurers Annual Conference</td>
<td>Biloxi, MS — Beau Rivage Hotel. Contact Adree Hamilton at (859) 244-8174</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2002</td>
<td>State Legislative Leaders Foundation Leaders Advanced Management Program “Meet the Press: Understanding and Responding to the Modern Media”</td>
<td>New York, NY, Columbia University</td>
<td>Contact Roberta Duane or Janice Giovon at (508) 771-3821 or (508) 532-3379</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 20-20</td>
<td>National Association of State Treasurers Annual Conference</td>
<td>Biloxi, MS — Beau Rivage Hotel. Contact Adree Hamilton at (859) 244-8174</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 20-20</td>
<td>CSG National Conference of State Treasurers Annual Meeting</td>
<td>St. Croix, VI — Divi Carina Bay. Contact Gail Manning at (859) 244-8171 or <a href="mailto:gmmanning@csg.org">gmmanning@csg.org</a> or see <a href="http://www.ncfg.org">www.ncfg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2002</td>
<td>CSG 2002 National Annual Meeting and Leadership Forum</td>
<td>Richmond, VA — Richmond Marriott. Contact Wanda Hines at (859) 244-8200 or <a href="mailto:whines@csg.org">whines@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2002</td>
<td>CSG/Southern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA — Sheraton New Orleans. Contact Colleen Cisneros at (404) 266-1271 or see <a href="http://www.scaltlanta.org">www.scaltlanta.org</a></td>
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<td>August 2002</td>
<td>American Legislative Exchange Council Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Orlando, FL — Hotel BTA</td>
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<td>August 20-23</td>
<td>CSG Midwestern Legislative Conference 27th Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Fargo, ND — Holiday Inn. Contact Michael McCabe at (605) 881-0102</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 20-27</td>
<td>National Governors’ Association Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN — Contact Susan Dotchin at (202) 624-5327</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2002</td>
<td>CSG Henry Toll Fellows Program – Lexington, KY – Hilton Suites at Lexington Green</td>
<td>Contact Allison Spurrer at (859) 244-8249 or <a href="mailto:aspurrer@csg.org">aspurrer@csg.org</a> or see <a href="http://www.csg.org">www.csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2002</td>
<td>CSG 2002 Annual Meeting and Leadership Forum</td>
<td>Richmond, VA — Richmond Marriott. Contact Wanda Hines at (859) 244-8200 or <a href="mailto:whines@csg.org">whines@csg.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2003</td>
<td>CSG Southern Legislative Conference Winter Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Washington, DC — Hyatt Regency. Contact Susan Donchin at (202) 624-5327</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2003</td>
<td>CSG Spring Meeting – Washington, DC — Hotel BTA</td>
<td>Contact Susan Donchin at (202) 624-5327</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2003</td>
<td>National Governors’ Association Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Ft. Worth, TX — Hotel BTA. Contact Colleen Cisneros at (404) 266-1271 or see <a href="http://www.scaltlanta.org">www.scaltlanta.org</a></td>
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<td>April 2003</td>
<td>National Governors’ Association Annual Meeting</td>
<td>San Francisco, CA — Hotel BTA</td>
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<td>May 2003</td>
<td>2003 CSG/Midwestern Legislative Conference 29th Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Milwaukee, WI — Wisconsin Club. Contact Mike McCabe at (608) 810-0210</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2003</td>
<td>CSG Annual Meeting – Pittsburgh, PA — Hotel BTA</td>
<td>Contact Wanda Hines at (859) 244-8200 or <a href="mailto:whines@csg.org">whines@csg.org</a></td>
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Midwest: Bowhay Institute taking applications

Applications will be available in December for the 2002 Bowhay Institute for Leadership Development, to be held July 12-16 in Madison, Wis. Each summer, The Council of State Governments’ Midwestern Office selects legislators from the region to participate in BILLD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Participants develop leadership skills through a curriculum of professional development and policy analysis seminars, and meet peers from neighboring states.

