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Collective Wisdom Drives Innovations Awards

By Jack Penchoff

In his 2004 book, *The Wisdom of Crowds*, business writer James Surowiecki contends, “under the right circumstances, groups are remarkably intelligent, and often smarter than the smartest people in them.”

For 30 years, The Council of State Governments has followed the same “collective intelligence” reasoning through the annual Innovations Awards, which recognize exemplary programs in state government. Through the awards program, these best practices and policy initiatives receive greater visibility, which facilitates transferring these successful experiences to other states.

Particularly rewarding for the eight finalists, two from each state, is that state officials select them. In other words, their peers found these programs the most relevant and adaptable for other states.

These shared experiences are helping state officials meet the challenges of governance in the 21st century.

The eight winners we highlight in this month’s *State News* will be recognized Saturday, Dec. 3 during a special awards luncheon at CSG’s Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum in Wilmington, Del.

Louisiana and Mississippi are two states facing some of the most daunting challenges: rebuilding in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

This month, Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu of Louisiana lays out his plan to rebuild his state’s tourism and cultural industries. He calls his strategy, “Louisiana Rebirth: Restoring the Soul of America.”

And Beverly Bell, a policy analyst with the National Emergency Management Association, updates our readers on the amount of coordination the Emergency Management Assistance Compact provided in the wake of devastation from Katrina and Rita. She also provides background on some of the legislative activities centering on the funding and reorganization of the Department of Homeland Security.

Among the challenges, confronting state governments is public safety in a post-9/11 world. John J. Mountjoy, director of CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts, reports on the increasing use of surveillance cameras and other monitoring devices in public places.

As Mountjoy notes, cameras in London’s public transit stations helped identify terrorists following bombings in July. The challenge, he reports, is finding ways to use modern technology to stop the attacks.

When three northeast state legislators visited Inner Mongolia this fall to promote their region’s agriculture exports, they learned the importance of relationships in international trade.

Karen Inamas, publications manager for CSG’s Eastern Regional Conference, reports this month that the intention of the legislators was to promote cow embryo transfer. However, the delegation discovered the farms were not equipped for implants.

“Going over there, we realized we could make a fabulous one-time sale,” Assemblyman Darrel Aubertine of New York said, “but we looked as this mission as a tremendous opportunity to build relationships in the long term.”

—Jack Penchoff is CSG’s assistant director of communications and senior editor of *State News*.
The Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) released a tool kit to assist public safety communication center managers, human resource personnel, police chiefs, sheriffs, fire chiefs and elected officials address the challenges associated with hiring and retaining qualified personnel for 9-1-1 communications centers.

9-1-1 call takers are the nation’s first responders for the more than 300,000 9-1-1 calls made in the United States each day. And while these positions are life-saving and rewarding, the profession historically experiences high turnover and frequent vacancies.

APCO’s Project RETAINS (Responsive Efforts to Address Integral Needs in Staffing) directed a national study of staffing and retention issues in a random sample of public safety communications centers in 2004. A second study was conducted in 2005 to learn if staffing and retention issues were different in large centers. The resulting tool kit for public safety communication center managers offers three main tools: a staffing estimator, a retention rate calculator and an employee satisfaction survey.

For more information, visit www.apcointl.org.

The U.S. Census Bureau released its annual income, poverty and health insurance report, which indicated that the U.S. poverty rate rose to 12.7 percent in 2004, up from 12.5 percent in 2003. These numbers indicate 1.1 million more people fell into poverty last year.

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2004 reports that real median household income did not change between 2003 and 2004, remaining at $44,389. Among race groups, black families had the lowest median income in 2004 at $30,134. Hispanic households earned a median income of $34,241 and non-Hispanic white households earned $48,977. Asian households had the highest median income at $57,518.

Thirty-seven million people lived in poverty in 2004, up from 35.9 million in 2003. The poverty rate for families did not change between 2003 and 2004, remaining at 10.2 percent. The average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2004 was an annual income of $19,307; $15,067 for a family of three; $12,334 for a family of two; and $9,645 for unrelated individuals. In 2004, the poverty rate for Asians declined from 11.8 percent in 2003 to 9.8 percent, did not change for Hispanics (21.9 percent) and blacks (24.7 percent) and rose from 8.2 percent in 2003 to 8.6 percent for non-Hispanic whites.

The percentage of the U.S. population without health insurance in 2004 remained at 15.7 percent. The percentage of those covered by employment-based health insurance declined from 60.4 percent in 2003 to 59.8 percent in 2004. Increases in Medicaid coverage in 2004 drove government health insurance coverage up to 27.2 percent from 26.6 percent in 2003. The number of uninsured children remained at 8.3 million, or 11.2 percent.

To view the complete report online, visit www.census.gov.

Among race groups, black families had the lowest median income in 2004 at $30,134. Hispanic households earned a median income of $34,241 and non-Hispanic white households earned $48,977. Asian households had the highest median income at $57,518.
Report Says States Don’t Provide Adequate Parental Leave

According to a report released by the National Partnership for Women and Families, parental leave policies in the United States are among the worst in the world. To date, Expecting Better: A State-by-State Analysis of Parental Leave Policies is the most comprehensive analysis of laws and regulations governing paid parental leave.

According to the report, both parents work outside the home in 78 percent of modern American families. Women work longer hours with fewer benefits, and they work later into their pregnancies. More than half of all working pregnant women work until one month before the birth of their first child and return to work within three months after the child’s birth. A 2000 survey of personnel managers found that only 12 percent of companies offer paid maternity leave and only 7 percent offer paid paternity leave.

Parental leave is said to provide long-term benefits such as improving a child’s brain development, social development and overall well-being. Unfortunately, paid parental leave is not available to most Americans, especially low-income families, and Expecting Better reports that no state mandates job protection and benefits to new parents.

The report grades all 50 states regarding parental leave, and no state earned an A. California received an A-; Hawaii, the District of Columbia and Oregon received grades of B+; Connecticut, New Jersey and Washington received Bs; Maine, Vermont, Minnesota and Rhode Island received grades of B-. The remaining states received grades of C+ or lower. Nineteen states received Fs because they do not provide any benefits or programs that assist families before or after the birth of a child.

To see your state’s grade and to read the full report, visit www.nationalpartnership.org.

Despite States’ Efforts to Improve Exit Exam Pass Rates, Achievement Gaps Remain

According to a study by the Center on Education Policy (CEP)—a national independent advocate for public education and more effective public schools—English language learners are more likely to fail exit exams, and therefore are not permitted to graduate from high school. Twenty-six states currently use or plan to soon implement exit exams, which high school students must pass to graduate. Disproportionate amounts of minority students are required to take exit exams, partially due to heavy concentrations of Latino students living in states requiring the exams.

CEP recently released its report, States Try Harder, But Gaps Persist: High School Exit Exams 2005, the fourth in a series of annual reports from the CEP that track the status, characteristics and effect of the exams. The report claims that even though states have attempted to boost pass rates for high school exit exams, achievement gaps have not changed.

Nineteen states currently require students to pass exit exams, and seven states plan to phase in mandatory exit exams in the next seven years. States requiring exit exams in 2005 are: Alabama, Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. States that will phase in exit exams by 2012 but are not yet withholding diplomas are: Arizona, California, Maryland, Oklahoma, Utah and Washington.

By 2012, approximately three-quarters of all American public school students will be required to pass exit exams in order to graduate from high school.

Many states have implemented policies, programs and resources to help more students pass the tests, but pass rates have not changed much in the last year. According to the report, while small increases have been seen in a few states, little or no change has been seen in many others.

For more information or to view the report online, visit www.cep-dc.org.
On Aug. 29, 2005, the most destructive storm ever to strike the United States, Hurricane Katrina, hit southeast Louisiana, Mississippi and parts of Alabama. Four parishes in Louisiana, including the city of New Orleans, were severely damaged. This hurricane tore apart and uprooted families, lives, homes and businesses across the country. Then, on September 24, 2005, Hurricane Rita bore down on southwest Louisiana and eastern Texas with her full force in a devastating storm surge.

The state of Louisiana will not rest until her people are home and safe in all communities that make up our unique culture. As Gov. Kathleen Blanco said, “Katrina and Rita brought our people and our economy to its knees. These storms knocked us down, but they didn’t knock us out. We will come back stronger and more prosperous than before.”

We have begun the daunting task of rebuilding south Louisiana, the small towns and cities’ each distinctive and precious in its own right, and the city of New Orleans. On Sept. 20, I unveiled “Louisiana Rebirth: Restoring the Soul of America,” a strategic plan to rebuild Louisiana’s tourism and cultural industries in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and now Hurricane Rita.

There are four key areas, or results, crucial to the recovery of the state:

- Rebuild Louisiana to worldwide pre-eminence as a top tourist destination.
- Make Louisiana’s Cultural Economy the engine of economic and social rebirth.
- Build better lives and livelihoods than before for all Louisiana’s people.
- Make Louisiana’s recovery the standard for high performance, accountability and ethical behavior.

Louisiana can, once again, get on track to becoming the beacon of the New South: a community where differences unite us, where diversity is a strength, a progressive state with strong family and cultural roots, sustained by a dynamic economy.
The Strategy

Historians have told the story of Louisiana as one of “opportunity lost.” It is now the challenge of the nation and the people of this great state to change ours into a story of “opportunity found.” The number of homes, neighborhoods and lives that will have to be rebuilt is staggering, but the cornerstones of Louisiana have survived; our rich heritage and cultural advantages will serve as our guides to the rebirth. This disaster has presented Louisiana with a historic opportunity to build back better than before. In so doing, we will demonstrate to our fellow Americans and the world that we can be a model of response, rebuilding and reconciliation.

For each of the results of “Louisiana Rebirth,” we have identified ways to track our results and plan, next steps and ways to help. We know that people need new, positive images of Louisiana. We will not only provide access to information about recovery efforts, but also help connect resources to citizens in need. We must reunite families and reconnect their jobs and homes to them. People need to know their government is working for them.

Louisiana’s tourism industry is a vital economic driver for the state. In 2004, visitor spending reached $9.9 billion and the state hosted 25.5 million visitors. The tourism industry accounted for 120,000 jobs statewide, of which 81,000 were in New Orleans. The entire retail, banking, professional and services industries in New Orleans depend on the more than $5 billion of annual direct visitor spending and an additional several billion dollars of direct spin-off impact.

My office and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism will serve as the flagship for the recovery of the tourism industry for the state of Louisiana. The challenge to recreate and surpass previous achievements will be met immediately with every public and private resource that can be brought to bear. Our first emphasis will be on promoting the state’s tourism industry—which is still open and operating—in order to restore and retain visitor spending. Simultaneously, we will offer short-term and long-term business assistance to all tourism entities within the state. We know work force development will be an immediate component of rebuilding infrastructure and will utilize research in determining a long-term national and international image campaign to rebuild and restore the image of Louisiana and New Orleans.

