STATELINE MIDWEST

STATES EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR BUILDING STRONGER FOUNDATION OF CHILD CARE

COVID-19 led to unprecedented response to help this sector; long-term challenges remain

by Tim Anderson (tanderson@csg.org)

Pick a community in Greater Minnesota, the largely rural part of the state outside the Twin Cities area, and one issue is likely to be a top concern among many of its working parents: a lack of child care options.

It’s been called the state’s “quiet crisis,” with a 2017 study from the nonpartisan, not-for-profit Center for Rural Policy and Development concluding that a 35 percent increase in state capacity was needed to meet families’ needs. Jeff Brand, now in his second year as a state legislator, first took on this lack of child care access while on the City Council in the Greater Minnesota town of St. Peter. As the parent of two young children, the issue was personal to him. And as he learned in talks with other local leaders, the lack of child care also was a community-wide problem.

Brand and others came upon a solution: Let’s use some of the town’s economic development dollars to help home day care providers, as well as to turn one of the town’s vacant buildings into a child care center.

Brand has brought at least two lessons from that experience to his current work as a state legislator: one, the need for child care is widespread; two, public investments are needed to address the problem, which he says not only strains individual families, but constrains the economic potential of entire communities.

In the Legislature, he has proposed new state-local funding partnerships to facilitate the opening of new child care facilities in Greater Minnesota. The state’s half of his $40 million funding plan would come in the form of bonds, which the Legislature already uses to support public infrastructure projects.

“We’ve got areas in Minnesota that don’t have any child care, and that’s true for a variety of reasons,” says Rep. Brand, whose proposal (HF 423) was included in this year’s bonding bill, but without an appropriation.

“When the parents’ side, you have the problem of affordability. Say it costs $800 a month to have your two kids in child care. If a person makes $2,000 a month, you don’t have much left over. And then on the flip side of the coin, the providers aren’t making much money. You look at the costs of feeding kids, hiring staff, training, paperwork.

“When you get down to it, it’s a tough gig.”

STABILIZING THE INDUSTRY

That “gig” — for larger child care centers and small, home-based providers alike — got even tougher starting in March, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. These providers were forced to shut down for a time, then required to institute new health and safety measures upon reopening, and often had to deal with these higher costs while losing some of their business.

States and the federal government took unprecedented steps to help the child care sector, a recognition of its importance to the overall economy.

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% of families with children under 18 that have all available parents working

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2014-2018

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Overview: CSG Midwest Issue Briefs, Around the Region, MLC Chair’s Initiative, Question of the Month, CSG Midwest News, BILLD Alumni Notes, Capital Insights
In Wisconsin, future of ‘game-changing’ manufacturing facility — and state tax subsidies — is uncertain

by Laura Tomaka (ltomaka@csig.org)

Three years ago, Wisconsin lawmakers passed a bill (AB 1) granting $3 billion in refundable tax subsidies and incentives to build a $10 billion factory in the city of Mount Pleasant. Proponents viewed the deal as a game-changer for the state’s economy and manufacturing sector. Up to 13,000 people were expected to be employed at a facility that would produce flat-screen LCD displays. The 20-million-square-foot facility in Mount Pleasant would be one of the largest manufacturing campuses in the world.

However, Wisconsin officials recently announced that the Taiwanese company would not be receiving scheduled tax subsidies because it had failed to meet terms of its agreement with the state, in areas such as capital investment and employment. Foxconn originally planned to build a Generation 10.5 LCD advanced manufacturing facility, but is now planning to construct a Gen 6 plant. By the end of 2019, the company was supposed to be employing 520 people with wages of at least $10,000 a year. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) estimates that only 281 positions of at least $30,000 a year. The Wisconsin budget of 2019, the company was supposed to announced that the Taiwanese company facility in Mount Pleasant would be one of the largest manufacturing campuses in the world.

“Both parties should be working more closely with local officials that represent the area where the project site is located,” he says. “If the desire is to truly make this successful, those on the frontlines can play a much bigger role.” Wittke also points to benefits that the area has seen since the Foxconn development began: for example, a major freeway expansion that has spurred regional development; new employment in construction and related trades; and a boost to the area’s depressed housing market.

“Does Wittke think the project can be salvaged?” “After meeting with local officials, yes, I see several paths forward,” he says. “Before anything moves forward, the disagreement between the WEDC interpretations and Foxconn must be resolved. … There are many more related benefits we see on the ground here. I am confident this project will be completed in some format that provides substantial benefits to southeastern Wisconsin, as well as the state.”

Wisconsin Rep. Robert Wittke

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Flood mitigation takes big investment, but can result in cost savings for Midwest’s communities

by Carolyn Orr (carolyn@strawridgefarm.us)

For every dollar spent on flood mitigation, an average of $6 can be saved in post-disaster recovery costs, according to Federal Emergency Management Agency research. That figure might increasingly drive public policy and investments in the Midwest, considering the historically destructive year of flooding last year along the Mississippi River (an estimated $6.2 billion in damages) as well as longer-term weather patterns.