Last August, 35 Midwestern and Canadian legislators became the seventh graduating class of BILLD after five days of intensive training. The Fellows participated in such policy sessions as teacher compensation and student achievement, Midwestern electricity markets and manufacturing in the global economy. In addition, the program included professional development seminars on time management, communicating with the public, legislative strategies, creating win-win public policies and media relations.


Lawmakers are chosen to be fellows by the BILLD Steering Committee through a competitive, nonpartisan process. To receive application materials or for more information, call Laura A. Tomaka at (630) 810-0210 or visit the program’s Web site at www.csgmidwest.org/MLC/BILLD/BILLD.htm.

Midwest: Saskatchewan to host 2005 meeting

The Canadian province of Saskatchewan will host the Midwestern Legislative Conference’s Annual Meeting in 2005. The conference’s Executive Committee made the decision to allow an MLC affiliate to host the event for the first time during the MLC’s 56th Annual Meeting in Lincoln, Neb.

While welcoming Midwestern lawmakers, Saskatchewan plans numerous other special events during 2005 to celebrate its 100th year as a Canadian province.

Also at its annual meeting, held July 29 — Aug. 1 in Lincoln, Neb., and attended by almost 600 people, the MLC heard from several renowned speakers. It passed 13 resolutions and welcomed Ontario as the newest Canadian affiliate.

Several resolutions approved by MLC members dealt with agricultural issues, including one calling for a nationwide ban on the use of MTBE as a fuel additive and several others aimed at finding ways to help family farms. One resolution, proposed by the MLC’s 56th Annual Meeting in Lincoln, Neb., dealt with several important regional policy issues dealing with important regional public policy issues.

The meeting ended with delegates hearing historian Stephen Ambrose, author of books on Lewis and Clark, the transcontinental railroad, D-Day and World War II, speak about past U.S. leaders and what made them great. Attendees also heard presentations by speakers Mark Shields, a political commentator for CNN and PBS, and clinical psychologist Mary Pipher, author of No. 1 best seller Reviving Ophelia. Throughout the conference, legislators participated in sessions dealing with important regional public policy issues.

In 2002, members of the MLC will meet Aug. 18-21 in Fargo, N.D. The Annual Meeting will be held in Milwaukee, Wis., in 2003 and in Iowa in 2004.

East: Annual Meeting a success

More than 300 state leaders from around the Northeast met in Bartlett, N.H., Aug. 26-29 to discuss a host of issues ranging from electric deregulation to health insurance and trade. The event was the 2001 Annual Meeting of The Council Of State Governments/ Eastern Regional Conference.

“Working with colleagues from around the region always proves to be an enormous help and productive,” said New Hampshire Reps. David Alkoumis and Tom Crosby, ERC’s 2001 co-chairs. “We all have common concerns, and there’s a lot to gain by taking what has worked elsewhere and applying it to our efforts here in New Hampshire.”

Other issues delegates tackled included agriculture, juvenile justice, transportation policy and education finance.

In addition to discussing state policy, delegates passed a number of resolutions to support federal policies that benefit the Northeast. Among them were increased Amtrak capital funding, continued support for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, renewed advocacy for Northeast agricultural concerns in federal policy, and environmentally friendly water policy.

Delegates to the conference also participated in skills workshops focusing on using the Internet to facilitate their work and effective time-management techniques.

Several nationally known speakers addressed the group. ABC News Correspondent Bettina Gregory moderated a discussion on media that included Howard Fineman, senior editor at Newsweek, and Pete Hamill, editor of the New York Daily News. Lowell Bergman, the correspondent for The New York Times and Frontline producer for Al Pacino in the 1999 movie The Insider, spoke about his reporting on California’s electricity crisis.

The Eastern Regional Conference was established in 1937 and includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, the Virgin Islands, and the Canadian provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Prince Edward Island.

East: ERC has temporary office

The Eastern Regional Office of The Council of State Governments, which was destroyed during the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, has found temporary office space for the next two to three months.