Louisiana’s cultural economy is a $202 million industry. It employs more than 140,000 people in enterprises and communities that transform cultural skills, knowledge and ideas into economically productive goods, services and places. Our cultural assets create economic opportunities and a high quality of life for all Louisianans through disciplines such as entertainment and performing arts, visual arts and crafts, design, media, literary arts, humanities, history, historic preservation, folklife, archaeology and culinary arts. Louisiana’s cultural economy reflects the state’s unique heritage, the diversity of its residents, its rich history and its broad range of cultural products.

Culture Drives Economy

In the wake of Katrina and Rita, we must make our cultural economy the engine of Louisiana’s economic and social rebirth. We will do so by first ensuring those cultural assets that were damaged by the storm and flooding are restored to good condition, and those assets that fortunately remain undamaged are properly conserved and maintained. We will also continue to apply our creative talents and innovative thinking to develop new and exciting cultural products and services that capture the imagination of the public. We will make investments that rebuild capacity within our cultural industries, enhance our distribution outlets, promote cultural education and create marketing to help fuel this rebirth.

Rebuilding people’s lives and their livelihoods is the centerpiece of rebuilding Louisiana. People—all people—and the quality of their lives within their communities must be the cen-
The one thing Katrina did not impact was the foundation of our core. No matter how strong this storm was, it couldn’t destroy the assets we have in Louisiana that will guide us as we rebuild. The people and culture of Louisiana are more genuine and authentic than anywhere else in the country. They still exist. No matter how long it takes us to pump out water, rebuild houses, roads and buildings and get our people home, nobody will take away our heart and soul. Like we say in Louisiana, “You’re home is where you at.” Nobody can duplicate the special uniqueness that we have in Louisiana.

Now we must rebuild. We know it is possible. It is a matter of willpower and money. Many Americans have opened their hearts and their pockets to support relief. But we need the president, Congress and the American people to remain true to their promises to provide us with the resources we need. We are not looking for a handout, but a hand up. If the appropriate investments are made to rebuild the South, the people of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama have the willpower to return that investment many times over. We ask for help out of need, not out of greed. It is a humbling experience.

We know it is possible—history tells us so. Communities can be built back. And they can be built back better than they were before. Consider Europe following World War II, without the Marshall Plan, or the countries in Southeast Asia washed away after last year’s tsunami. They were rebuilt out of a sense of public duty.

Join me in this unprecedented opportunity to rebuild a state by relying on its rich cultural heritage. Never before in our nation’s history has such an opportunity come before us. You are the stewards of our nation’s cultural economy and I encourage you to contribute ideas to rebuild an American cultural asset. We have put structures in place to receive and implement the best ideas. We welcome your help and want you to be a part of Louisiana’s and America’s New South history.

—Mitch Landrieu is Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana.

To see Louisiana Rebirth: the Soul of America and the National Advisory Board for Cultural Economy, Tourism and Hospitality in Louisiana in their entirety, visit www.crt.state.la.us.

The Road to Recovery

The one thing Katrina did not impact was the foundation of our core. No matter how strong this storm was, it couldn’t

terpiece of the recovery strategy. To rebuild lives that have been so devastated requires a massive effort. Strategies for housing, clothing, food, health care, jobs, transportation, communications and public utilities are being developed and led by other agencies. We are planning to offer information that will put people in contact with the resources available to rebuild their lives. Reopening state libraries as information clearinghouses; using education and training to help people rebuild their lives; accepting donations, volunteers and recovery efforts of nonprofit organizations; engaging America’s youth in the rebuilding efforts; and providing temporary and transitional housing in state parks are just a few of the ways the state can help.

Making Louisiana’s recovery the standard for high performance, accountability and ethical behavior, the state of Louisiana must restore lives and livelihoods as well as earn the public’s trust in their government. This will require accountability for using every dollar of recovery spending to deliver the right result, to the right people, on time and on budget, without mis-spending any money. Louisiana’s response must be focused, fast, fair and fiercely accountable.

We recognize we cannot do this alone and have created a National Advisory Board for Cultural Economy, Tourism and Hospitality to guide our plans to rebuild Louisiana’s tourism and cultural economies and it is co-chaired by Ed Lewis, Essence magazine and Wynton Marsalis, Jazz at Lincoln Center. We have also asked tourism, business, cultural and government leaders from Louisiana to serve on an advisory board to work with the national advisory board.

The Response Continues

As relief continues to flood into the Gulf Coast, Congress considers ways to improve disaster response

By Beverly Bell
more than two months after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, it continues to exert its strength. Not only did the nation’s costliest hurricane create the ongoing demand for resources to aid in the relief, but it also spurred activity in Congress with hearings on the response effort, the recovery’s financing and how to improve the nation’s response to future disasters.

Record Response Continues

No response effort rivals that of Hurricane Katrina. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact, a state-to-state mutual aid agreement that allows support across state lines following a disaster, has deployed much of the personnel and equipment. This includes approximately 52,000 emergency response professionals and National Guard members, as well as other resources, totaling more than $700 million in aid. Add to that 5000 people and $60 million in assistance to the Hurricane Rita response, and EMAC is handling a deployment that shatters previous records. Through the compact, 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have provided assistance. Resources have covered a wide range of disciplines such as law enforcement, firefighting, health and medical and transportation.

Congress Looks for Answers

Trying to remedy failures with the response to Hurricane Katrina, Congress has held at least 40 committee and subcommittee hearings. These have included the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee; Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee; Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee; and the Environment and Public Works Committee. In the House, the Homeland Security Committee has met, along with Transportation, Appropriations, Energy and Commerce and others.

Members of Congress have heard from Michael Brown, the former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); Richard Skinner, the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Gov. Kathleen Blanco of Louisiana and Henry J. Rodriguez, Jr., president of St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana, which was decimated by Katrina. Representatives from victim relief organizations have testified, along with health officials, educators and infrastructure experts. The sheer breadth of topics and witnesses underscores the scope of the disaster.

The Deterioration of FEMA

The National Emergency Management Association, a CSG affiliate, which also administers EMAC, has taken an active role in addressing some of the problems with the Hurricane Katrina response. In September, NEMA published its recommendations for the selection process and qualifications of the new FEMA director, stressing that the post should go to someone with significant emergency management experience and a direct reporting line to the president.

In October, Albert Ashwood, NEMA vice president, testified before Congress with “A Tale of Two FEMAs.” He explained that the FEMA of the mid to late 1990s had been more than up to the task of disaster management, successfully responding to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Oklahoma City federal building bombing and Hurricane Floyd in 1999. However, after it was absorbed into the bureaucratic maze of the Department of Homeland Security, suffered budget cuts and a steady exodus of knowledgeable people, the agency no longer possesses the resources or experience to handle natural or manmade disasters.

“Unfortunately, we have stood by and watched as FEMA has become a shell of its former self,” Ashwood said. He explained that FEMA is understaffed at headquarters and on the regional level. “The regional offices are the direct line of communication for state and local governments to tap into federal resources,” Ashwood said. Without adequate staff, FEMA cannot fulfill its congressionally mandated mission of disaster relief.

Ashwood’s testimony was consistent with NEMA’s policy position. In July 2005, the association sent a letter to congressional leadership critical of the proposed reorganization of DHS. The letter warned that the restructuring, which took all natural disaster preparedness away from FEMA and lacked a focus on an all-hazards approach, would pose serious risks to the country if disaster struck. On August 21, NEMA leadership met with DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff and Deputy Secretary Michael Jackson, expressing the same concerns. Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast eight days later.

DHS Reorganization—and More FEMA Budget Cuts—Go Forward

Despite complaints about the continued evisceration of FEMA, and insufficient federal funding to states for disaster response, DHS is moving forward with its plans to reorganize.

Congress approved the restructuring in October, along with the $30.8 billion DHS budget for fiscal year 2006. This represents a 4 percent increase for the department, but a 10 percent decrease for FEMA, further undermining funding for disaster response and mitigation programs designed to reduce future damage from earthquakes, hurricanes and other natural disasters. Border security received the lion’s share of the additional money.

—Beverly Bell is a policy analyst with the National Emergency Management Association, an affiliate of CSG.

the council of state governments  www.csg.org
The Power to Convene

State legislators can take the lead in decision making by convening public and private sector parties to tackle problems

By Christine Carlson and Greg Wolf

When hurricanes Frances and Jeanne made landfall in Florida in 2004, there was a group ready to handle the aftermath. They had not been convened for that purpose; however, they have a hand in setting the agenda for how the region can move forward.
State Sen. Ken Pruitt, with Gov. Jeb Bush, had convened the Committee for a Sustainable Treasure Coast to take a collaborative look at how best to improve the quality of life in the three-county area. Twin hurricanes placed a new item—rebuilding—squarely on their agenda. What this means is that rebuilding will take place in a way that draws together people and interests from different counties and jurisdictions.

Sen. Pruitt’s foresight was also the state’s good fortune. “This committee will set the template for what will happen along the Treasure Coast,” he said. “I cannot understate the importance of the committee’s collaborative work.”

And Sen. Pruitt is not alone in imagining a better way to get people working together. State legislators can help engage people in problem solving in their districts, as Senator Pruitt has done, as well as in their policymaking role.

A term for this new approach is finding “Public Solutions.” In practice, this means people from inside and outside of government, taking responsibility for coming up with an answer to a thorny public problem. It all starts with legislators convening people, calling them to the table to work on issues that government alone cannot resolve.

“When we are elected,” says Roger Moe, former Minnesota Senate President, “legislators are given a gift. But many don’t know about it. This gift is the power to convene.”

Lana Oleen, former Kansas Senate Majority Leader, points out, though, that the idea can be vague. What does “convening,” mean? “It’s simple,” she answers. “Call the right people, and encourage them to work together to come up with a solution. Generally, when leaders invite people to the table to work on an issue, they are willing to come.”

Over the past decade, the Policy Consensus Institute has worked with leaders to foster the kind of collaboration needed to achieve better solutions. From these experiences, we have developed Public Solutions, a system for employing a collaborative approach to governance in a variety of settings.

Being a convener is different from chairing a committee or leading a meeting. Here are seven suggestions that we have found useful for legislators to keep in mind when they serve as conveners:

- **Be inclusive.** “Don’t be afraid to engage a wide variety of people,” says Sen. Oleen. “Welcome representatives from all interests—not just those with an obvious interest.” Welcome each participant so they know they are important to the decision-making process.

- **Establish a neutral place.** The place needs to ensure an impartial process. When the issue is complex and divisive, it will be especially helpful to get assistance from an experienced facilitator in planning and conducting the process.

**Continued on page 36**
The use of high-tech surveillance devices is an emerging tool in countering threats to public safety. States are increasingly monitoring the public through camera networks similar to ones used in London. In addition, state officials are considering more cutting-edge tracking devices for security.