In Manitoba, Minister of Economic Development Ralph Eichler puts the cost savings of a 52-year-old flood-mitigation measure in his province — the Red River Floodway — at more than $40 billion. Initially completed in 1968 to protect the city of Winnipeg, the project at the time “was one of the largest earth-moving projects on the planet,” Eichler says. It created a floodway channel around the city. In 1970, an additional diversion was built, and after another severe flood in 1997, construction commenced to double capacity of the mitigation project. The Red River Floodway remains perhaps the most significant flood-protection measure in the Midwest.

There are many others, however. Between 1993 and 2002, North Dakota’s Devils Lake tripled in size. The result was the flooding of homes, destruction of towns and farmland, and hundreds of millions of dollars in costs. Since the lake began its rise, more than $1 billion has been spent on various infrastructure projects, culminating with the construction of two pumps to lower water levels.

Built by the state of North Dakota, the Devils Lake Outlet has been operating for more than a decade and “has reduced the lake’s depth by about 5 feet, bringing 50,000 acres of farmland back into production,” Sen. Jim Dotzenrod, vice chair of the Council of State Governments’ Midwestern Legislative Conference Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, said during a committee-led webinar this fall. “Discussion [now] centers around whether the state should continue to operate the two pumps … or whether the pumps should remain idle.”

Farmers want lower water because it exposes more agricultural land; people who fish the lake want higher water levels. Minnesota’s Permanent Red River Flood-mitigation project has also had its share of controversy: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ $2.75 billion Fargo-Moorhead Arroyo Diversion project is the biggest and most ambitious infrastructure project in America, with plans to construct in-town levees and floodwalls, upstream storage, and a 30-mile diversion channel.

Though Fargo, N.D., and Moorhead, Minn., have experienced flooding since the cities were founded, the need for such a project has intensified since 2009, a period in which some of the highest Red River crests have occurred.

The Corps-led project has spurred multiple state and federal lawsuits, though in October, a settlement was reached between the Metro Flood Diversion Authority and several upstream entities. A unique mix of project partners and funding sources is being used for the Fargo-Moorhead Area Diversion.

The Metro Flood Diversion Authority, a specially created local government entity, is primarily responsible for building the channel. It plans to hire a private consortium to do the work. Unlike most public-private partnerships (a toll road, for example), though, the river diversion project won’t have a stream of revenue, so local voters had to approve a sales tax hike.

North Dakota is investing $870 million ($582 million of 2019), while $66 million is coming from Minnesota and $750 million from the federal government. Meanwhile, smaller-scale initiatives are newly available to the Midwest’s farmers and communities. For example, dozens of acres of farmland are expected to be taken out of production under the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Emergency Watershed Protection Program. In addition, FEMA’s new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program is offering grants to state and local governments.


C S G M I D W E S T I S S U E B R I E F S

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

by Carolyn Orr (carolyn@strawridgefarm.us)

“Floods like this are becoming more common,” Eichler says. “Emergency management is one solution, but I believe that we have to protect the land and the environment.”

In Wisconsin, where the Red River floods periodically, farmers want lower water levels. “Farmers have been hurt by water for so long,” says Deb Brown, a 10th-generation dairy farmer in Green Lake County. “There are good days and bad days.”

Between 1993 and 1997, the Red River crested for the first time in 60 years. The 1997 flood was the costliest in Wisconsin’s history, with damage estimated at $1 billion. That year, the state had to approve a sales tax hike.

At home, farmers want lower water because it exposes more agricultural land; people who fish the lake want higher water levels. Minnesota’s Permanent Red River Flood-mitigation project has also had its share of controversy: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ $2.75 billion Fargo-Moorhead Arroyo Diversion project is the biggest and most ambitious infrastructure project in America, with plans to construct in-town levees and floodwalls, upstream storage, and a 30-mile diversion channel.

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

As recent data show big rise in youth suicide rates, states are launching, mulling new prevention strategies

by Jon Davis (jdavis@csg.org)

ewly released federal data on suicide rates among young people show how well state lawmakers are doing in reducing the number of school suspensions and the associated harm.

The study, ‘Lost Opportunities,’ done by the UCLA Civil Rights Project, notes that school suspensions vary widely from state to state — as low as eight days per 100 students in Idaho, as high as 70 in North Carolina. In the Midwest, the rates range from 49 days in Michigan to 70 in North Dakota (see table). “People understand chronic absenteeism and why that is a problem; this should be thought of in the same way,” says Daniel Losen, director of the Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the UCLA Civil Rights Project. “The thing that schools can control the most when it comes to chronic absenteeism is whether they decide the kids can be there.” Losen served as lead researcher of the October 2020 report, “Lost Opportunities,” which was done in collaboration with the Learning Policy Institute. The study recommends a series of state-level policy changes, some of which have already begun to be implemented in the Midwest. In Ohio, starting next school year, districts cannot suspend or expel students in kindergarten through third grade. Also under HB 318, signed into law in 2018, the state is incorporating a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model across the entirety of its education system. This model uses evidence-based strategies to identify students at risk of developing serious behavioral problems and provides intensive in-school supports. A central goal of PBIS is to reduce the prevalence of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.

