

Canada – United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – États-Unis
Section canadienne

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Annual National
Conference
of the Council of State Governments (CSG)**

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America
14–16 December 2017**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 14–16 December 2017, two Vice-Chairs of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) – Senators Diane Griffin and David M. Wells – attended the annual national conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG) with three of their colleagues: the Honourable John McKay, P.C., M.P.; Mr. Gord Johns, M.P.; and Mr. Len Webber, M.P. The conference was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Miriam Burke, the Canadian Section’s Executive Secretary, and Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

The CSG serves all three branches of state government and provides regional fora – the western, midwestern, southern and eastern regional conferences – through which ideas and insights are exchanged with a view to shaping public policy.

Each year, the CSG convenes a national conference, which is attended by state legislators from throughout the United States, as well as selected governors. In addition to this annual conference, the CSG’s various regions hold an annual meeting.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The CSG’s national conference provides members of the Canadian Section with an important opportunity to speak with state legislators from throughout the United States. These interactions contribute to the Canadian Section’s ability to achieve the IPG’s four main goals: find points of convergence in respective policies; initiate dialogue on points of divergence; encourage exchanges of information; and promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. Moreover, the conference provides members of the Canadian Section with an opportunity to give input to, and gather information about, state-level issues that affect Canada.

ACTIVITIES AT THE EVENT

The following sessions were held at the CSG’s 2017 national conference:

- Shared State Legislation Part I
- Hiring and Retaining Workers with Disabilities
- Making Waves with State Water Policies
- Growing a Consensus on Marijuana Policy
- Steps to Success with the Every Student Succeeds Act (Education & Workforce Development Public Policy Committee)

- The Who, Watt, When of Modernizing Power Grids (Energy & Environment Public Policy Committee)
- Developing a Cybersecurity Strategy
- Interstate Compacts 101
- The Businesses Incentive Trap (Fiscal & Economic Development Public Policy Committee)
- All Trade is Local (International Committee)
- Professional Licensing from Plumbers to Physicians
- Best Practices for Administering Interstate Compacts
- Opening Session: Oregon Governor Kate Brown and Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval
- Interstate Compacts and State Legislatures
- Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System
- The Uncertain Future of Health Care (Health Public Policy Committee)
- Nevada Drives Transportation Policy into the Future (Transportation & Infrastructure Public Policy Committee)
- Shared State Legislation Part II
- Federalism and Interstate Compacts
- Improving the State and Federal Connection (Intergovernmental Affairs Committee)
- Success Improving Voting for Overseas Citizens
- Legal Roundtable
- Keynote Address: Michael Beschloss
- Occupational Licensure Compacts.

In addition, the following “innovation classrooms” were held:

- The Time is Now to Eliminate the Rural Broadband Gap

- Purpose and Persistence: Delivering the First FDA-Approved Gene Therapy to Fight Cancer
- Tobacco, Ebola and Public–Private Partnerships – Harnessing Innovation for Public Good and Economic Growth
- Creating Transparency, Openness and Trust: A Modern Approach to Redistricting
- Using Technology to Create and Inform Your Opioid Strategy.

Finally, a service project – Campaign Against Hunger – was undertaken.

At the conference, the CSG adopted the following policy resolutions:

[Resolution In Support Of Maintaining State And Local Tax Deduction](#)

[Resolution In Support Of State Control Of Occupational Licensing](#)

[Resolution On The Children’s Health Insurance Program](#)

[Resolution On Open And Reciprocal Trade In North America](#)

[Resolution on Promoting Equity in Education](#)

[Resolution on Promoting Federal Support for State Skills and Apprenticeship Programs](#)

[Resolution on Reauthorization of the Farm Bill](#)

[Resolution on Sale of Insurance Across State Lines](#)

[Resolution on Strengthening the Role of the States in International Trade](#)

[Resolution on the Use of Recycled Rubber Infill.](#)

Among these resolutions, those addressing North American trade, a strengthened role for U.S. states in international trade and reauthorization of the U.S Farm Bill could have direct or indirect implications for Canada.

This report summarizes the discussions that occurred at selected sessions.

MAKING WAVES WITH STATE WATER POLICIES – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Radhika Fox, *US Water Alliance*

- Water is one of the defining issues of our time, as well as a growing geopolitical and economic risk.
- Water challenges in the United States are deepening and growing.
- For some U.S. states, drought is the “new normal”; for others, having too much water is the norm.