Keeping a Close Eye

In the United States, cities and states are seeking camera surveillance technology. Several cities have already started using cameras to monitor large crowds. In 2001, at Super Bowl XXXV in Tampa, for example, cameras scanned some 100,000 faces in the crowd.

In 2001, at Super Bowl XXXV in Tampa, for example, cameras scanned some 100,000 faces in the crowd.

After the London terrorist attacks in July, law enforcement officials identified the suicide bombers through a network of more than 6,000 cameras in the transit system and on street corners. Although the cameras aided in identifying the perpetrators, they did little to thwart the attackers.

Other cities are adopting simple camera networks. Large cities such as New York, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit and Washington, D.C., have placed cameras in high-traffic areas such as subways, buses, transit stops and popular shopping areas. Even smaller cities such as Durham, N.C., Jersey City, N.J., Athens, Ga. and Chelsea, Mass., use cameras for surveillance.

Homeland security funds have financed the development of the growing number of camera networks. In 2005, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) earmarked $800 million for 50 cities. The Fredonia Group, a national market research firm, projects that the...
States are also upgrading surveillance of their public transportation. Colorado is working to connect more than 200 state highway cameras and other surveillance sources into the state’s homeland security “fusion” center, a centralized counterterrorism intelligence and analysis clearinghouse that is increasing in popularity among states.

Surveillance cameras and technology are needed to upgrade the nation’s transportation security systems. While the focus remains on air travel, an increasingly important area is mass transit within metropolitan areas and in commuter transportation. Sixteen times more people than those who use domestic airlines use public transportation daily.

However, DHS has spent $18.1 billion on airline security since Sept. 11 and only $250 million on transportation security nationwide, according to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). In 2004, APTA conducted a study of transportation security needs and determined that approximately $6 billion was needed nationally to strengthen transportation security.

London is testing a system that uses interconnected “smart” cameras to track drivers over a wide area such as a neighborhood instead of limiting surveillance to a single intersection.

Watching Drivers

States are also using automated traffic tollbooths, which operate off radio frequency identification devices (RFIDs) or “smart tags.” RFIDs reduce congestion and employee expenses, while providing greater efficiency. RFIDs are low-powered radio transmitters that read data stored in a transponder, or tag, at distances up to 100 feet away. The private sector uses RFID tags to track assets, manage inventory and authorize payments. In addition, they increasingly serve as electronic keys to everything from automobiles to secure facilities.

The E-ZPass system, available in 10 states—Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia—is pioneering the high volume use of “smart tags” by motorists. The system, which can be used by participating drivers in any member state, allows vehicles with a displayed “smart tag” to drive through toll stations and have their pre-paid accounts debited for the appropriate toll.

E-ZPass and similar systems are raising concerns about other roles for which the technology might be used. For instance, while the system is currently limited to ticketing speeding offenders in the reduced speed toll zones, they could be used to identify and ticket drivers for speeding over the course of their commute by measuring time over distance and issuing citations automatically.

“Automatic tollbooth data has already been used by the courts to prove one’s location, either to include or exclude individuals as suspects in criminal cases,” said Mark McChesney, Information
Technology Security Chief for the Kentucky Department of Transportation. “It’s only a matter of time before it’s used for other applications.”

London is testing a system that uses interconnected “smart” cameras to track drivers over a wide area such as a neighborhood instead of limiting surveillance to a single intersection. The idea is that by tracking a vehicle over a set course, driving habits such as speeding can be identified and citations automatically issued via the traditional camera feature. As results on the effectiveness of this system are studied, look for this technology in the United States in the next few years.

Another application of RFID tags is used in the United Kingdom: RFIDs are embedded in car license plates. These e-Plates enable a scanner to identify cars. According to the manufacturer, the e-Plate may be scanned by either a handheld portable device or by a stationary roadside device. It can detect dozens of vehicles moving at any speed from a distance of about 100 yards. The e-Plate provides access control to parking areas or restricted access roads, automated tolling, traffic flow monitoring and vehicle compliance with the law. With a 10-year battery, the embedded chip will likely outlast the license plate in which it is stored.

While states are embracing RFID technology, they are also acting to protect and educate consumers about the devices. For instance, bills introduced in Utah and California sought to force retailers to disclose to consumers the presence of RFID tags. Neither bill was enacted. There is strong support from privacy groups for such action.

Opponents, however, contend such laws will increase costs.

North Dakota was the first state to prohibit insurance companies from using data in black boxes to set rates. Insurance companies are using the boxes, now standard in many new American cars, to prove liability in vehicle accidents and to justify rates. Already in use by some rental car companies to track wear and tear and speeding infractions by customers, the black boxes were developed for manufacturers to determine the cause of vehicle problems.

### Tracking Travelers and Immigrants

RFID chips are also used to strengthen security and deter the forgery of official documents, such as passports. Similar to the E-ZPass cards and e-Plates, these documents would contain an embedded RFID to store data, ensure authenticity and allow tracking.

Since passage of the REAL ID Act, such technology is being considered for required security upgrades to state issued driver’s licenses.

States and the federal government are also turning to RFIDs and biometrics to track foreigners within our borders and reduce illegal immigration. Biometrics, the study of biological phenomena and statistics, uses human traits such as fingerprints, retinal scans, voice signatures and DNA data sets for identification. Armed with this data, agencies can quickly locate fraudulent documents such as entry visas.

As RFID and other high-tech security features get a great deal of attention, paper is getting a face-lift. Paper contains a unique “fingerprint” of surface imperfections that can be identified, cataloged and used for identification and tracking purposes when combined with a special scanning device.

Detailed in the July 2005 issue of Nature magazine, the unique pattern of a sheet of paper remains recognizable even after it is crunched, rolled into a ball, soaked in water, baked at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes, scrubbed with an abrasive cleaning pad or scribbled over with a black marker.

While this does not prevent people from fraudulently obtaining valid documents from the source, such as a motor vehicle department, it does hold the potential for detecting forgeries common on fake entry visas and other immigration and travel documents.

—John J. Mountjoy is director of CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts. He may be reached at jmountjoy@csg.org.
Assemblyman Darrel Aubertine (N.Y.), Rep. Arthur Hershey (Pa.) and Rep. Nancy Smith (Maine) are all state legislators and dairy farmers interested in promoting a strong agriculture industry in their states. This combination of job experience gave the group unique insight in evaluating the potential export and joint venture opportunities with farmers in Tongliao, Inner Mongolia.

Agriculture is one of the few sectors where the United States has a trade surplus with China. Agriculture is one of the few sectors where the United States has a trade surplus with China. China hopes to boost its dairy industry over the next 10 to 15 years, thanks to the growing consumption of milk and other dairy products. Milk con-

By Karen Imas

Three legislators from the Northeastern states visited Inner Mongolia in China to promote Northeast agricultural exports. Their site visits ranged from small family-owned dairy farms to briefings by Chinese and American government officials in Beijing. The purpose of the visits was to provide an overview of Chinese agri-business, which will help Northeast companies understand the Chinese market.
Consumption is increasing by 15 to 18 percent annually (37 percent in 2003) and flavored yogurt is growing in popularity, especially among young people. In 2004, China’s purchases of dairy products set records.

The trade mission initially intended to promote assisted reproductive technology, particularly cow embryo transfer, to small and medium sized farms. However, the delegation discovered that many of the Tongliao farms are not well equipped for implants, nor is this method the most effective approach for local farmers to increase production.

“Going over there, we realized that we could make a fabulous one-time sale, but we looked at this mission as a tremendous opportunity to build relationships in the long term. We hoped to impart to the dairy farmers and industry representatives that when they think about cows, they think about the Northeast,” said Assemblyman Aubertine, a member of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture as well as the Committee on Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry.

Mr. Lui, Vice Chairman of the Tongliao Economic Development Zone (TEDZ) is a noted Chinese authority on agriculture. He and many of his colleagues were very familiar with the U.S. dairy industry. However, they assumed that all dairy was in Wisconsin. Assemblyman Aubertine responded that while the dairy cows of Wisconsin are of high quality, they are descendents of dairy cows from the Northeast. A priority of the mission was to identify the Northeast as a player in agriculture research, technology and dairy.

Export Opportunities

The legislators agreed that with a change in herd management, production of milk could increase and even double. Given that the dairy farms in Tongliao were relatively similar in size to many small and medium sized farms in the Northeast (two to 500 cows), the legislators were able to use their own farming experience to suggest many cost-effective solutions to help the farmers increase productivity. The ultimate goal is to create a partnership to help Tongliao develop a dairy industry and encourage local farmers to look to the Northeast as a resource for information and equipment. This would result in the following new potential export opportunities for businesses in the Northeast.

- **Protein Supplements**: Increasing protein in the hay that cows are fed is standard practice in the United States but is unknown in China. Supplements and preservatives can improve milk quality and increase production.
- **Feed Management**: Chinese dairy farmers have historically used corn for cow feed but are unaware of options including alfalfa, commonly used in Northeast farms. Growing conditions for alfalfa in Tongliao are optimal. Also, small and medium sized farms in the Northeast use feed mixing technology and equipment that is unknown in Tongliao.
**Ethanol Production:** New York state has developed a growing industry: producing ethanol with corn and using the byproduct as an additive to cattle feed. Since the Tongliao economic development zone is industrial and agricultural, the area is well suited for a similar industry.

**Consulting:** Northeast businesses could impart technological expertise, particularly in the aforementioned areas. For example, New York businesses involved in the new ethanol production facilities in Fulton and Seneca Falls can provide models and best practices to Tongliao.

Assemblyman Aubertine explained that the Tongliao farmers were sold on the idea of using genetic methods in agriculture but were unaware that there are other ways to improve milk output. He added that Northeast businesses are well poised to offer them know-how.

“This holistic approach would help increase and enhance productions levels, getting the Tongliao dairy industry stabilized, which sets the basis for them to buy other products, like embryos from the U.S.,” said Rep. Smith, House Chair of the Business, Research and Economic Development Committee.

Several Chinese farmers have already visited Pennsylvania farms and businesses involved in embryo transplant technology, according to Rep. Hershey, chairman of the agriculture committee in the Pennsylvania House, and he hopes to have the farmers he met in Tongliao explore purchasing opportunities in the Northeast.

“I hope to invite individuals from China important to our mission to visit farms in the Northeast, and show them our best stuff including cheese making and crossbreeding systems for beef cattle. Such partnerships will help strengthen Northeast-based businesses,” said Rep. Smith.

Hershey added that the relationship is a two-way street and that dairy farms in the region have some things to learn from China as well. For example, he was impressed with the Tongliao dairy farmers’ recycling efforts.

**The Importance of Trade Missions**

Exploring an untapped market such as Tongliao and establishing networks and contacts provides essential information to small to medium sized enterprises based in the Northeast.

“There are numerous small and medium sized Northeast companies who would benefit from increased trade with China,” said Rep. Hershey. “This trip allowed us to establish a network and presence that will be good for the regional economy as we increase foreign trade.”