Under the 2018 Ohio law, this model must be implemented in every school, taught in teacher preparation programs and included as professional development for instructors. In Michigan, schools must now consider a series of steps before suspending or expelling students (severity of the offense, age, disciplinary history and disability status), while in Illinois, schools must exhaust all non-exclusionary methods of discipline before removing a student from school. These laws in Michigan and Illinois took effect after the 2015-16 school year. Losen also suggests that states include out-of-school suspensions as part of their accountability plans for schools. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, states such as Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin have included attendance rates or chronic absenteeism as nonacademic indicators of school quality. This is because poor attendance correlates with students falling behind or dropping out of school. The inclusion of suspensions as a measure of quality would trigger additional state-level supports and interventions for schools with high rates of lost instructional days, Losen says.

D

uring the 2015-16 school year, students across the country lost a total of 11 million instructional days due to out-of-school suspensions. Dig deeper into the federal data, as a pair of education- and civil rights-focused groups did, and some more eye-popping numbers are revealed.

• For every 100 U.S. Black high school students, 103 instructional days were lost due to school suspensions. That is 82 more days than White students lost during the same school year. The Midwest had five of the six largest Black-White gaps in the nation: Kansas (second-largest, behind only Missouri), Nebraska (third), Ohio (fourth), Michigan (fifth) and Wisconsin (sixth). • Secondary-level students with disabilities lost close to twice as many instructional days (68 days per 100 students) as non-disabled students. • Lost instructional days from out-of-
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Study reveals millions of lost instructional days due to school suspensions, and large Black-White disparities

by Tim Anderson (tanderson@csg.org)

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FOUR TAKEAWAYS FROM NOVEMBER ELECTIONS, FROM CONTROL OF LEGISLATURES TO A THIRD STATE IN MIDWEST LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

by Tim Anderson (tanderson@csq.org)

1. STATUS QUO: INCUMBENT GOVERNORS WIN HANDILY, NO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS FLIP

One of the striking results of the November 2020 elections was how little changed at the state level, in terms of partisan control of legislatures and governors’ offices.

All nine incumbent U.S. governors seeking re-election won their races, including Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum (both Republicans) in the Midwest. Burgum's margin of victory was the largest of any gubernatorial candidate in the nation this year; he received close to 70 percent of the vote in North Dakota.

Only two states in the Midwest had gubernatorial races this year, but control of 19 of the region’s 20 partisan legislative chambers was at stake (there were no elections in the Michigan Senate).

Not a single chamber flipped.

Democrats maintained control of the Illinois House and Senate as well as the Minnesota House. Republicans continue to have majorities (sometimes super-majorities) in all of the other partisan legislative chambers in the Midwest.

Minnesota remains the only state in the nation with a divided partisan Legislature; Democrats control the House and Republicans the Senate.

2. REPUBLICANS WILL CONTROL REDISTRICTING IN MAJORITY OF MIDWEST’S STATES

State legislative races held in the first year of a new decade go a long way toward determining which party will redraw the nation’s political maps (U.S. congressional and state legislative districts).

In the Midwest, the decennial redistricting process will be controlled by Democrats in Illinois and by Republicans in Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. (Though the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature is nonpartisan, a majority of the senators are Republican; the GOP also controls the governor’s office.)

Minnesota’s partisan divide will require some kind of agreement between the two parties for a redistricting map to pass the Legislature, while in Wisconsin, any plan passed by the GOP-controlled Legislature could be vetoed by Democratic Gov. Tony Evers.

Two Midwestern states have new redistricting laws in place.

Michigan’s maps will be drawn for the first time by an independent, citizen-led commission. In Ohio, new rules and incentives strongly encourage the drawing of maps that receive bipartisan support in the General Assembly and/or among seven members of a Redistricting Commission: the governor, secretary of state, state auditor and four legislative representatives from both parties.

3. SOUTH DAKOTANS LEGALIZE MARIJUANA; ILLINOIS VOTERS REJECT GRADUATED INCOME TAX

This year’s elections in the Midwest included ballot measures on marijuana, tax policy, payday lending and privacy. The results were mixed for supporters of these measures.

South Dakota became the third state in this region to legalize the recreational use of marijuana, joining Illinois and Michigan. Fifty-four percent of South Dakota voters approved this constitutional amendment; an initiated measure to legalize medical marijuana won by an even greater margin (70 percent to 30 percent).

In Illinois, tens of millions of dollars were spent by supporters and opponents of a legislative-initiated constitutional amendment on tax policy. The proposal called for an end to a constitutional requirement that any state income tax be imposed at a flat rate.

In advance of the election, the state General Assembly had passed a bill detailing its plans for implementing a graduated income tax. About 55 percent of voters, though, rejected the constitutional amendment. As a result, Illinois will remain among the three Midwestern states with a flat income tax; the others are Indiana and Michigan.

Other notable results from this year’s ballot measures included:

- Voter approval of a new cap in Nebraska on the annual interest rates that can be charged by payday lenders. The limit is 36 percent.
- The addition of “electronic data” and “electronic communications” to a section of the Michigan Constitution that secures a person’s “houses, papers and possessions” from unreasonable searches and seizures.
- Voter rejection in North Dakota of a legislative-initiated proposal to change how the state’s Constitution can be amended. As a result of the November vote, North Dakota remains one of five Midwestern states where voters have broad authority to change state constitutions without legislative input (see map).

This year’s proposal would have required any voter-initiated and -approved constitutional amendment to go before the North Dakota Legislative Assembly. Lawmakers would then have had the chance to approve or reject the voter-approved amendment. Any amendment rejected by the Legislative Assembly would have not taken effect unless voters approved it a second time.