- Water quality is a growing issue, including in relation to the Great Lakes.
- In the United States, a water main breaks every two minutes; communities need to focus on securing their water future.
- The United States' water infrastructure is aging and investments are needed; the water systems that were built 80-100 years ago were not designed to deal with the weather variations that are currently occurring.
- Ideas for sustainable water management in the United States include the following:
 - Advance regional collaboration regarding water management.
 - Accelerate partnerships between the agricultural sector and utilities with a view to improving water quality.
 - Maintain adequate funding for measures that support responsible water infrastructure management.
 - Address water infrastructure needs by combining public and private expertise and investment.
 - Redefine water "affordability" for the 21st century.
 - Reduce lead risks and take other actions to protect public health.
 - Accelerate the adoption of technology in order to foster efficiency and improve water service.

Nathan Allen, *WaterStart*

- If a drought occurs year after year, at some point, it must be recognized that drought is the "new normal."
- Demand "drives" innovation.
- Efforts should be devoted to "de-risking" new technology pilot projects relating to water, including through partnerships.
- Existing water infrastructure needs to be "operated" efficiently and effectively.
- The agricultural sector is responsible for about 40% of the United States' water use.
- Water-related problems and challenges should be defined specifically but not prescriptively, and creativity should be employed in finding solutions.

MAKING WAVES WITH STATE WATER POLICIES – COMMUNICATING THE VALUE OF WATER: RATE SETTING AND AFFORDABILITY ISSUES

Glenn Barnes, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

- The availability of safe drinking water is important for reasons that include public health, livable communities, a high quality of life, economic development and fire protection.
- Water is a necessary service provided by governments to citizens.
- A variety of models are used to determine water and sewer rates.
- Water costs often do not depend on the quantity of water that is treated and distributed, yet it is often sold at a price that includes a base charge and a volume charge.
- Historically, water has been underpriced in the United States.
- Much of the United States' water infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life.
- Drinking water is more capital-intensive than energy, telephone, cable and broadband.
- The cost of drinking water is rising more quickly than inflation and other utilities.
- Certain groups are vulnerable to water affordability concerns, including low-income households, small water systems, and communities that are losing population and sectors.
- To address water affordability concerns, states can take such actions as low-interest loans, grants and principal forgiveness for disadvantaged communities; they can also provide financial support for cost-reduction and affordability programs at the water system-level.
- In attempting to address water affordability concerns, water systems can become involved in partnerships and use other methods to reduce costs; they can also adopt variable pricing strategies.

Gregory Pierce, *University of California at Los Angeles*

- Water should be clean, safe, affordable and accessible.
- The financial ability of water providers to make investments in infrastructure, fund their operating costs, etc. should be supported.
- Because of health and livelihood impacts, households should be assisted – as required – to ensure that they can afford water; options to achieve this outcome include a flat-rate or percentage discount on their water bill.

MAKING WAVES WITH STATE WATER POLICIES – WATER = JOBS: THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY OF INVESTING IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Alexander Quinn, *Hatch*

- “Filling the water-related infrastructure gap” would lead to economic and employment gains, productivity savings and a reduction in the costs associated with water disruption.
- Although the need for improved water infrastructure is dispersed throughout the United States, it is particularly acute in the southeast; historically, both investments and maintenance have been lacking.
- Water-dependent sectors include agriculture, manufacturing, education and services.
- Water infrastructure generates high-quality jobs, and contributes to competitiveness and economic prosperity.

Josh Young, *American Chemistry Council*

- It is not possible to have clean drinking water without chlorine.
- The water infrastructure problem in the United States is significant.
- In the next 5-10 years, water may be unaffordable for 30% of the U.S. population.
- While aging water infrastructure is a problem, outdated policies – including about the materials that can be used for pipes – are also a challenge.

MAKING WAVES WITH STATE WATER POLICIES – BEYOND FLINT: THE FUTURE OF WATER QUALITY ISSUES IN THE UNITED STATES

Christina Devine, *Virginia Tech*

- About 50% of the water service lines in Flint, Michigan are made of lead; lead is also found in solder, among other sources.
- Elevated levels of lead in water lead to elevated levels in blood, which is particularly dangerous for infants, young children and pregnant women; in children, these elevated levels can lead to irreversible reductions in intelligence quotient scores and growth rates, and to behavioural issues.
- Flint’s water situation is not an anomaly; other U.S. cities have similar problems.

Clark Halvorson, *Washington State*

- Lead affects every system in the body; children are significantly more sensitive to the effects of lead.
- Lead-based paint, including on toys, is the largest high-risk source of lead; lead also enters homes in dust and soil.

- Parents and health care providers should be educated about lead-related risks, and the blood of high-risk children should be tested for lead.
- Children with elevated levels of lead in their blood should not be “used” to “find” sources of lead.
- Homes should be inspected for lead and other environmental hazards.

Peter Grevatt, *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will work with U.S. states on legislation regarding clean water and clean air.
- While Americans continue to have among the safest drinking water in the world, the situation that occurred in Flint, Michigan caused them to “think twice” about the water coming out of their tap, which is problematic.
- There is lead coming out of faucets and drinking fountains in U.S. schools.