You may reach Alan Sokolow, Pam Stanley, Cynthia Valve and Renee Brackett at the CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution, 366 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10017-3122. The phone number is (212) 944-6560, and the fax number is (212) 694-8859.

When calling, be aware that the phone will be answered by the CPR Institute because these ERC staff members are sharing the institute’s receptionist. Also, please address mail to CSG East, c/o the CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution.

Staff not listed above are still working from home and can be reached on their cell phones.
Midwest: Bowhay Institute taking applications

Applications will be available in December for the 2002 Bowhay Institute for Leadership Development, to be held July 12-16 in Madison, Wis.

Each summer, The Council of State Governments’ Midwestern Office selects legislators from the region to participate in BILLD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Participants develop leadership skills through a curriculum of professional development and policy-analysis seminars, and meet peers from neighboring states.

Last August, 35 Midwestern and Canadian legislators became the seventh graduating class of BILLD after five days of intensive training. The Fellows participated in such policy sessions as teacher compensation and student achievement, Midwestern electricity markets and manufacturing in the global economy. In addition, the program included professional development seminars on time management, communicating with the public, legislative strategies, creating win-win public policies and media relations.


Lawmakers are chosen to be fellows by the BILLD Steering Committee through a competitive, nonpartisan process. To receive application materials or for more information, call Laura A. Tomaka at (630) 810-0210 or visit the program’s Web site at www.csgmidwest.org/MLC/BILLD/BILLD.htm.

Midwest: Saskatchewan to host 2005 meeting

The Canadian province of Saskatchewan will host the Midwestern Legislative Conference’s Annual Meeting in 2005. The conference’s Executive Committee made the decision to allow an MLC affiliate to host the event for the first time during the MLC’s 56th Annual Meeting in Lincoln, Neb.

While welcoming Midwestern lawmakers, Saskatchewan plans numerous other special events during 2005 to celebrate its 100th year as a Canadian province.

Also at its annual meeting, held July 29 — Aug. 1 in Lincoln, Neb., and attended by almost 600 people, the MLC heard from several renowned speakers, passed 13 resolutions and welcomed Ontario as the newest Canadian affiliate.

Several resolutions approved by MLC members dealt with agricultural issues, including one calling for a nationwide ban on the use of MTBE as a fuel additive and several others aimed at finding ways to help family farms.

One resolution, proposed by the newly formed Elections Task Force and approved by the full MLC, voices support for maintaining local and state control over elections. The MLC also supported resolutions by its Health and Human Services Committee dealing with federal reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the treatment of people suffering from mental illness and substance abuse.


The meeting ended with delegates hearing historian Stephen Ambrose, author of books on Lewis and Clark, the transcontinental railroad, D-Day and World War II, speak about past U.S. leaders and what made them great.

Attendees also heard presentations by speakers Mark Shields, a political commentator for CNN and PBS, and clinical psychologist Mary Pipher, author of The New York Times No. 1 best seller Reviving Ophelia. Throughout the conference, legislators participated in sessions dealing with important regional public policy issues.

In 2002, members of the MLC will meet Aug. 18-21 in Fargo, N.D. The Annual Meeting will be held in Milwaukee, Wis., in 2003 and in Iowa in 2004.
West: Californian receives award

Former California Assemblywoman Denise Moreno Ducheny was awarded the 2001 Betty Fahrengamp Award for legislative leadership in the Western region at CSG-West’s annual meeting in Whistler, British Columbia, this summer. The award is named for late Alaska Sen. Betty Fahrengamp of Fairbanks, who served in the Alaska Senate for many years and was a tireless advocate of Western states working together to achieve regional interests.

CSG-West leaders cited Ducheny for her efforts as founding chair of the joint CSG-West/Southern Legislative Conference Committee on the South-ern Border. That committee provides a forum for legislators from four U.S. states and six Mexican states to discuss common issues along the shared 2000-mile border. Since its creation, the committee has examined environmental, transportation, health and water issues in a dynamic region undergoing dramatic change.