4. IN UNIQUE ELECTION YEAR, MORE VOTERS TURNED OUT — AND CAST BALLOTS IN NEW WAYS

Voter turnout in all 11 Midwestern states increased significantly from four years ago, with rates in some states nearing 80 percent, according to an early analysis of state results. The U.S. Elections Project’s data on turnout is based on the number of ballots counted vs. the total number of residents eligible to vote.

Using that measure, Minnesota’s turnout rate was 79.8 percent, highest in the nation. Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan were not far behind (see table). Nationwide, prior to Election Day, more than 100 million votes already had been cast, either through early-in-person voting or by mail. The total number of early votes cast in 2020 equaled 73.6 percent of the total votes counted in 2016. Many states in the Midwest facilitated this historic change by sending vote-by-mail ballot applications to all eligible voters and/or by allowing residents to request ballots online.
T he most visible impact lawmakers have on their state’s literacy policies is likely via the funding provided to local school districts and the mandates that they set for schools — requiring the teaching of digital, financial or media literacy, for example.

A less direct impact can be found in the federal Grants to States program under the Library Services and Technology Act. Administered through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the program distributes population-based block grants to state libraries. The money is then spent locally as the state sees fit on programs supporting the federal law’s myriad purposes.

Broadly stated, the goals are to promote and broaden the reach of library services and maintain libraries as community anchors, and to “promote literacy, education and lifelong learning.” In fiscal year 2020, a total of $168.8 million was sent to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the territories.

States must provide matching funds and sustain a “maintenance of effort” level of spending on libraries and library programs to ensure that federal funds don’t replace state dollars in supporting state-based programs. They also must develop five-year plans identifying library needs and how they will use the grants to meet these needs.

Nancy Medema, program director at the State Library of Iowa, says its grant is used for technology but also for literacy, mainly via the Iowa Center for the Book (an affiliate of the national program created by the Library of Congress to promote literacy and reading).

The center operates “All Iowa Reads,” a statewide book club of sorts that picks a book each year for adults, adolescents (ages 12 to 18) and children (ages 8 to 12). Each of these books is set in Iowa or written by an Iowa author if possible. The center also runs the Iowa Literary Award, given to an outstanding contribution that has made an “outstanding contribution” to literacy efforts.

Measuring the success of literacy efforts is difficult because feedback is largely anecdotal, especially so this year as programs are shut down when the COVID-19 pandemic began, Medema says.

“We measure [by] how many literacy programs get reported to us, so we have a somewhat good idea of how many programs there are,” she says. “You hear these kinds of stories that help us determine, ‘Yes, we want to keep this program.’”

Ohio determined that grant-supported literacy programs can address any form of literacy, not just traditional “learn to read” ones, says Evan Struble, associate state librarian at the State Library of Ohio.

Even before COVID-19 struck, he says, literacy grants enabled the “Guiding Ohio Online” program to place a State Library technology trainer in a rural library for 12 months to assist staff and patrons with navigating the online environment (for example, job hunting or using e-government services).

But digital literacy “becomes increasingly critical as we’re forced to work remotely and use all sorts of devices” as a result of the pandemic, Struble says.

“It’s been interesting, academically speaking, to see how libraries had to pivot and respond to maintain a relevant summer library program” by broadening their reach via social media platforms and online forums, he says.

Ohio officials are now looking at how they might encourage libraries to maintain their digital reach to a wider audience: “I think there will have to be a place for a digital option alongside traditional offerings,” Struble says.

The Ohio State Library also uses literacy money to fund a summer library grant, open to every library in Ohio, which focuses on helping keep students (and others) involved with reading during the summer months.

This year’s Midwestern Legislative Conference Chairman’s Initiative of Michigan Sen. Ken Horn is focusing on policies related to literacy. Stateline Midwest is featuring a series of articles on this subject throughout the year.

**QUESTION | Under state laws in the Midwest, when can election officials start verifying, processing and counting mail-in absentee ballots?**

This year, more than 100 million Americans voted before Election Day — a record number that was close to 74 percent of the total votes cast in the 2016 election, according to the U.S. Election Project in the Midwest, in every state.

Early-voting figures eclipsed 50 percent of total turnout four years ago. These statistics underscore just how different this year’s election was for voters, as well as state and local officials: For health and safety reasons, growing numbers of people chose to vote before Election Day, either in person or by mail.

These increases, especially in vote-by-mail, have raised questions about state laws that limit when ballots can start being processed and counted. Such statutory restrictions have been in place for many decades due to concerns that results could be released prior to polls closing on Election Day, Amber McBride, CEO of the National Vote at Home Institute, said in an interview earlier this year with CSG Midwest.

“Back in the day when it was more hand tallies and not optical scanners doing the tabulating, there was more of the potential of that happening,” she said.

In the Midwest, with the exceptions of Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Ohio (see map), states don’t allow ballot counting to begin until Election Day, sometimes only after polls close. Outside the region, some states allow for ballot counting well in advance of Election Day — 15 days in Colorado and seven days in Oregon. These states have traditionally relied on mail-in ballot systems. California passed legislation this year that permitted ballot counting 29 days in advance of the November 2020 election.