MAKING WAVES WITH STATE WATER POLICIES – STRENGTHENING FLOOD RESILIENCE THROUGH INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT

Tyler Antrup, *City of New Orleans*

- In some cities, such as New Orleans, “big rain” events lead to the pumping of water in order to avoid major “flood” events.
- While some rain may be absorbed into the soil, it may be stored for a brief period in order that pumps can “keep up.”
- Natural processes, including plants, can be used to store and drain water.
- Strong storms are expected to continue.

Carol Haddock, *City of Houston*

- In August 2017, Houston experienced a “rain” event, not a hurricane, and the effects on the city go well beyond the initial impacts of the flooding; there is a great deal of infrastructure to build, replace and repair.
- Disasters are an opportunity to rebuild to a “better normal.”
- In the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster, the goal should be “become operational”; returning to “normal” may not be possible.
- Changes to building codes have no impact on existing homes; they affect future development, not current problems.

DEVELOPING A CYBERSECURITY STRATEGY

Alex Pettit, *State of Oregon* and Doug Robinson, *National Association of State Chief Information Officers*

- According to the National Association of State Chief Information Officers, a recent survey indicated that – for the fifth consecutive year – state chief information officers believe that cybersecurity will be the primary policy and technology priority in 2018; the issue of cybersecurity has been among their priority issues since at least 2006.
- Cybersecurity is about more than information technology.
- Cyber is a major business risk.
- Cybersecurity is a problem that stakeholders and communities must fix together.
- New threats and “bad actors” are always emerging, and cyber problems and challenges are evolving.
- Because they have data, U.S. states are attractive targets for the perpetrators of cyberattacks.

ALL TRADE IS LOCAL

Kristopher Sanchez, *State of Nevada*

- Economic diversification is important.
- Each state and local cluster in the United States should identify the value that it can add to businesses that decide to locate there.
- Market access and capital are key foci for businesses.
- Engagement by communities and regional development authorities is important, especially for business “after-care.”

Robert Hamilton, *State of Washington*

- One outcome of the Uruguay Round of World Trade Organization negotiations was efforts to strengthen the role of subnational governments in the development of international trade policy.
- The U.S. Trade Representative publishes annual reports on such issues as intellectual property violations by countries and agricultural trade barriers erected by nations.

Brandon Lee, *Government of Canada*

- When the United States does well, Canada does well; the two countries succeed or suffer together.

- It is in the United States' self-interest to keep its relationship with Canada strong.
- In terms of the "North American economy," Canada, the United States and Mexico are "in it together."
- As a trading nation, Canada pursues free and fair trade, and does not see trade as a "zero-sum game."
- A "winner-take-all" mentality should be avoided during trade negotiations.
- Canada's provinces/territories are actively involved in developing trade policy.
- The *North American Free Trade Agreement* (NAFTA) is "about jobs"; an estimated 14 million U.S. jobs depend on trade with that country's NAFTA partners, 9 million and 5 million because of its trade with Canada and Mexico, respectively.
- During the NAFTA negotiations, Canada cannot accept proposals that, either intentionally or unintentionally, would harm the country; anything that harms Canada also harms the United States.
- The NAFTA countries buy things from, and sell things to each other; they also make things together for sale to other countries.
- "Buy American" provisions in U.S. legislation are well-meaning but have negative effects on Canada; the focus should be "Buy North American."
- A U.S. withdrawal from NAFTA would harm businesses in the United States, Canada and Mexico, particularly those in the agricultural and automotive sectors.

Eduardo Gonzalez, *ProMexico*

- When Mexico experiences economic growth, the United States benefits from an expanding consumer market.
- NAFTA was the building block for Mexico's other free trade agreements.
- Mexico exports to – and imports from – the United States, partially through integrated supply chains.

OPENING SESSION: OREGON GOVERNOR KATE BROWN AND NEVADA GOVERNOR BRIAN SANDOVAL

Governor Kate Brown, *State of Oregon*

- Regional problems should be tackled with regional solutions using a multi-governmental approach.

- Citizens should be educated, engaged and empowered so that all voices are heard.

Governor Brian Sandoval, *State of Nevada*

- Regulatory regimes should be characterized by certainty, fairness and predictability.
- Businesses must be able to access a trained workforce, and states need to address the skills gaps that can undermine their economic growth and diversification efforts.
- All young people must have the opportunity to reach their full potential; our youth deserve our best efforts.
- Every student deserves a high-quality education; the “ceiling” on a state’s potential depends on how that state educates its children.
- Everyone should have access to high-quality health care.
- Opioid abuse is a serious and growing problem in the United States, and – among other actions – there is a need to monitor physician prescriptions and to expand access to naloxone.