Ducheny, a San Diego resident, represented an assembly district that borders Baja, Mexico. As a legislator, she achieved notable successes in convening cross-border coalitions of legislators and other elected officials. Legislators from all 10 U.S. and Mexican border states enthusiastically greeted her proposal to create a Southern Border Committee, and many attended meetings during the four years when she served as its chair.

National: Publications available

CSG State Directory II — Legislative Leadership, Committees & Staff 2001 and CSG State Directory III — Administrative Officials 2001 are now available.

Directory II includes the name, address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail and Web addresses for elected and appointed officials with primary responsibility in more than 150 state government functions. Sample categories include administration, debt management, elections administration, facilities management and higher education, to name a few.

To order, contact CSG’s publication sales order department at (800) 800-1910 or access CSG’s online store at www.csg.org/store/

National: Toll Fellows program taking applications

Emerging leaders from the legislative, executive and judicial branches of state government who are looking for a chance to improve their leadership skills and gain a greater appreciation for the public service challenges that lie ahead should apply for the 2002 Henry Toll Fellowship Program.

Each year since 1986, 40 leaders selected from across the country have gathered in Lexington, Ky., for the Henry Toll Fellowship Program, the premier leadership development program for state government officials, sponsored by The Council of State Governments.

The program was named for Henry Toll, a Colorado Senator and founder of CSG, who wanted to provide information and contacts to state officials across the country.

Toll Fellows are selected competitively based on their leadership potential and accomplishments to date. The 2002 program is scheduled for Sept. 28-Oct. 3. The application deadline is Jan. 7, 2002.

To request an application or for more information regarding the program, contact Allison Spurrier at (859) 244-8249 or aspurrier@csg.org, or refer to our Web site at www.csg.org.

NASPE: Big meeting at Big Sky

The National Association of State Personnel Executives held its 2001 Annual Meeting in Big Sky, Mont., July 7-11. A record number of more than 200 attend- ed the conference, allowed people from 31 states and 22 companies to share infor-mation on human-resource issues affecting the country’s state personnel agencies.

Presentation topics included hiring and retaining employees, leadership development, compensation, human resources over the Internet, work-force planning, and workplace violence. Ohio and Wisconsin were recognized for outstanding human resource programs, and Mollie Anderson, director of the Iowa Department of Personnel, was honored for her leadership in human-resources management at the annual awards dinner on July 10.

NASPE will hold its midyear meeting in Oklahoma City on Feb. 1-3, 2002.

NASTD sets new tone

Charleston, S.C. welcomed more than 300 attendees of the 2001 National Association of State Telecommunications Directors Annual Conference and Trade Show this past August.

During its annual business meeting, NASTD passed a motion to change the association’s motto to “NASTD: The Association for Telecommunications and Technology Professionals in State Government.” The change reflects a new effort to include more state executive-branch telecommunications and information-technology officials as a part of the organization.

NASTD also agreed to work to increase its promotional efforts, emphasize special-interest groups and expand membership. The new leadership also committed to build upon this year’s Charleston meeting as it prepares to meet next September for the 2002 Annual Conference and Trade Show in Anchorage, Alaska.

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The National Association of State Facilities Administrators held its 2001 Annual Conference & Trade-show, June 9-13 in Lexington, Ky. The conference provided attendees from 34 states and 27 companies the opportunity to share information on facility issues affecting the country’s state facilities administrators.

CSG Executive Director Dan Sprague addressed the conference as did keynote speaker Dr. Carl Hurley. The highlight of the meeting was the awards banquet where Arizona, Michigan, Missouri, and Washington were recognized for outstanding state facilities programs. Outgoing President Gary Grimes of Kansas also presented the 2001-02 president’s plaque to Lamar Holland of Georgia.

CSG Associate Profile: Becton, Dickinson & Co.

Welcome to the first of our CSG Associate profiles. Each month, we will highlight a CSG Associate and its work in the states. We will also hear from Associate members on the trends affecting their industry.

Becton, Dickinson & Co.