Prior to counting, each ballot that arrives by mail must be verified. The ballot envelope typically contains information necessary to verify the voter, so election officials are able to match the name and address of a registered voter with the identifying information on the outside envelope, or the privacy sleeve, holding the mail ballot. Many states verify the signatures of the voter.

Some states then allow further processing in advance of Election Day, such as removing the ballots from the envelope and unfolding it, or placing it in a sealed container for counting. During the 2020 presidential primaries, more than half a million mail ballots were rejected. The most common mistake was related to voter signatures. Either a voter’s signature does not match the one on file, or the ballot envelope simply was not signed.

According to the Campaign Legal Center, during the COVID-19 pandemic, 18 states — including Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Ohio — had modified their laws to have no tolerance for an error that would cause a ballot to be rejected.

These notice- and- cure provisions give voters a chance to fix their ballot, either by affidavit or in person. Other states adopted such laws this year in response to the rise in mail-in voting. Some states also have faced court orders to allow voters to fix their ballots.

**Questions of the Month response by Ilene Groman (igromans@csg.org), assistant director for CSG Midwest, which provides individualized research assistance to legislators, legislative staff and other government officials. This page highlights a research question received by CSG Midwest. Inquiries can be sent to cigroman@csg.org.**

**STATELINE MIDWEST | NOVEMBER 2020 5**

**WHEN VOTES CAN BE PROCESSED AND COUNTED IN MIDWEST (2020 ELECTION)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>State funds, to match 34% of federal grant</th>
<th>Federal funds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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*Processing can include measures such as signature matching and verification that information on the outside of the ballot is complete. Some states also allow additional types of ballot processing in advance of Election Day.*

**State, Federal Funds for ‘Grants to States’ Program for Library Services (FY 2020)**

**QUESTION OF THE MONTH**

**By Jon Davis (jdavis@csg.org)**

**Chair’s Initiative**

November 2020
Concerns about child care access and affordability in Wisconsin well preceded this year’s pandemic. Over the past 10 years, Amundson says, the state has lost almost 70 percent of its licensed family-care providers. A large majority of residents in Wisconsin’s rural areas currently live in child care deserts,” says Toot, vice president for early childhood research and partnerships at Child Trends, a national research organization whose work focuses on improving the lives of children.

That foundation is based primarily on a private pay model, with families incurring most of the costs of child care. These costs are rising, and have neared or eclipsed $10,000 a year in some parts of the Midwest (see table). Meanwhile, the hourly mean wage for child care workers ranges from $10.18 in Iowa to $12.23 in Illinois.

“Right now, we have an unsustainable difference between what it costs to provide high-quality care and what parents can pay,” Touts says.

Within this existing private pay model, some government assistance already goes to families and providers. For example, subsidy programs run by the states (with funding support from the federal Child Development and Block Grant Fund) help lower-income families pay for child care. Through these programs, the state picks up a part of the cost, though families are often responsible for some kind of co-payment.

These programs have varying income caps, and some states have recently raised those limits in order to make more families eligible for assistance. Michigan’s new budget raised the income-eligibility cap for child care assistance from 130 percent to 150 percent of the federal poverty level. In Illinois, some families with incomes as high as 225 percent above the federal poverty level can now receive state support for child care.

According to the National Women’s Law Center, South Dakota’s income cap was 209 percent in 2019, and as of last year, it was the only U.S. state that fully exempted low-income families from co-payments related to child care.

The center says there is another important policy difference among the states: the rate at which they pay providers serving families who receive the child care assistance.

The U.S. Administration for Children and Families recommends that a state’s payment rate be equal to at least 75 percent of the market rate in a local community. Only North Dakota and South Dakota were meeting this threshold as of 2019, according to the center.

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

In Wisconsin, Amundson says, one way to create a stronger foundation for child care is to build on what’s already there — namely, higher levels of public support via the existing subsidies, payments systems and grant programs.

Toot says the same is true across the country. “The pandemic and the (government’s) response, in terms of the types and amount of emergency grants we’re seeing, can help us reconsider the dollar amounts needed to support high-quality practices,” she adds.

NEW CHILD CARE POLICY IDEAS

Along with these existing state policies, lawmakers have been exploring new partnerships and investments.

One example is Rep. Brand’s proposal in Minnesota to fund the construction of child care facilities through a new capital grant program. He also sponsored legislation last year to help Minnesota communities increase the supply of quality child care providers — through local programs that facilitate business startups or expansions, modify facilities, or help providers manage state licensing and regulatory requirements. A total of $1.5 million was appropriated for two separate grant programs.

For the past several years, too, Minnesota has been offering early-learning scholarships, with families being provided up to $7,500 per child to attend a highly rated provider. Last year, more than 15,000 Minnesota children received these scholarships.

This past legislative session, Iowa and Michigan passed bills to encourage the opening of new child care centers.

Under Iowa’s “Challenge Fund,” matching dollars will go to projects that expand the availability of child care for working families. Likewise, a “tri-share” pilot initiative in Michigan will seek new funding partnerships between the state, child care providers and local businesses in order to build or open new facilities.

Amundson says Wisconsin is exploring these types of partnerships as well. Another idea is to provide more supports for smaller, family-care providers through shared-service networks that handle parts of the business operation (accounting, payroll, state regulations, etc.).