The legwork done by the legislators in conjunction with the Eastern Trade Council (ETC) and Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship provided the foundation for future growth.

“Real farmer-to-farmer exchange is a significant factor in building credibility and trust with the Tongliao farmers,” explained Rep. Hershey.

Building these long-term relationships is particularly important with many constituents and legislators concerned about outsourcing and the trade deficit.

“We are in a global market, like it or not … it’s better to have input now, be proactive and take advantage of opportunities that would otherwise pass us by,” said Assemblyman Aubertine.

**Next Steps**

Cheese is one of the fastest growing food markets in China, and has seen a 30 percent increase over the last five years. This breakthrough area should be of interest to several Northeast cheese companies.

“As the Chinese people’s incomes increase, their diets are also changing, becoming more Westernized,” said Rep. Hershey. This dietary shift creates trade opportunities for those companies willing to invest time and effort. Companies that choose to participate in future trade missions to the region will already have crucial background information and substantial contacts.

Through the work of the participating legislators, ETC has been able to establish connections with Tongliao universities and officials in the economic development zone to promote trade between the Northeast and Inner Mongolia.

—Karen Imas is publications manager for The Council of State Government Eastern Regional Conference.

There are numerous small and medium sized Northeast companies who would benefit from increased trade with China.

—Rep. Hershey

Trade consultant Jeffrey Qi, left, and Assemblyman Darrel Aubertine in Tongliao, Inner Mongolia.
The Council of State Governments
2006 Innovations Awards Program

CSG helps state officials by providing critical foresight about trends and highlighting innovative programs that states develop to address trends in public policy. Such trends (e.g. immigration), derive from a number of factors and often impact more than one department or branch of state government.

CSG is currently monitoring ten “change drivers” that are reshaping state government resources and policy. **Accordingly, we invite you to submit programs from your state for a 2006 CSG Innovations Award that address at least one of the following:**

- **Silver Society: Aging of America**
- **Immigrant Nation: Changing Face of America**
- **Growth Dynamics: Regional Hot Spots**
- **Economic Transformation: Knowledge is King**
- **Globalization Era: New Forces at Work**
- **Information Revolution: Sorting it Out**
- **Privacy vs. Security: A Balancing Act**
- **Resource Management: Sustaining Our Future**
- **Polarized Populace: Eroding Common Ground**
- **Ambiguous Authority: Who’s in Charge?**

The following criteria are used to determine the award winners.

- **Newness**—Will the program be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 4, 2006?
- **Creativity**—Does the program represent a new and creative approach to problems or issues?
- **Effectiveness**—Has the program or practice been effective in achieving its goals and purposes to this point?
- **Transferability**—Could the program or practice be easily transferred to other states?
- **Significance**—Does the program or practice address significant regional issues or problems which are regional in scope?

**Application Deadline:** March 4, 2006

For more details or to obtain an electronic application, please visit CSG’s Innovations Awards Program on the Web at www.csg.org in the Programs section or contact Nancy J. Vickers at nvickers@csg.org or (859) 244-8105.
State responses to 21st century challenges

State officials face unprecedented, turbulent times in which to govern. The Council of State Government’s national trends mission helps state officials address the near- and long-term trends that affect their states by providing the critical foresight capabilities they need to make policy decisions.

Aligned with that mission is CSG’s Innovations Awards Program, which since 1975 has sought to identify innovative state programs that states can share. Through the Innovations Awards Program, CSG moves decision makers across state borders to join in discussions that provide a wider view and deeper understanding of our fast-changing world.

This year the top eight finalists, two from each region, are programs from New York, New Jersey, South Carolina, Alabama, Michigan, Illinois, Montana and Nevada. The programs will be recognized at a special awards luncheon Saturday, Dec. 3 during CSG’s Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum in Wilmington, Del.

This year, applications were entered in 10 categories that CSG has identified as change drivers that cut across traditional policy areas. These change drivers are already affecting states, and the programs states submitted this year for Innovations Awards reflect responses to the implications of these change drivers.

The categories this year were:

- Silver Society: Aging of America
- Immigrant Nation: Changing Face of America
- Growth Dynamics: Regional Hot Spots
- Economic Transformation: Knowledge Is King
- Globalization Era: New Forces at Work
- Information Revolution: Sorting it Out
- Privacy and Security: A Balancing Act
- Polarized Populace: Eroding Common Ground
- Ambiguous Authority: Who’s in Charge?
- Resource Management: Sustaining Our Future

Choosing the winners was a two-step process. First, CSG headquarters and regional staff reviewed the applicants and narrowed the field to 50 finalists. Four regional committees made up of elected and appointed state officials then reviewed the finalists from their respective regions. Through a rigorous review process, each regional committee selected two winners and alternates.

Eligible programs between nine months and five years old were judged on creativity, effectiveness, significance and transferability to other states.

The winners this year represent the diversity of issues and concerns in state government. Issues include economic development, international trade, health, voter identification, wetlands restoration and centralized management practices.

The following pages not only highlight this year’s winners, but also provide snapshots of the other 42 nationwide finalists.

CSG’s hope is that programs like the Innovations Awards will help states and their institutions become more flexible and responsive to the rapidly changing environment in which they operate.

For more information on the Innovations Awards Program and CSG’s national trends mission, visit our Web site at www.csg.org.
New Jersey

Program Ensures Genetic Identification of Offenders

New Jersey’s DNA Convicted Offender Sampling and Testing program ensures that offenders and their DNA samples are properly identified and entered into the state’s criminal records database. In 2003, New Jersey instituted legislation that all persons convicted of an indictable crime are required to submit to DNA identification. An oral swab sample from each convicted offender is collected either at the site of incarceration or obtained by the appropriate county sheriff for those offenders who are not incarcerated.

The DNA Convicted Offender Sampling and Testing program—a statewide unified approach to classification and upfront verification of information—also utilizes handheld biometric computers to read a single sample fingerprint and biometric fingerprinting computers to take full fingerprints of convicted offenders.

In New Jersey, the primary identifier for a person convicted of an indictable crime is the person’s State Bureau of Identification (SBI) number. To properly identify convicted offenders, the state must ensure that:

- the person has an SBI number;
- the SBI number matches the person from whom the DNA sample was taken;
- the DNA sample is identified with the accurate SBI number; and
- the person’s SBI criminal record reflects the fact that a DNA sample was taken.

In using the handheld biometric computers, the state criminal record database and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) data available to other states, information on offenders is captured properly, correctly and quickly. In addition, the statewide approach to gather, handle and classify DNA information from over 100 collection locations throughout the state, has reduced laboratory turnaround time from 210 days to 30 days. So far, 85,000 DNA samples of convicted offenders have been entered into the system since its inception in 2003.

The program’s annual operations costs are approximately $2.1 million. To support the DNA collection program, each person convicted of a traffic offense in New Jersey is required to pay a $2 DNA surcharge. This surcharge helps finance supplies, personnel and laboratory staff for the DNA Convicted Offender Sampling and Testing program.

For more information, contact Thomas J. O’Reilly, administrator, Office of the Attorney General, at (609) 292-9660, Thomas.OReilly@lps.state.nj.us or visit www.state.nj.us/lps.

New York

PSYCKES Provides Psychiatrists New Way to Share Information

New York’s Pharmacy Service and Clinical Knowledge Enhancement System (PSYCKES) is an innovative health information technology product implemented in the state mental health system. PSYCKES provides access to medication guidelines and medical information that physicians and other clinicians can review and assess in order to prescribe an appropriate and effective medication regimen for their patients. In addition to supporting the information needs of clinicians, PSYCKES provides information for quality managers. The system is a new and creative method for using administrative and pharmacy data to support clinical decision making at the individual patient level.

“PSYCKES is an outstanding example of using state-of-the-art technology to support innovation and excellence,” said Sharon E.
Carpinello, RN, PhD and commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Health. “By improving clinician access to patient medical information and relevant clinical practice guidelines, we can increase quality of care, improve patient outcomes and can better enable recovery from psychiatric disabilities.”

Without a tool like PSYCKES, it is virtually impossible for physicians to track all client information over a long period of time. With PSYCKES, physicians can access two types of information: all available patient treatment history data for the past 15 years for all patients currently served in New York’s 26 adult, child and forensic state psychiatric hospitals; and context-based links to information resources including RxList, PubMed and clinical practice guidelines. The system is a secure, HIPAA-compliant application that requires three levels of security clearance.

PSYCKES organizes data into two types of reports: clinical reports to aid physicians in their clinical decision making; and management reports to support quality improvement measures at state, hospital and system-wide levels. It may also serve as a model for other states, the federal government and large payors.

The PSYCKES system provides important information that could improve the quality of mental health care.

- Although there is broad national consensus on evidence-based practices for mental health, states need more information on effective methods for implementation.

PSYCKES provides clinicians and administrators critically important information regarding the effective implementation of evidence-based medication guidelines.

- Physicians’ psychoactive medication prescribing practices have been identified as an area of urgent public health need. PSYCKES helps standardize medication practice patterns through its automated, guideline-driven performance measures that profile quality, safety and conformance to evidence-based practices at the hospital and physician levels.

- Studies have demonstrated the feasibility of using mental health administrative and pharmacy databases to assess conformity with evidence-based practices. The studies suggest that administrative and pharmacy databases such as PSYCKES can provide inexpensive, reliable sources for determining adherence to prescription guidelines.

So far, no other state has developed a mechanism for sharing all clinically relevant data with treating physicians in a flexible, point of service, Web-based manner. It is the first example of an integrated, guideline-driven, clinical and fiscal decision support system for psychiatry.

For more information about this program, contact Edith Kealey, MSW, New York State Office of Mental Health, at (212) 868-6707 or coevemk@omh.state.ny.us.

Implementation of Illinois’ Shared Services Model began in 2003, at a time when the state was facing a $5 billion budget deficit. The fiscal crisis, combined with an influx of new managers in state government, helped lead to the administrative changes in Illinois, according to Paul Campbell, director of the state’s Department of Central Management Services (CMS). Officials believe the new approach has saved Illinois hundreds of millions of dollars.

Under the initiative, various state agencies’ legal services, internal audits and facilities and fleet management have been consolidated into CMS. In addition, the state has centralized and standardized its procurement process. CMS has enhanced the efficiency of much of the state’s administrative back-office functions by partnering with private firms and other state government entities to implement a Shared Services Model that incorporates sound management principles designed to build consensus, increase accountability, decrease administrative costs and free up resources to be redirected to core services. This model—programmed around a new center-led approach to procurement and the consolidation of other state agencies’ internal audit, legal services, facilities management, information technology and media relations functions—has saved Illinois hundreds of millions of dollars to date and is projected to recap additional savings this fiscal year and in the years beyond.