For more than a decade, health-care professionals, elected officials and the public have been increasingly concerned about two major issues — the exposure of health-care workers to blood-borne pathogens through needle- stick injuries and the possibility that workers may make mistakes in administering medication or collecting blood samples. Becton, Dickinson & Co., a global medical-technology company, addresses these issues through a broad range of products and services.

“As the world’s largest manufacturer of hypodermic needles and syringes, plus a broad array of other sharps products, BD has been working hard to provide safety-engineered solutions that protect health-care workers from accidental needle-stick injuries,” said Ted Jurashcek, director of government relations. “We applaud the federal government and the many states that have recently enacted legislation to ensure that products with safety-engineered features are available for use by all health-care workers.”

To address the problem of medical errors, BD and other companies sell handheld, software-based systems that significantly reduce the number of medication and collection errors. “Hospitals are facing such tight margins and shortage of capital that most cannot afford to purchase these systems themselves, Jurashcek said. “States and the federal government can help by appropriating and designating funds that can be used to help purchase these effective systems.”

Jurashcek predicts that in coming years, his industry will address the cost of health care and medical technology. America is in the midst of a revolution in medical technology that will yield major break-throughs in areas such as artificial organs, tissue engineering, DNA-based testing and diagnostic imaging. Jurashcek said. Advances in medical technology have allowed more patients to receive better care at a lower cost. Americans older than 65 are living longer, more productive lives. Advances such as coronary stents, implantable defibrillators and minimally invasive heart surgery have helped cut the mortality rate from heart disease by 40 percent over the past 20 years, Jurashcek said.

BD manufactures and sells a broad range of supplies, devices and systems for use by health-care professionals and the general public. These include such diverse products and services as anesthesia products, antibiotics, diabetes-care accessories, elastic bandages and braces, infectious-disease analysis units, surgical blades, scalpels and scrubs, prefilled drug-delivery systems, lab equipment and health-care consulting services.

Headquartered in Franklin Lakes, N.J., the company also has facilities in California, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Carolina and Utah, and has a significant presence in more than 65 countries worldwide.
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How do kindergarten programs differ?

BY JAMES CARROLL

Just as in other aspects of public education, state governments control the kindergarten programs within their boundaries. These programs vary among the 50 states in such aspects as whether kindergarten is mandatory, how long the school day lasts, and how old children must be to enter.

Children entering kindergarten face myriad changes. Many things such as developmental opportunities in the new environment can significantly affect a child’s reaction to these changes. While experts agree that kindergarten is a critical time in a child’s development, they have no shortage of theories about which programs are most effective. Here are the major differences in how the 50 states deal with five major issues in kindergarten.

Is kindergarten attendance mandatory?

Only 15 states and the District of Columbia require children to attend kindergarten before starting first grade. Of those, Louisiana and West Virginia allow some students to enter first grade by passing a readiness test in lieu of attending kindergarten.

Are schools required to offer kindergarten?

Although a majority of states do not require children to attend kindergarten, most do force local school districts to offer the program. In fact, 42 states impose this requirement. The eight states that do not are Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota and Washington. Although not required, all districts in Idaho and New Jersey do have kindergarten programs. Meanwhile, in Arizona, where kindergarten is required, school districts can make an exception if the Department of Education approves a formal exemption claim.

What states require full-day kindergarten?

Of the 42 states that require kindergarten, 12 must offer full-day programs. These are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia and Oklahoma, where legislation was signed in May. New Mexico also passed a law this year that will phase in full-day kindergarten programs until they are required in 2004. In Illinois, the state will fund full-day programs, but the decision on program length is still left to the local districts. Another 12 states require that kindergarten classes be offered at least half a day. These include Arizona, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The remaining states leave the decision to local school districts.

Are state funds available for kindergarten programs?

Despite variation in the requirements that states impose on local districts, all 50 states provide at least partial funding for kindergarten.

How old must a child be to enroll in kindergarten?