According to Toot, another important role for states is to collect and use timely data on child care options for families. For example, what programs have opened or closed over the past month? What are the number of available slots, by age group, in licensed programs? What is the price of each slot? How does the availability and quality of child care options look in different communities of the state?

“We knew if we lost child care, we would be difficult for our entire economy to rebound.”

Emile Amundson, secretary of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

According to state data, child care in Wisconsin is an integral part of many state policies including tax credit, Wisconsin’s Work Opportunity Rebate, and Wisconsin’s Tax Relief for Education Savings Act.

“We knew if we lost child care, it would be difficult for our entire economy to rebound.”

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The center says there is a shortage of minority child care providers. “Some states have one or two of these data elements, but most states do not have a data infrastructure that allows them to review comprehensive data on a regular basis,” she says.

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ILLINOIS: HIGHER INCOME CAPS ALLOW MORE FAMILIES TO GET HELP WITH COSTS
Last year, eligibility for Illinois’ Child Care Assistance Program was expanded in two ways. First, families with incomes of up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level began qualifying for assistance (it had been 185 percent). Second, this state assistance continued even when participating families’ income levels went above 200 percent (up to a maximum of 225 percent above poverty).

INDIANA: 2020 LAW EXPANDS REACH OF WORKER BACKGROUND CHECKS
With this year’s passage of HB 1264, Indiana strengthened its background check requirements in child-care facilities. The previous law only mandated background checks for individuals who have direct contact with children. Under the new law, the criminal histories of all employees and volunteers will be checked.

IOWA: CHALLENGE FUND ENCOURAGES OPENING OF NEW CHILD CARE CENTERS
Iowa legislators created a new fund this year (part of HF 2629) to encourage businesses, nonprofit groups or local consortiums to build new child care facilities for their communities. Through the fund, the state will provide matching dollars for locally driven projects that expand the availability of child care for working families.

KANSAS: STATE IS INCREASING VALUE OF TAX CREDIT FOR FAMILIES’ CHILD CARE EXPENSES
According to the National Women’s Law Center, Kansas is one of five Midwestern states (Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Ohio are the others) that provide a tax credit to families to offset expenses related to child care. The credit was established in 2017 (SB 30), and the maximum value has been rising every year. In tax year 2020, the amount will be equal to 25 percent of the credit offered to families through the federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.

MICHIGAN: CHILD CARE IS BIG PART OF RECENTLY ENACTED 2021 BUDGET
Michigan’s new budget has several child care provisions: increasing the number of families eligible to receive state assistance (the cap was raised to 150 percent of the federal poverty limit); new grants for child care centers; and a $1 million pilot project to expand the availability of child care via “tri-share” funding partnerships involving the state, local businesses and providers.

MINNESOTA: EARLY LEARNING SCHOLARSHIPS IMPROVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY CARE
Seven years ago, Minnesota launched a scholarship program to improve families’ access to quality early-education and child care programs. In 2019, more than 15,000 children received early-learning scholarships through this program. Up to $7,500 per child is available to attend one of the state’s highest-rated child care programs. Lesser amounts are available to attend lower-rated programs. Starting in 2021, scholarships of up to $10,000 will be available for young children who are in foster care, in need of protective services, homeless or the child of a teen parent.

NEBRASKA: SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDITS GO TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS, WORKERS
Since passage of a law in 2016, Nebraska has been offering “school readiness” tax credits to early-childhood programs and workers. The credit for providers varies depending on where they fall on the state’s Step Up To Quality rating system: $1,597 per child for level-four providers vs. $532 for level-one providers. Employees are eligible to receive credits of anywhere from $532 to $1,597. Higher amounts go to more-qualified workers.

NORTH DAKOTA: STATE STANDS OUT FOR RATES OF PAYMENTS TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS
The U.S. government recommends that state payment rates for child care providers be equal to at least 75 percent of market rates in local communities. North Dakota was one of only four states (along with South Dakota and two others outside the Midwest) that met this payment-rate threshold in 2019, according to the National Women’s Law Center. These state payments are for providers serving lower-income families eligible for child care assistance.

OHIO: PUBLICLY FUNDED PROVIDERS MUST MEET STATE’S QUALITY STANDARDS
In July 2020, participation in Ohio’s Step Up To Quality program began being required of all licensed child care providers that receive state funding. Additionally, these providers must receive a rating of three, four or five on Ohio’s five-star scale, which considers factors such as staff qualifications and professional development, leadership practices and learning environments. In advance of the state mandate, Ohio offered incentives and grants for providers to be rated and improve quality of care.

SASKATCHEWAN: CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY TIED TO PROVINCE’S BROADER GROWTH STRATEGY
Since 2007, the number of child care spaces in the province has increased by 80 percent (from 7,100 to 16,700). A continued increase in capacity is part of Saskatchewan’s broader, long-term strategy for economic growth. For individuals wanting to start a licensed, home-based business, Saskatchewan offers startup grants, training from child care consultants and promotional assistance.

SOUTH DAKOTA: STATE EXEMPTS SOME FAMILIES FROM CO-PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS
In recent years, South Dakota has expanded the number of families who can receive assistance to pay for their child care costs. The state’s eligibility cap increased from 175 percent of the federal poverty limit in 2018 to the current level of 209 percent. According to the National Women’s Law Center, as of 2019, South Dakota also was the only U.S. state that fully exempted low-income families from co-payments related to child care (those with incomes at or below 160 percent of the federal poverty level.)