Prior to the implementation of this program, administrative functions were largely decentralized and scattered across agencies. Management of these functions was further complicated by the rigid and bureaucratic structure typical of government, the inflexibility of federal mandates and increased pressure to provide higher quality services with increasingly scarce resources. In many cases, resources were allocated haphazardly and economies of scale were not achieved. To address these problems, CMS adopted a more networked approach that incorporated shared-services and center-leading strategies. Administrative back-office functions at the various state agencies—such as legal services, audit and media relations—were consolidated into CMS to free those agencies and other state governmental units from a broad range of administrative responsibilities so they are better able to allocate their efforts, time and resources to accomplishing their core missions.

Prior to the implementation of this program, administrative functions were largely decentralized and scattered across agencies.
“No one likes to give up control,” said Campbell, noting early resistance to the changes. “But when you present something in a business model that makes sense, people are going to do the right thing.”

He believes the shared-service model has paid off for the state in numerous ways. In addition to saving taxpayer dollars and improving accountability, Campbell says the initiative has allowed agencies to focus on their core missions.

“Our agency heads should be able to focus on keeping at-risk kids safe, protecting the environment or whatever their core mission happens to be,” he added.

“They shouldn’t have to worry about fixing a pipe that busts in their office. That’s our job.”

For more information on Illinois’ Shared Services Model, contact Paul Campbell at (217) 524-5508 or Paul_Campbell@cms.state.il.us or visit www.state.il.us/cms.

**Michigan**

**Creating New Companies Diversifies State Economy**

Three years ago, hundreds of scientists working for a pharmaceutical company in Kalamazoo, Michigan, faced the prospect of either losing their jobs or having to relocate.

The downsizing was a blow not only to the scientists, but also to a community on the verge of losing good-paying, high-tech jobs.

With the help of an innovative state economic development program, though, the scientists and community have created new opportunities out of a once-blighted situation.

“Rather than leave Kalamazoo, many of the scientists started their own companies,” said Roselyn Zator of the Michigan Economic Development Corp.

They did so under an initiative known as Michigan SmartZones. SmartZones is producing important results in Michigan, said Zator, as exemplified by economic activity in Kalamazoo. That city’s zone now has 30 technology companies employing almost 500 people in high-skilled, high-wage jobs.

Nine other regionally based, high-tech clusters have been created in different parts of Michigan. Each involves collaborations among universities, industry, research organizations, government and other local institutions. Each zone targets growth in a specific high-tech economic sector that fits the geographic region’s strengths and needs.

Created through legislation passed in 2000, the goal of the program is to diversify Michigan’s economy by spurring new local partnerships, stimulating entrepreneurship and fostering growth in high-tech economic sectors.

Each zone is governed by a Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA). The authority is empowered by the state to collect the growth of property taxes within the zone. And unlike most tax increment financing districts, the LDFA can use this tax revenue for projects beyond traditional public infrastructure improvements.

For more information, contact Jeff Mason, senior vice president, Technology Development, at (517) 241-4333 or masonj@michigan.org, or visit http://medc.michigan.org/smartzones.
South
Alabama

BioTrac Program Aids Patients and State

Helping Medicaid patients manage chronic diseases is a win-win situation for the patient and the state. Patients gain better health, and the state achieves potentially lower Medicaid expenses. Alabama is pursuing both goals through its BioTrac program, administered by the Center for Strategic Health Innovation (CSHI) at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

CSHI established BioTrac in 2001 as a pilot program to use remote technology to monitor the health of rural isolated chronically ill patients, including those with diabetes, hypertension and congestive heart failure. At the time, CSHI believed that monitoring the patients’ physiologic conditions would improve their compliance with drug, diet and exercise recommendations and consequently reduce emergency room visits. A medical device that recorded weight, blood pressure, blood glucose and other physiologic signs was provided to participants. Patients could then take the device to a doctor’s office or, connected via telephone, to transmit information from the device to a database. Medical personnel could access the database through a secure Web site and monitor patients’ conditions and medical trends.

As the program evolved, state health officials became interested in using this data to help determine whether primary care doctors were effectively managing the complex conditions of these types of patients within Alabama’s Medicaid population. Medicaid participants, including rural residents, often have multiple ailments and several doctors who may not coordinate their treatment plans or prescribe the most cost-effective treatment. In 2004, the state began enrolling Medicaid recipients in the BioTrac program and began using special software to track treatments and project future medical costs.

CSHI currently has claims data on over 60,000 Medicaid patients across the state. The software uses the data collected from the medical devices and patient claims records to formulate cost calculations. Early estimates show the potential for over $23 million in savings or approximately 5 percent of current medical and pharmacy costs. CSHI—with the Alabama Department of Public Health home health nurses—uses the information gathered through BioTrac to alert and make recommendations to doctors when there are gaps in treatment, competing or conflicting treatment plans or conflicting medications for any given patient in the program.

CSHI also created the Representational Medical Environment for Data Exchange (known as RMEDE), an innovative secure Web portal for primary care physicians. RMEDE allows primary care providers to view patients’ virtual medical records, giving providers a true 360 degree view of patients’ health and treatment needs.

Alabama health officials believe BioTrac is innovative because it is the first program in the nation to examine the three basic components of patient care.

South Carolina
Program Protects Agencies from Cybercrime

While the ongoing development of computers and the Internet contributes innumerable benefits to society, these benefits are increasingly accompanied by costs associated with
malicious computer viruses, worms, trojans, denial-of-service attacks, pharming, spyware and phishing, all of which are designed to disable, disrupt or steal data from computers and computer networks. The sheer volume and sophistication of cyber crime can overwhelm the capacity of a public agency to prevent and manage attacks on its equipment and networks.

South Carolina has recognized these threats and has created a statewide system to coordinate the detection, analysis, notification and response to cybercrime against public agencies. The system includes an early warning mechanism to alert public agencies about threats, a clearinghouse of information about cybercrime and a mechanism to help agencies deal with attacks on computer networks.

South Carolina’s Information Sharing and Analysis Center (SC-ISAC) is a unique partnership designed to enhance coordination of investigation and intelligence information to detect, pre-empt and prevent future cyberterrorist acts by combining resources—including personnel, equipment and information—from the South Carolina Chief Information Officer (CIO), the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the United States Secret Services (USSS), the Multi-State ISAC, the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) and the Department of Homeland Security.

The approach uses the expert resources within each partner organization, leveraging the expertise of each association. For example, SC-ISAC formed a partnership with the Computer Crime Center, SLED’s unit that fights cyber-attacks against private companies. Until now, no organization was charged with defending public sector computers in South Carolina from malicious attacks.

SC-ISAC was created to assist the South Carolina government by implementing proactive measures to reduce the risks of computer security incidents and to support the government by responding to such incidents when they occur.

- The South Carolina Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC) analyzes and distributes information on security events, best practices and awareness programs to federal, state, county and local levels.
- A Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) creates a trained resource (50 volunteers) that can be utilized by South Carolina to minimize the impact and the costs associated with a security event.
- A 24/7 Security Operations Center (SOC) monitors and activates the CSIRT if a security event occurs. The centerpiece of the SOC is a Security Information Management System (SIMS). By creating a central location for events to be recorded and monitored, South Carolina will be the first state with such a comprehensive view of the security posture of its network.

SC-ISAC was created in October of 2003 in response to the lack of sufficient staff resources and security practices in place in South Carolina to defend against and minimize damage due to hostile attacks by viruses, worms and terrorist attacks. Initially funded by a grant from the Department of Homeland Security, financial resources and core competencies are now contributed by partnering organizations.

SC-ISAC currently monitors approximately 2.5 million security events a day, and has monitored as many as 36 million events in a 24-hour period. For more information, contact Tom Fletcher, deputy CIO, S.C. State Budget and Control Board, 4430 Broad River Road, Columbia, SC, 29210, or (803) 896-0404, fletcher@cio.sc.gov.

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West

Montana

Program Identifies Unidentified Voters

Verifying a voter’s identity is critical in protecting the integrity of elections. The federal Help America Vote Act and Montana law require citizens to present legal identification at polling stations. Unfortunately, people sometimes forget their identification cards or fail to bring them to the polls. Montana’s Voter Verification Service is an innovative, inexpensive, and practical method that addresses this problem.
Started in 2004, Montana’s Voter Verification Service enables county election administrators in all 56 counties to use the Internet to search Montana Department of Justice’s driver record database to verify the identity of prospective voters who show up at the polls without identification.

County election officials can dial-up the system from the polling place using a modem or faster Internet connection. Election officials in polling places that do not have Internet access can call polling stations that do have Internet access and request for those officials to perform a search. The state provides the service free to the counties. “The Voter Verification Service has quickly proven to be a reliable safeguard to ensure that people who forget their ID on Election Day are able to avoid voting provisionally,” Secretary of State Brad Johnson reported.

The new service has saved time and money for voters and state and local governments. For example, in 2004 officials used the service for more than 600 searches in a primary election and 200 searches in the general election. Cities and towns have continued to use the service during this fall’s municipal primary elections. The state plans to extend the service to other local races such as school board elections.

During the handful of elections after the identification requirement took effect in 2002, but before start of the voter verification service, people who wanted to vote but did not have proper identification could either go home and get it or fill out a provisional ballot.

Going home to get a forgotten ID is inconvenient, and can be a chore in a state where many people live more than 20 miles from their polling station. People who choose to use a provisional ballot must still furnish proper identification to their county elections administrator by 5:00 p.m. the day after the election in order for their ballots to be counted. Although they can do this in person, by mail postmarked the day after the election, or by fax, it can still present an inconvenience for voters and additional work for county election officials. The Voter Verification Service allows citizens to exercise their right vote conveniently. Indeed, the number of provisional ballots in the 2004 general election was much lower than expected, about 10 per county; most of these were cast for reasons other than insufficient identification.

Montana officials believe the Voter Verification Service is the first of its kind and is easily replicable in other states. The service is maintained for the Secretary of State’s Office at no cost through the state’s self-funded electronic government services contract managed by the Montana Department of Administration.

For more information, contact Audrey Hinman, bureau chief, Architecture and Internet Services Bureau, Information Technology Services Division, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 200115, Helena, MT 59620-0115, (406) 444-1635.

Nevada International Program Increases Exports

Nevada’s International Representatives Program developed a number of international offices around the world to represent the state’s economic, trade and investment interests. The key is that these offices are independent representatives—and they do not cost the state any money.

Nevada’s state legislature closed all foreign offices in 1993 due to budget and related reasons, and had not reopened or funded them. However, due to increasing globalization and the need of businesses to increase international trade, something had to be done. As a result of this program in both 2003 and 2004, Nevada was second in the nation in percentage increase of exports. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has also increased as a result of this program.

After some consideration of possible alternatives to setting up representative offices, the program team came up with a plan. They decided to use the concept that the representative would not get paid by the state, but would be paid by clients on either side of a deal (Nevada and/or foreign entity) if the representative was able to bring the deal to fruition. This works the same as a “straight commission” salesman would work in sales in the private sector.
Another condition was that there had to be no start-up or continuing operational costs or new legislation required.