In 36 states a student must be 5 years old by some time in August, September or October to enroll in kindergarten. Connecticut and Vermont require a student to be 5 by January 1, while Indiana sets the date at June 1. Five states (California, Hawaii, Michigan, New York and Rhode Island) require a student to turn 5 by a set day in December. The other six states allow local school districts to set the age for kindergarten entrance. In Pennsylvania, state law allows students as young as 4 to attend, but each district sets the age requirement for its schools.

For decades educators and educational experts have looked at kindergarten as the first stage of a child’s educational development. However, researchers are increasingly emphasizing children’s development at younger ages. Some states are replacing their K-12 (kindergarten through 12th grade) educational systems with ones that coordinate education from preschool through undergraduate college work, or P-16 systems. In fact 13 states are working to create a seamless system of education that begins with preschool and extends through college. These states are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. Vermont’s preschool component is currently being developed.

For more information on these and other issues, contact the States Information Center at (888) CSG-4SIC or sic@csg.org.

James Carroll is Southern regional coordinator with CSG’s States Information Center.
Shane Broadway was elected to the Arkansas House at the age of 23. His career in that body will end in 2002, before he turns 30. No doubt, term limits is ridding the legislatures of old geezers in Arkansas.

Broadway is currently speaker, having assumed that office in January 2001, after only four years as a member of the House. Elected from a competitive district, his main goal was re-election, not the speakership. But when the time came, he ran and won the top job.

How does a legislator learn to be a leader? And how does one do it in the short time available in Arkansas?

Legislators, like everyone else, learn from experience. In term-limited states, legislators have less experience to draw on than do their counterparts elsewhere. Broadway had a few years under his belt before becoming speaker. He had gone through a special session in which the House, Senate, and governor butted heads and came away with very little. From this he learned an important lesson, which led him to build a good working relationship with the Senate president.

While experience helps, it is also true as Broadway says that, “No other capacity prepares you for this job.” Nevertheless, Arkansas should be credited with figuring out ways to help train leaders. The former speaker, Bobby Hogue, set procedures in motion to bring legislators up to speed. He and his successor lengthened the orientation session for new members.

Broadway has developed continuing education programs that encourage members to learn from legislators in other states at conferences conducted by CSG and the National Conference of State Legislatures. (As speaker, Broadway was most impressed with a program conducted by the State Legislative Leaders Foundation at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.)

The continuing education programs and other activities have tended to separate those members motivated to learn about the legislative process and policy issues from those less inclined or with less time. The motivated members participated regularly and diligently. The experience helped Broadway decide which of his colleagues he wanted on his leadership team.

To prepare for the office of speaker, Broadway made full use of Arkansas’ speaker-designate system, which had been in place before term limits to accommodate the state’s tradition of rotating speakers for each biennial General Assembly. Florida is the only other state with a similar speaker-designate system.

Broadway was chosen speaker-designate in March 1999, affording him one-and-one-half years to learn as much as he could and to think seriously about how to be a good speaker. If a legislator’s principal objective is simply getting the votes to be elected speaker, that crowds out any thought of learning much about the job itself. Broadway acknowledges that he couldn’t have both campaigned and learned about leadership at the same time, saying, “When you’re running, you’re so committed to it.”

The time as “speaker in waiting” allowed Broadway to concentrate on learning. He spent much of his time during the interim period traveling the state and talking with colleagues, legislative staff and experts.

Above all, he was able to put issues into a statewide framework and he developed a knowledge and respect for the legislature as an institution, essentials for legislative leaders. He was mentored by his predecessor, Bob Johnson, and benefited greatly. As speaker, Broadway is mentoring his designated successor, Herschel Cleveland, and has taken him to an executive committee meeting of CSG’s Southern Legislative Conference to meet and learn from other leaders in the region.

The speaker-designate system is not without problems. In Florida, the power of the speaker declined in the lame-duck year, while that of the speaker-designate increased. In Arkansas, however, House designates have tried to guard against this. When legislators approached Broadway looking for a cue when he was speaker-designate, he referred them to the sitting speaker for advice in order to protect the power of the office.