WISCONSIN: 4-YEAR-OLDS HAVE ACCESS TO KINDERGARTEN ACROSS STATE
Under the Wisconsin Constitution, schools in the state must be “free and without charge” for students beginning at the age of 4. As a result, local school districts receive state dollars (via Wisconsin’s K-12 funding formula) to provide half-day kindergarten to 4-year-olds. Recent legislative proposals have called for the state to fund full-day kindergarten for 4-year-olds and expand access to include some 3-year-olds.

SNAPSHOT FROM MIDWEST ON CHILD CARE POLICY: RECENT ACTIONS AND UNIQUE/INNOVATIVE LAWS
Jean Breaux has been serving in the Indiana Senate since 2006, and she’s been around state and local politics much longer than that — thanks to the leadership of and example set by her mother, Billie.

Billie served in the state Senate for a decade and a half (Jean immediately succeeded her in office), and was an important leader on civil rights in Indianapolis as well as president of the city’s teachers union.

On her mother’s many travels, Jean would come along, sometimes stepping in for her mother at meetings and speaking on her behalf. “Before you know it, it just becomes a part of you,” Jean Breaux says of politics and community involvement.

She began her own career in human resources, eventually working for the state of Indiana on economic development issues, including policies to help retain and attract businesses.

Breaux’s personal and professional background helped prepare her for the job of state senator, which she describes as requiring the ability to think creatively about policymaking, to be able to work well with others, and to be committed to solving problems.

In a recent interview with CSG Midwest, Sen. Breaux shared her perspective on serving in the minority (she is a Democrat in a state with a Republican governor and a GOP-led legislature), on legislative leadership, and on Indiana’s big policy challenges and opportunities.

Here are excerpts.

**Q** How would you describe your leadership style as a legislator?

**A** I follow some advice my mother gave me about the importance of surrounding myself with competent people. Then give them timelines, check in periodically and let them do their jobs. I let people know what my expectations are, give them the tools to be successful, and step in when I need to. I especially love to encourage and develop the young staff that works with me.

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**Q** What are one or two pieces of legislation that you were particularly proud of helping get signed into law?

**A** In 2019 I authored a bill to allow pregnancy services under Medicaid to cover the cost of a doula (birthing coach). Indiana has had an abysmal infant mortality rate, and this law makes the services of doulas available to women who receive health care through the Medicaid system. With bipartisan support, including health committee chairs in both chambers, the legislation passed but was not funded. Our Families and Social Services Administration has been working on guidelines for the program, after which I hope to get all the funding in place. In 2017, I had a family tell me that they could not get health records for their disabled (adult) child after the child died. I authored a bill that gives a parent/guardian access to health records for a specific amount of time after the death of an incapacitated person in order to resolve any payment or other outstanding issues.

**Q** How have the COVID-19 pandemic and other outstanding issues impacted your work as a legislator? Has it changed your perspective in any way?

**A** Yes, surprisingly, it has changed my perspective. COVID has exposed so many inequities in the system. I feel like I have a greater burden to speak for the minority community. I haven’t always been like that, but the pandemic has done it.

**Q** Looking ahead to the 2021 session, what issues do you believe are most important for the legislature to tackle and why?

**A** COVID has shown that there are great racial disparities, including in health care. Indiana needs a stronger public health system, I hope we will look at public health spending overall, as well as how much goes to low-income communities and communities of color, and in what way. Some early interventions would save the state money.

**Q** How do you go about convincing other legislators, not in the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus, to consider its legislative priorities?

**A** A lot of it has to do with educating colleagues and making sure that they understand the costs and benefits of certain policies.

**Q** What do you see as some of the biggest challenges and opportunities ahead for the state of Indiana?

**A** Our redistricting process is very partisan. We need to have an impartial group who will make district lines based on fairness and not politics. Indiana’s public health system ranks very low, and we have to improve public health outcomes. We also should improve our public education system and make funding more equitable and stable.
By Illinois Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford (lightford@senaterecall.illinois.gov)

Three years ago, the Illinois General Assembly passed a law (Public Act 100-0451) requiring businesses that get certain state tax breaks to report how much work they did with minority- and women-owned companies. The goal was to encourage economic diversity and take the pulse of the state’s business community. Well, the results are in.

Here’s an excerpt from a recent report of the Better Government Association (a nonpartisan government watchdog group in Illinois):

“Since the law went into effect, 119 companies that had more than $150 million shaved from their tax bills have not submitted any such reports. ... And of the 61 firms that did file the required reports, nearly three-quarters reported none of the data the law was intended to gather.”

It’s hard to see this as anything but the latest slap in the face to people of color, and I have to say, as a person of color accustomed to a certain level of pain, my face is feeling unusually raw these days.

I have a fundamental belief that government can make a meaningful difference.

It’s why I got into public service.

NO EXCUSES, TIME TO DO BETTER

Economic inclusion is the key to solving the myriad, long-lasting racial inequities that continue to plague our communities, state and country. I’d like to believe that given the caring, open-minded and awakened people we have at top positions of power in Illinois, we can be a leader in promoting economic inclusion.