REDUCING RECIDIVISM AND IMPROVING OTHER OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Nina Salomon, *Council of State Governments Justice Center*

- Decisions about changes to criminal justice systems should be evidence-based.
- Research is being undertaken about ways in which to reduce recidivism rates and improve youth outcomes in criminal justice systems.
- Resources should be aligned with needs and conclusions that are based on research; as well, program effectiveness should be evaluated to determine if expenditures are having the expected and/or desired results.
- Nationwide, there has been a dramatic decrease in the incarceration rate for U.S. youth in criminal justice systems, and many youth are being supervised in communities; community supervision often leads to better outcomes.
- Juveniles must be able to access the services that they need, and efforts should be directed to identifying gaps in services.

Secretary John Tilley, *State of Kentucky*

- Outcomes for youth in juvenile justice systems need to be improved.

- Detention centres can make a situation worse for youth by exposing them to individuals who truly are criminals.

Susan Burke, *State of Utah*

- Services should be matched to individual needs, and youth in juvenile justice systems should be located close to their home community.
- Youth in rural areas and in urban areas should have the same access to services.
- For youth, home detention may be preferable to being locked in detention.
- Decisions should be informed by data.
- The manner in which justice-related spending occurs and the outcomes of that spending should be examined.
- Youth who do not want to go to school should not be locked up with youth who have committed an armed robbery.

Kelly Wooldridge, *State of Nevada*

- Efforts should be devoted to improving outcomes for youth in juvenile justice systems, and resources should be allocated to that end.
- Real outcomes should be measured against anticipated outcomes, with funds allocated based on evidence.

Judge Marie Ward, *State of New Mexico*

- All relevant stakeholders should be involved when decisions are being made about changes to criminal justice systems.
- A key focus should be youth who are at the greatest risk of reoffending; resources should be allocated to helping these youth.
- Detentions should be reduced without having an adverse impact on public safety.
- Leadership across multiple levels of government can be critical to progress and change.

IMPROVING THE STATE AND FEDERAL CONNECTION

Christopher Coppin, *Conference of Western Attorneys General*

- Federal–state relations should be guided by the U.S. Constitution’s Tenth Amendment.

- U.S. federal legislation should explicitly indicate whether pre-emption of state laws is envisioned.
- U.S. states should be true partners in decision-making processes.
- In the United States, federal actions are often determined through litigation, and states are seldom participants in these lawsuits; states should have an opportunity to participate in the cases that affect them.
- One size does not fit all; local solutions to problems are far preferable to federal solutions because the “further down in government that you get,” the “better the decisions that you get.”

Representative Cindy Evans, *Hawaii State Legislature*

- Relationships and communication are critical for good decision making.
- Millennials communicate differently than other age groups in terms of the content of communications, the modes through which communication occurs, etc.
- U.S. states should be consulted by the federal government, especially if a federal unfunded mandate exceeds a certain threshold amount.

Jason Sloan, *Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies*

- U.S. state and local governments, as well as other relevant stakeholders, should participate in consultations and decisions by the federal government.
- Entities with “on the ground” experience and expertise should be involved in discussions.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: MICHAEL BESCHLOSS

Michael Beschloss, *Historian, Journalist and Author*

- Historians often wait 40 years to write about a U.S. president because that is the time that it takes for letters and other documents to be made public.
- Examining a U.S. president in hindsight yields conclusions and thoughts that are different from those that result from examining that president in “real time.”
- Common leadership qualities of U.S. presidents include the following:
 - Presidents must be willing to be unpopular.
 - Presidents must be able to make unpopular decisions, and to explain those decisions in a persuasive way.
 - Presidents must have a sense of history.
 - Presidents must be able to work with those “on the other side,” and to understand a range of perspectives.

- Presidents must be able to bring people from different political parties, regions and perspectives together.

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE COMPACTS

Leslie Adrian, *Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy*

- Occupational licensure compacts facilitate an interstate ability to practise a profession.
- Licence reciprocity is particularly important for such groups as military spouses.
- Interstate compacts are a bipartisan issue.

Senator Stephan Pappas, *State of Wyoming Legislature*

- Occupational licensure compacts reduce employment barriers.
- Interstate licence portability in such areas as health care, counselling and therapy could lead to increased services for rural communities.

Sharyl Thompson, *Higher Education Regulatory Consulting*

- In certain occupations, individuals must have a licence in order to practice.
- Reciprocity is important for professional licensure.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald,
Senator, Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P.,
Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Annual National Conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG)
DESTINATION	Las Vegas, Nevada, United States of America
DATES	14–16 December 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Diane Griffin The Hon. David M. Wells
HOUSE OF COMMONS	The Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P. Mr. Gord Johns, M.P. Mr. Len Webber, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Miriam Burke, Executive Secretary Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 6,465.31
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4,140.53
PER DIEMS	\$ 3,065.40
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 4,175.35
TOTAL	\$ 17,846.59