Arkansas doesn’t have all the answers. But, impelled by term limits, the House has crafted a few: continuing programs for legislator education and the speaker-designate system to prepare a new speaker for the job. Education programs ought to be instituted and/or beefed up in every state legislature. The speaker-designate innovation, however, is applicable only when a speaker is term limited — whether by statute, rule or convention. That appears to be the situation in a growing number of states.

Alan Rosenthal is a professor with the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.
Reforming school finance

BY KEON S. CHI

State policy-makers are anxious to find out how the Congress will respond to President George W. Bush’s education blueprint that calls for a larger federal role in improving primary and secondary education. The president wants to increase accountability for student performance, enhance teacher quality, increase flexibility in funding and empower parents to choose the school their children attend.

However, state and local governments, not the president or Congress, play the primary role in public education in the United States. After all, the federal government contributes a mere 7 percent to public-school financing.

Litigation: Since the California Supreme Court held in Serrano v. Priest in 1971 that the state’s school system, with its uneven tax burdens and disparate spending patterns, was unconstitutional, many states have been subject to similar litigation. Of suits decided by high courts in 36 states, 18 school-finance systems were held constitutional and 18 ruled unconstitutional. Litigation is pending in several other states.

While it is difficult to pin down exact reasons for school-finance litigation across the United States, experts often cite school-finance systems that have not kept up with changing social forces such as enrollment increases, demographic changes, higher expectations of student achievement, especially in comparison with other countries, and marginal growth in state aid for public education.

Legislative responses: In the past three decades, many state legislatures have come under intense pressure from the courts to reform public-school finance systems. Legislative strategies to deal with court rulings may be grouped into three types: increasing spending in poorer districts, modifying school-finance formulas, and diverting revenues from wealthier districts to poorer districts.

What appears to be lacking in these strategies is explicitly linking school funding to student performance. The question is whether legislators should think about school finance beyond equity and adequacy. Pouring more money into school districts would not meet the public’s expectations unless clearly defined and measurable student achievement standards are in place.

Challenging questions: No matter which strategies reform-minded legislators choose to adopt, it is important to pay attention to three broad aspects of school finance. Specific questions policy-makers might address include: Philosophical. What should the funding system accomplish in terms of equity, adequacy, efficiency and local control? What connections should there be between the funding system and student and school performance goals? How can the school-funding system provide incentives to improve student and school performance? Technical. How should the funding formula allocate state and local money? What strategies and information should be used to set a base student-funding level? How should the funding formula adjust for high-cost students and other factors out of the district’s control? Political. What state dollars should be available for education compared with other state programs? How can state leaders balance the needs of the districts they represent with other districts in the state? What changes in funding levels and policies are politically acceptable? How and to what extent should state leaders control district spending and tax levels?

Policy options: Although the mandate for school-finance reform varies from state to state, legislators encounter issues common to the process of redesigning school-finance systems. The following policy options reflect these central issues.

First, legislators need to create a school-finance system that works. They should strive to ensure adequacy, promote equity and improve efficiency.

Second, legislators need to consider school finance as part of an integrated approach to reforming public schools. School finance cannot be dealt with independently of educational programs and outcomes. School finance must evolve from educational needs and programmatic responses rather than political judgment. Also, while school finance should be flexible enough to permit experimentation, its primary focus should be on improving public education.

Third, legislators should ensure that all school districts have the resources to meet the educational needs of their students. They might want to adopt a higher baseline funding level, limit local funding systems and provide additional funds to reduce spending disparities between districts.

Finally, necessary supplemental programs should be funded by categorical means or by the weighted pupil approach. States must guarantee that all districts have the necessary funds without inappropriate or unrealistic demands on the local tax base. States also must engage the public by developing a formula that is easy to understand and that addresses commonly perceived needs and expectations.

Keon S. Chi is a senior fellow with The Council of State Governments and editor of Spectrum: The Journal of State Government.
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