The program has been very effective and successful in addressing the number one issue: establishing a network of strategic foreign representatives with no start-up or continuing costs. The current network includes eight representative offices helping Nevada exporters to increase their business; additional representatives are planned in the future. Several tangible examples include:

- The Singapore representative, whose territory covers Southeast Asia, is helping a private company to set up distribution of its products in three countries where they have never been sold before. The representative forecasts that, within 3 years, sales in these three countries will be $40 million per year.

- The representative in Taipei is bringing the first Chinese-owned bank to Nevada (Las Vegas) that will initially open two branches to serve the Asian community.

- The former representative in Beijing was responsible for developing a relationship with the Tianjin (China) Convention Center project that should result in the purchase of $30 million in products and services from Nevada suppliers.

The new Beijing representative is helping two Chinese companies establish U.S. operations in Nevada. One of these companies is moving its U.S. distribution operation from California to Nevada. The representative is also bringing in a large delegation of buyers from Chinese Mongolia to purchase cattle feed (alfalfa) from Nevada growers. Nebraska suppliers will also take part in a contract to provide some security services for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

None of these successes would have happened without the International Representatives Program.

For additional information, contact Alan Di Stefano, director, Global Trade and Investment for the Nevada Commission on Economic Development, at (775) 687-4325, ccintl@bizopp.state.nv.us, or www.expand2nevada.com.

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New Jersey’s Garden State Network Enterprise Intrusion Detection Project was created by a partnership between the state and the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command Research, Development and Engineering Center (CERDEC). The project is an effort to thwart cyberterrorists by researching and analyzing the state’s networks and developing an intrusion detection system. The program is CERDEC’s first research partnership with a state government. For more information, contact Anna Thomas, chief of strategic development and digital communications, at (609) 633-9032, anna.thomas@oit.state.nj.us, or visit www.nj.gov/it.

Vermont’s Comprehensive Environmental Resource Management Plan (CERMP) establishes a single source within state government for identifying and advancing the environmental sustainability of state government operations. The plan includes four major goals:

- reduce the environmental impact of state government daily operations;
- reduce the costs of operating state government through energy and programmatic savings;
- create new and sustain existing businesses in the state that develop, produce or market environmentally preferable products; and
- demonstrate to other states and the private sector that fiscal responsibility does not have to be sacrificed for environmental stewardship.

For more information, contact Dave Burley, chief of engineering, at (802) 828-3314, dave.burley@state.vt.us or visit www.bgs.state.vt.us.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System launched eFolio Minnesota to provide Minnesota students and residents the ability to construct and deploy a free, multimedia, Web-based showcase of their educational and work force accomplishments.
Web-based showcase of their educational and work force accomplishments. This Web-based electronic portfolio reflects a commitment to helping Minnesotans succeed in life and work. For more information, contact Paul Wasko, eFolio Minnesota director, at (651) 649-5956, paul.wasko@so.mnscu.edu or visit www.efoliominnesota.com.

Southern Alternates

North Carolina’s Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) proactively compensates for unavoidable environmental damage to North Carolina’s wetlands and waterways. The initiative restores and protects the state’s natural resources and assists responsible economic growth, and has earned national recognition for innovation and effectiveness in achieving tangible results. For more information, contact Tad Boggs, director of communications, at (919) 715-2227 or tad.boggs@ncmail.net, or visit www.nceep.net.

The Council on Virginia’s Future was developed to create a new policy-making framework for the 21st century. The new, dynamic framework balances continuous improvement of the daily delivery of services to citizens with breakthrough thinking to effect long-term, positive quality-of-life changes. For more information, contact Jane N. Kusiak, executive director, at (804) 371-2346 or JaneKusiak@virginia.edu, or visit www.future.virginia.gov.

Western Alternate

The Mapping Evapotranspiration from Satellites Project, a cooperative effort of the University of Idaho, the Idaho Department of Water Resources, NASA and the private sector, is an operational tool for water administration in Idaho. This technology uses satellite image data to compute a complete radiation and energy balance, sensible heat, and evapotranspiration or ET, which is water that is transpired by vegetation or evaporated from the soil. The project is of particular interest to Western states, which are expected to have water supply crises by 2025. For more information, contact William J. Kramber, senior remote sensing analyst, Department of Water Resources, at (208) 287-4878 or bill.kramber@idwr.idaho.gov, or visit www.idwr.state.id.us/gisdata/et.htm.

Finalists

Eastern Finalists

Delaware’s Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, part of the Department of Health and Social Services, developed the Home and Community Based Services Waiver Individualized Rate Setting Program. The program is a resource allocation and reimbursement structure based on the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. It empowers each individual to determine when, where and how his or her services are provided. Contact Valerie J. Smith, chief of administration, at (302) 744-9600 or Valerie.smith@state.de.us.

Massachusetts’ Shared Services Model Hiring Reform Program sought to fix a redundant, expensive, prolonged and frustrating hiring process. By forming a partnership with state agencies, utilizing technology and assuming more of an oversight role, the Human Resources Division developed a set of new hiring guidelines that reduced the hiring time by 85 percent. Contact Sarah Unsworth, account analyst, at (617) 878-9767 or sarah.unsworth@hrd.state.ma.us.

New Jersey’s Focus on the Victim (FOV) Program is a voluntary offender program that employs restorative and reparative justice principles as its main focus and provides offenders the opportunity to examine the impact of their crimes on victims and communities. Through unique role-playing techniques and face-to-face interaction with survivors of victimization, this program has empowered victims by allowing them to help
offenders modify negative behaviors, ultimately preventing destructive future behavior. Contact Melanie Boston, coordinator, New Jersey Department of Corrections, Division of Programs and Community Services, Office of Victim Services, at (609) 943-5390 or Melanie.Boston@doc.state.nj.us.

New Jersey’s FastID system, implemented by the New Jersey Department of Corrections, provides a one-to-one comparison/verification between an individual’s live fingerprint and offender information stored within New Jersey’s database. This accurate and secure identification method allows the NJDOC to increase efficiency and accuracy in intake and release processes at correctional facilities. Contact Doreen White, project manager, at (609) 341-3022 or doreen.white@doc.state.nj.us.

Pennsylvania’s Blue Ribbon Passport Program is the keystone in the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s agritourism initiative. It aims to partner various agricultural related assets and promote agricultural awareness through increased tourism. The program also helps drive agricultural economic development by assisting farms and farm-based ventures with additional income, thus preserving small farm operations and increasing tourism revenue in rural communities. Contact Brant Bickel, division chief, at (717) 787-5342 or brbickel@state.pa.us.

Pennsylvania’s Maintenance Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness (MECE) initiative was developed by a team of 81 experienced maintenance professionals. The group recommended 92 ways to improve asset management, staffing, winter operations efficiency, department work force versus contracting, and equipment optimization. Through the implementation of MECE, PennDOT has refocused the highway maintenance community on core business functions, redirected savings, increased productivity and facilitated the use of better highway maintenance business practices. Contact Robert M. Peda, P.E., at (717) 787-6899 or rpeda@state.pa.us.

Midwestern Finalists

Illinois’ InfoNet is a state-of-the-art data collection system for victim service providers developed by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. The program facilitates uniform data collection and promotes program planning and accountability. Contact Karen M. Griffiths, InfoNet project manager, at (312) 793-8950 or kgriffiths@icjia.state.il.us.

The mission of the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is to develop and promote a recognized, voluntary and proactive environmental assurance program that is targeted to Michigan’s agriculture industry. The program ensures that producers engage in cost-effective pollution prevention practices and are in compliance with applicable state and federal environmental regulations. MAEAP uses a systems approach based on education, site-specific risk assessments and third party verification that is developed for all Michigan farms, regardless of size, commodity or species. Contact Janice Swartz Wilford, program manager, Environmental Stewardship Division, at (517) 241-4730, wilford@9@michigan.gov or visit www.maeap.org.

Michigan’s FieldManager is an innovative suite of software tools used to manage and track field-level progress of road and bridge construction projects. It can be used by State Department of Transportation field offices, local government agencies, engineering firms and construction contractors. For more information, contact C. Douglass Couto, information officer, at (517) 241-2899, coutod@michigan.gov or visit www.michigan.gov/mdot or www.fieldmanager.com.

Michigan’s Statewide Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition Initiative is a unique partnership among the governor’s office, the Department of Human Services and communities throughout Michigan to provide affordable, ethical access to tax preparation services to the working poor. An evaluation conducted in the first year of the initiative demonstrated that a collaborative approach yielded a cost-effective method that enabled eligible workers to increase household income by gaining federal and state tax refunds. Contact Susan Cociarelli, coordinator, Statewide EITC, at (517) 241-7911 or visit www.michigan.gov/tns or www.fieldmanager.com.

MinnesotaHelp.info is Minnesota’s most comprehensive online human services database. It contains over 30,000 services and resources for providers and consumers of all ages, income levels and abilities. For more information, contact Krista Boston, manager for consumer choices team and MinnesotaHelp.info project director, at (651) 296-0378, Krista.Boston@state.mn.us or visit www.MinnesotaHelp.info.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources’ Strategic Conservation Agenda program uses new and innovative approaches for defining and measuring progress toward statewide natural resources results. Rather than simply communicating a strategic vision, it makes progress perceptible by communicating critical natural resource trends. The program also uses 85 specific indicators and targets to measure results in six performance areas: natural lands, fish and wildlife, waters and watersheds, forests, outdoor recreation and natural resources stewardship education. Contact Keith Wendt, manager, Science Policy Unit, at (651) 297-7879, keith.wendt@
Wisconsin has deployed its statewide MEDDIC-MS and MEDDIC-MS SSI Rapid Cycle automated system. Cost-effective automated systems that measure health care performance are essential to improving the quality of the nation’s publicly-funded managed health care programs. Systems like these are especially important to financially pressured state Medicaid programs. For more information, contact Gary R. Ilminen, RN, nurse consultant, BMHCP, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, at (608) 261-7839, ilmingr@dhfs.state.wi.us, or visit www.dhfs.state.wi.us or visit www.dnr.state.mn.us or visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/index.html and www.dnr.state.mn.us/conservationagenda/index.html.

Southern Finalists

Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Fund establishes an innovative new funding mechanism to support capital improvements to wastewater treatment plants and other measures essential to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. The program helps generate revenue by implementing new fees on the use of septic systems and in water and sewer bills. That revenue will be used to service bonds that will pay for the $700 million to $1 billion required to upgrade all major wastewater treatment plants, upgrade septic systems and fund activities related to agricultural cover crops. For more information, contact Sue Battle-McDonald, strategic planning coordinator, at (410) 537-4111, sbattle-mcdonald@mde.state.md.us or visit www.mde.state.md.us/Water/CBWRF/index.asp.

The program helps generate revenue by implementing new fees on the use of septic systems and in water and sewer bills.

The Missouri Division of Tourism—working in partnership with the Missouri Department of Agriculture and the Missouri Department of Conservation—is giving travelers more places to visit and reasons to experience the state’s agricultural and rural areas through Missouri’s Rediscover Your Roots … Connecting Urban Dwellers with their Rural Heritage. Promoting travel destinations that involve work/stay farms and native grown produce is a blossoming trend. The trend has gained popularity for a variety of reasons including visitors’ increased demand for cultural heritage and historical experiences, the need for additional income in agricultural communities and the desire to close the gap on urban and rural diversity in order to reconnect vital constituencies in a state polarized by an urban/rural split. Contact Debra Lee, strategic planner, at (573) 526-3566, debra.lee@ded.mo.gov or visit www.VisitMo.com.

Tennessee’s Southeast Alternative Fuels Task Force is a team comprised of state environmental officers, energy officers, transportation officers, Clean Cities coalitions and private sector stakeholders that work together to advance the use of cleaner burning fuels in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. The task force is currently focused on developing refueling corridors and accompanying support tactics that by 2010, facilities that provide biodiesel and ethanol will be strategically located along key interstate highways. These facilities will allow confident travel between major destinations. For more information, contact Emeline Johnston, policy research analyst, at (615) 532-0130, Emeline.Johnston@state.tn.us or visit www.sealfuels.org.

Tennessee’s Exemplary Educator (EE) program is a targeted technical assistance program which assists high priority state identified schools in reading, language, math and writing by utilizing the expertise of recently retired exemplary educators. Over the past four years, approximately one-third of Tennessee’s initially identified schools have moved off the list with the help of this program. For more information, contact Dr. Connie J. Smith, executive director, Office of Innovation, Improvement and Accountability, at (615) 532-4706 or Connie.j.smith@state.tn.us.

The Aging Texas Well program is designed to ensure that Texans prepare for aging in all aspects of life and that state and local social infrastructure facilitate lifelong healthy aging. For more information, contact Karl Urban, manager of policy analysis and support at (512) 438-4347, karl.urban@dads.state.tx.us, or visit www.agingtexaswell.org.

Western Finalists

Active Managerial Control is used by retail food establishment operators to manage risks that contribute to food borne illness. Alaska is the first state to implement Active Managerial Control as a system that includes four components: Trained Food Service Workforce; Standard Operating Procedures in Food Establishments; Self-Assessment; and Regulation through Inspection and Enforcement. For more information, contact Kristin Ryan, director, at (907) 269-7644 or Kristin_Ryan@dec.state.ak.us, or visit www.state.ak.us/dec/eh.

Hawaii Rx Plus is a prescription drug assistance program for those who qualify. It is designed to reduce the price of prescription drugs, keep administrative costs to a minimum, streamline the application process, prevent crowding out the prescription drug benefits already available through the Hawaii Pre-Paid Health Care Act and protect the rights and benefits of Medicaid recipients. For more information, contact Lillian B. Koller, Esq., director, or Tracy H. Okubo, program coordinator, at (808) 586-4997, Lillian.B.Koller@hawaii.gov or Tracy.H.Okubo@hawaii.gov, or visit www.hawaiirxplus.com.
This year’s graduates of the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD) are the 11th class of lawmakers to complete the intensive five-day program in Madison, Wis. The annual event helps develop legislators’ leadership skills through a curriculum of professional development and policy analysis seminars.

The Council of State Governments’ Midwestern office conducts the BILLD program in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin’s Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs. The sponsors of the 2005 Bowhay Institute were: Alticor Inc.; Anheuser-Busch Companies; Bayer HealthCare; DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund; Ford Motor Company; Novartis Pharmaceuticals; Pfizer Inc; United Parcel Service; Allergan Inc.; Altria Group, Inc.; the American Chemistry Council/American Plastics Council; Beverly Enterprises, Inc.; GlaxoSmithKline; Hoffman-La Roche, Inc.; Johnson & Johnson; LexisNexis; Merck & Co. Inc.; PhRMA; Sanoﬁ-Aventis; Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of America; Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; Barr Pharmaceuticals Inc.; and Kelly Services Inc.

Lawmakers from the Midwest are chosen through a nonpartisan, competitive selection process. Applications for next year’s BILLD program, which will be held next July, will be available in December. For more information, contact Laura A. Tomaka at (630) 810-0210 or l.tomaka@csg.org.

MLC Elects Officers at Annual Meeting

More than 600 people attended the 2005 Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting, held in a Canadian province for the first time in the event's 60-year history.

The four-day meeting in Regina, Saskatchewan, was highlighted by sessions on state-provincial relations as well as presentations and roundtable discussions on topics such as demographic trends in North America's heartland, the Canadian and U.S. health care delivery systems, school funding, rural economic development and medical malpractice.

Featured speakers included Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Joseph Ellis, Fox News political analyst Morton Kondracke and renowned Canadian broadcaster Pamela Wallin, who is now her country's consul general to New York.

The MLC also approved 11 policy resolutions.

Ohio Sen. Kevin Coughlin presided over this year’s meeting as MLC chair. Myron Kowalsky, speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, led his province’s work in hosting and helping coordinate the event.

At the meeting, the MLC Executive Committee nominated North Dakota Rep. Kim Koppelman to move into the rotation of officers that leads The Council of State Governments.

If this nomination is approved at CSG’s Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum, Koppelman will become vice chair in 2006. He will then be in line to serve as CSG chair-elect in 2007 and chair in 2008.

Illinois Sen. Donne Trotter has been elected to serve as the MLC chair in 2006. His duties will include presiding over the 61st Annual Meeting in Chicago on Aug. 20–23 of 2006.

Other elected MLC officers include Michigan Sen. Patricia Birkholz, first vice chair; South Dakota Sen. Tom Dempster, second vice chair; and Coughlin, immediate past chair.

Management Training Featured at CSG-W EST Fall Staff Seminar

Senior nonpartisan staff leaders for Western legislatures focused on customer service and stress management at the fall staff seminar in Sedona, Arizona. The annual professional development seminar is offered by the Legislative Service Agency/Research Directors (LSA/RD) Committee of the Council of State Governments-WEST.

Each year these staff directors gather for two days of outside management training and also share suggestions about best practices in Western state legislatures. Caryn Tilton of CT Consulting in Welches, Oregon, taught a class on how to deliver great customer service. Dr. Stanley Clark, Northern Arizona University human resources expert, worked with staff leaders on stress management techniques.

LSA/RD members conducted internal training on working with leadership staff, sexual harassment in the legislative workplace and legislative ethics.

Oregon Legislative Administrator Dave Henderson chairs the CSG-W EST LSA/RD Committee, and Nevada Legislative Counsel Director Lorne Malkiewich serves as vice chair. The goal of the committee is to develop and share practices that will result in the best possible customer service to lawmakers in a positive and professional workplace environment.

Lt. Governors ‘Significant, Visible’

“Lieutenant governors, once the fifth wheel of U.S. politics, are playing an increasingly significant, visible and controversial role in state government,” wrote Rick Hampson in USA Today on July 24, 2005. “Their importance has been underscored six times over the past two years, as governors died or resigned.”


The National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) is the professional association for those first in line of succession to become governor. NLGA’s newly installed officers include: Chairman, Colorado Lt. Gov. Jane Norton; Vice-Chairman, Michigan Lt. Gov. John Cherry; and Treasurer, North Dakota Lt. Gov. Jack Dalrymple. A full list of NLGA Executive Committee members is available at www.nlga.us.

New Home for CSG Midwest

The Midwestern Office of The Council of State Governments moved to a new office in Chicago’s western suburbs on October 3.

The new mailing address for the office is 701 E. 22nd Street, Suite 110, Lombard, Illinois, 60148-5651. The new phone number is (630) 925-1922; the fax number is (630) 925-1930.

The office’s e-mail address, csgm@csg.org, and home Web site, www.csgmidwest.org, remain the same.
NAST Annual Conference a Success

The National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) recently hosted one of its most successful conferences to date. Held jointly with the State Debt Management Network (SDMN), the NAST Annual Conference in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, drew more than 300 attendees.

From economic forecasts to hurricane recovery efforts, conference participants heard the latest details on a variety of timely topics. In the wake of the devastation left behind after Hurricane Katrina, a special session was arranged to address the financial angle of disaster preparedness. Government finance officials, including Mississippi State Treasurer Tate Reeves and Ben Watkins, director of the Florida Division of Bond Finance, shared their experiences with planning efforts, disaster aid and recovery efforts and concerns of implementing relief plans.

After a roundtable discussion, NAST and SDMN members drafted and passed resolutions that will help prepare state finance officials to respond to future disaster situations. The resolutions encourage state and local debt issuers to develop a disaster preparedness plan and enact new legislation and policy. NAST and SDMN also approved an additional series of resolutions that will provide debt service relief to areas already in the midst of the disaster recovery process.

NAST continues to work with treasurers from the Gulf Coast states to facilitate the drafting and passage of legislation to relieve the financial fallout from Katrina. To view any resolutions passed at the recent annual meeting, please visit www.nast.org or contact NAST at (859) 244-8175.

State Officials Gather for Inaugural Eastern Leadership Academy

In September, The Council of State Governments’ Eastern Regional Conference held its inaugural Eastern Leadership Academy in Philadelphia. The program, presented by the University of Pennsylvania’s Fels Institute of Government, helped the region’s best and brightest officials develop their leadership skills and examine the most significant policy issues facing the states today.

Lawmakers and state officials from all branches of government from 10 Eastern states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Québec participated in the Academy.

This year’s dynamic program focused on the Eastern region’s changing economy and culture, strategies to create new jobs, efforts to rein in the cost of health care and strategies to build an ethical climate in state government. Academy members worked to enhance their personal skills in communicating with the public, building consensus and solving problems.

Participants praised the program as an “excellent training and networking opportunity” and “a great source of professional and academic inspiration.” They also remarked favorably on the non-partisan nature of the Academy.

For information on the 2006 Eastern Leadership Academy, contact Karen Imas, CSG/ERC communications manager at kimas@csg.org or visit www.csgeast.org.
In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The Council of State Governments announces its new Healthy States initiative to educate state officials on public health issues. Areas include cancer, diabetes, immunization, school health and environmental health. 

Look for these new resources and services:

- Quarterly newsletter, issue briefs and other publications
- e-Weekly
- Inquiry service
- Issues analysis
- Comprehensive Web site

For more information, check out the Healthy States Web site at www.healthystates.csg.org.
The Power to Convene
Continued from page 13

- **Direct, rather than dominate, the discussions.** “Your role at such a meeting is to bring people together to find agreement,” says Sen. Moe, “not to make decisions for them.” There has to be an environment for working through issues.

- **Keep people moving.** Keep participants working together to consider options and integrate them into solutions. Where there may be institutional impediments, or red tape involved, consider using your own capabilities to overcome them.

- **Be impartial.** In order to keep people participating, they must believe that the leader or convener is not predisposed to one side or another and is trying to find a solution that all sides can embrace. This may require that there be conveners from both sides of the aisle. Help ensure that the issues being considered are framed in an unbiased way. Defining and naming the issue jointly can ensure that everyone is willing to contribute to finding a solution.

- **“Demonstrate on-going visible commitment to the process.”** In order to keep participants at the table, they need to know that the convener is paying attention and cares about the progress the group is making. Even when you cannot be directly involved throughout the process, it is important to send signals of your on-going interest. Provide feedback to the group on their progress.

- **Make sure there is an outcome.** Getting to closure can involve establishing timetables for the process and reminding people of them. The best agreements are written, and include an action and implementation plan that spell out different people’s responsibilities.

Sen. Moe points out, “One benefit of collaborative governance is that it can keep issues out of the legal and legislative arena. When people can develop a solution that does not involve more red tape and regulation, everybody benefits.” Things move more smoothly, and policymakers can focus on things where legislation is truly needed.

Convening is a useful tool to do that. It is not always the right option, but often it can work. “Pick the issue,” says Sen. Moe. “The environment, health care, education, transportation—chances are there is some element of it where collaborative governance would jump-start a solution. . . . [I]t will more often than not achieve results.”

Indeed, collaborative governance can unlock bitter disputes and create solutions that last. It has happened in legislatures in Montana, where there had been a simmering dispute over hazardous waste cleanup. It has happened in Minnesota on long-term care issues. In addition, in North Carolina, roadblocks to progress on groundwater contamination fell away in a day once the right people worked together. Legislators convened those who came together to craft answers to all these questions.

The bottom line on convening, from the standpoint of a legislator, is that not only is it a more effective way to arrive at better, more lasting solutions for people, “but it also makes good political sense,” says Sen. Oleen. “Involving people in the decisions that affect their lives makes them feel included.” And, even if the ultimate policies are not the ones they would have liked to see adopted, they can live with and accept the outcomes.

“Those who have been elected have a powerful, but little-used tool at their disposal: the power to convene,” says Sen. Moe. “This is not a currency to be spent frivolously. You have to be judicious.”

“But,” he adds, “the results can be remarkably satisfying.” And, he says, there are tools and resources available to assist legislators who choose to follow this course. “No one has to start from scratch.”

—Christine Carlson is Executive Director of the Policy Consensus Initiative, which builds and supports networks that provide states with leadership and capacity to achieve more collaborative governance. Greg Wolf is Executive Director of the National Policy Consensus Center. The Center conducts applied research to develop systems for collaborative governance that leaders can use to achieve better solutions to complex public issues.

For more information, please see www.policyconsensus.org.
Trends in America
Navigating turbulence to success

The premier organization in forecasting policy trends for state leaders
www.csg.org

Join us November 30–December 4 at our annual meeting in Delaware for the release of CSG’s second edition of Trends in America—your guide to the issues shaping tomorrow’s public policy.
conference calendar

his calendar lists meetings as designated by CSG’s Annual Meeting Committee. For details of a meeting, call the number listed. “CSG/” denotes affiliate organizations of CSG. Visit www.csg.org for updates and more extensive listings.

Other meetings have value to state officials. Purchase a meeting listing by calling (800) 800-1910 or by e-mailing sales@csg.org. Announce your meetings to thousands in the state government market through an advertisement, a Web listing or a banner ad in In the News, CSG’s weekly electronic newsletter. Get your free subscription to In the News at www.csg.org.

November 2005

Nov. 4–5  CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—Legislative Service Agency Directors Meeting—Asheville, N.C.—Grove Park Inn. Contact Ken Fern at (404) 663-1866 or kfer@csg.org.

Nov. 4–7  CSG/Southern Legislative Conference—2005 SLC Fall Issues Conference—Asheville, N.C.—Grove Park Inn. Contact Nai Hallman at (404) 663-1866 or nhallman@csg.org.

Nov. 8–9  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Survival Skills for Middle Managers: Out of the Frying Pan, Into the Fire—Lexington, KY. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Nov. 9–10  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Evidence-Based Practices—St. Louis, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Nov. 11–13  National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators—National Summit of Hispanic Legislators—Tampa, FL. For more information, call (202) 434-8070 or visit www.nhcsl.com.

Nov. 15–19  CSG/WEST Western Legislative Academy—Colorado Springs, CO—Cheyenne Mountain Resort. Contact Cheryl Duvauchelle at (916) 533-4423 or cd@westa.org.

Nov. 16–18  CSG/National Association of State Treasurers—NAST Issues Conference—New York, NY—Waldorf Astoria Hotel. Contact Adnée Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or ahamilton@csg.org or visit www.nast.net.

December 2005

Dec. 1–2  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Officer Safety: Issues in Supervising Mental Health Offenders—Topeka, KS. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Dec. 1–4  CSG 2005 Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum—Wilmington, DE. Contact Wanda Hines at (859) 244-8103 or whines@csg.org.

Dec. 5–7  CSG/National Youth Court Center—Youth Court Professional Development Institute—Chicago, IL—Radisson Hotel & Suites Chicago. Contact Lisa Ginter at (859) 244-8193 or nycc@csg.org or register online at www.youthcourtcert.com.

Dec. 7–11  National Black Caucus of State Legislators—Annual Legislative Conference—Washington, DC. For more information, call (202) 624-5457 or visit www.nbcl.com.

Dec. 14–15  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Officer Safety: Safety Strategies for Mental Health and Social Workers—Kansas City, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

January 2006

Jan. 7  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Officer Safety: Dealing with Aggressive Behavior—Austin, TX. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Jan. 8–11  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—WITI Training Institute—Austin, TX. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Jan. 11–12  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Real World Motivational Interviewing—St. Louis, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Jan. 11–12  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Evidence-Based Practices—Kansas City, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

Jan. 27–29  CSG/National Association of State Personnel Executives—Mid-Year Meeting—Arlington, VA—Hyatt Arlington. Contact Leslie Scott at (859) 244-8182 or lscott@csg.org or visit www.naspe.net.

Jan. 28–31  CSG/National Association of State Telecommunications Directors—Southern Region WITI Seminar—Savannah, GA—Savannah Marriott Riverfront Hotel. Contact Pam Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or pijohnson@csg.org or visit www.nastd.org.

February 2006

Feb. 15–16  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Evidence-Based Practices in Corrections—Kansas City, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

March 2006

March 5–8  CSG/National Association of State Treasurers—NAST Legislative Conference—Washington, DC—Willard Intercontinental Hotel. Contact Adnée Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or ahamilton@csg.org.

March 28–29  CSG/American Probation and Parole Association—Officer Safety: Safety Strategies for Mental Health and Social Workers—St. Louis, MO. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

April 2006

April 9–12  CSG/National Association of State Treasurers—Southern State Treasurers Conference—Savannah, GA—Hilton Savannah DeSoto. Contact Adnée Hamilton at (859) 244-8174 or ahamilton@csg.org.

April 20–21  CSG/American Parole and Probation Association—Supervising the Sexual Offender—Dallas, TX. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204 or kchappel@csg.org.

April 22–25  CSG/National Association of State Telecommunications Directors—Eastern Region Seminar—Newport, RI—Marriott Newport Hotel. Contact Pam Johnson at (859) 244-8184 or pijohnson@csg.org or visit www.nastd.org.

May 2006

May 7–9  CSG 2006 Spring National Committee and Task Force Meetings—W hitel Sulphur Springs, WV. Contact Wanda Hines at (859) 244-8103 or whines@csg.org.

May 16–17  CSG/American Parole and Probation Association—Evidence-Based Practices in Corrections—Fairfield, CA. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8184 or kchappel@csg.org.

May 16–17  CSG/American Parole and Probation Association—Real World Motivational Interviewing—Fairfield, CA. Contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8184 or kchappel@csg.org.
Although the federal government tends to get more attention, state officials are often on the front lines of cutting-edge trends and issues. On the other hand, sometimes in the community of state governments, the more things change, the more they stay the same. In print since 1958, State News (formerly State Government News) has chronicled many of the changes ... and continuities.

Here’s what we reported on:

40 Years Ago—November/December 1965
Prison Vocational Programs

In November 1965, we reported that Mississippi’s state prison inaugurated a job training program for its 2,000 inmates. The program offered training in sheet metal, cabinet work, carpentry, diesel mechanics and certain other trades, with the potential to add bookbinding at a later date.

Gov. Paul Johnson commented how the new program benefited inmates. “With the training we have programmed,” he said, “there will be someone waiting to hire them for skilled work.”

Update

Currently, Mississippi operates three prisons and has the capacity to house 10,133 inmates. The Central Mississippi Correctional Facility is the only Mississippi state institution that houses women.

Mississippi Prison Industries Corporation (MPIC), a nonprofit, self-funded corporation formed by the state in 1990, provides work experience to inmates. The company operates a tack shop, a print shop and a sign shop at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, and during the 2006 fiscal year, about 82 inmates per month contributed nearly 21,000 hours of labor at these shops. MPIC also operates a work program at the Mississippi State Penitentiary that utilizes over 296,400 inmate hours to operate its textile, metal fabrication and woodworking shops. This facility employs approximately 190 inmates per month.

In addition, the state’s prison system has expanded its vocational programming. Depending on the facility, inmates can participate in such programs as business technology, cosmetology, family dynamics, computer repair, culinary arts, agri-business and marine maintenance, among other options. These programs not only aim to enable inmates to obtain work experience to make them employable and economically self-sufficient upon release, but also aspire to reduce recidivism.

25 Years Ago—November/December 1980
Free Education for Illegal Immigrants

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell ordered Texas to provide free education to illegal immigrant children. Justice Powell stated that schools must admit the children at least while appeals were pursued of a July federal district court decision that the state had a constitutional duty to educate the children.

Update

A 1982 Supreme Court decision requires all states to provide free education for all children. Today, 11.9 percent of Texas schoolchildren are children of illegal immigrants. Based on the costs of K–12 schooling in Texas and estimates of the illegal alien population, Texas spends approximately $4 billion annually on educating these students.

Legislation regarding educating illegal immigrants has also expanded into the realm of higher education. Several states, including Texas, California, New York, Utah, Illinois, Washington, Oklahoma and Kansas have passed state laws providing in-state tuition benefits to illegal aliens who have attended high school in the resident state for three or more years.

10 Years Ago—November 1995
Telefile Reduces ‘Unpleasantness’ For Taxpayers

Ten years ago, CSG awarded Massachusetts an Innovations Award for its TeleFile tax program. We reported that the Telefile system requires applicants to fill out a worksheet and make a phone call that lasts approximately eight minutes in order to file state income taxes. The system reduced “at least some of the unpleasantness” of filing taxes for 172,000 or 30 percent of Massachusetts’ taxpayers.

Update

In 2004, 441,561 taxpayers filed their state and federal tax returns by phone. Taxpayers in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Oklahoma and West Virginia can now use the TeleFile system. However, only taxpayers who receive both federal and state TeleFile packages can use the combined TeleFile system.
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