That starts with the state of Illinois literally being a leader in promoting economic inclusion. Heaven forbid we put any conditions on the tax loopholes and carve-outs we approve so various corporate enterprises can escape paying their full, fair share. Tell us they these breaks are for the good of the state. Well, the Black community is still waiting.

We — Illinois state government — have to look in the mirror as well and ask what we can do. Every year, our state pays out billions of dollars to vendors and service providers to do work on behalf of the state of Illinois. On a per capita basis, Illinois annually ranks as having among the fewest state workers in the nation. That means we turn to outside businesses and firms to do a lot of work for us.

That gives the state immense economic power — power that can be used, if leaders so choose, to accomplish socio-economic goals, to right wrongs and to make things better for people too often on the losing end of history.

Once again, the results continue to be less than satisfactory.

Over the course of my 22-year journey from freshman senator to Senate majority leader, I’ve sat on committees where we have brought agency after agency after institution after institution before us to ask about economic diversity and inclusion. And year after year, agency after agency, institution after institution, we hear the same excuses for why they have not spent more money with Black businesses.

There aren’t enough Black-owned businesses. There aren’t enough qualified Black-owned businesses. Oh, it turns out there aren’t Black-owned businesses with the experience or expertise we were looking for. It is exhausting.

I’m tired of the excuses, because I know we can do better.

Look, Illinois is the state that literally reversed the flow of the Chicago River in response to public health emergencies in Chicago. It’s a feat that ranks as one of the greatest public works projects of the 20th century. We can do amazing things — when we want to.

Complicity won’t make us better.

You get better by pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. In the wake of the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and an unfortunately ever-growing list of others who lost their lives and were denied justice, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus has stepped forward to say: “Enough.”

No one is going to solve this problem for us. It’s up to us to make a difference and lead our colleagues to meaningful change.

For the last few months, we have taken on the daunting task of trying to figure out a practical, policy-driven approach to address systemic racism in Illinois. On Sept. 1, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus formally introduced our four pillars of policy:

• criminal justice, violence reduction and police accountability;
• education and workforce development;
• economic access, equity and opportunity; and
• health care and human services.

PROBLEMS WITH PROCUREMENT

Each pillar warrants a thorough review and discussion. But today I’m focused on one that, in all honesty, goes a long way toward addressing all the others: the economic pillar.

We are committed to making sure our state’s procurement process is more equitable for the Black community. In 1989, the Business Enterprise Program was created to encourage the state to use its economic power to spur growth and participation among Black-, minority-, disabled- and veteran-owned businesses.

The modest goal was for 20 percent of state contracts to fall into this category.

Let’s be clear. That 20 percent goal is a minimum standard. It’s the lowest possible passing grade. It’s not success. It’s a floor, not a ceiling.

What we’ve too-often found is the waiver process, intended to be a last resort, makes it too easy to skirt the goals and requirements. And once contracts are awarded, they tend to be renewed, and the goal and vision of success are lost.

Furthermore, our licensing process allows the state to keep giving money to companies or entities that refuse to fulfill the diversity principles we outlined in our laws.

Those are only two of the glaring issues with Illinois’ procurement process. When you mix in historic redlining, payment delays and how hard it is for Black people to attain capital, it is no secret why the process does not work.

It is time to consider a different route. The Illinois Legislative Black Caucus is exploring the idea of developing Commission on Equity and Inclusion that will be charged with overseeing our state’s procurement process.

It is our intention to make it clear that we expect to see results from using our state’s procurement process to uplift our neediest communities. I do not know how we expect anyone else to support our minority businesses if we, as a state, are not investing in their growth to back up our own words and commitments.

Sen. Kimberly Lightford has served as Senate majority leader since 2019. She is a Democrat from the Chicago suburb of Maywood.

By Illinois Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford (lightford@senaterecall.illinois.gov)

Three years ago, the Illinois General Assembly passed a law (Public Act 100-0451) requiring businesses that get certain state tax breaks to report how much work they did with minority- and women-owned companies. The goal was to encourage economic diversity and take the pulse of the state’s business community. Well, the results are in.

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We — Illinois state government — have to look in the mirror as well and ask what we can do. Every year, our state pays out billions of dollars to vendors and service providers to do work on behalf of the state of Illinois. On a per capita basis, Illinois annually ranks as having among the fewest state workers in the nation. That means we turn to outside businesses and firms to do a lot of work for us.

That gives the state immense economic power — power that can be used, if leaders so choose, to accomplish socio-economic goals, to right wrongs and to make things better for people too often on the losing end of history.

Once again, the results continue to be less than satisfactory.

Over the course of my 22-year journey from freshman senator to Senate majority leader, I’ve sat on committees where we have brought agency after agency after institution after institution before us to ask about economic diversity and inclusion. And year after year, agency after agency, institution after institution, we hear the same excuses for why they have not spent more money with Black businesses.

There aren’t enough Black-owned businesses. There aren’t enough qualified Black-owned businesses. Oh, it turns out there aren’t Black-owned businesses with the experience or expertise we were looking for. It is exhausting.

I’m tired of the excuses, because I know we can do better.

Look, Illinois is the state that literally reversed the flow of the Chicago River in response to public health emergencies in Chicago. It’s a feat that ranks as one of the greatest public works projects of the 20th century. We can do amazing things — when we want to.

Complicity won’t make us better.

You get better by pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. In the wake of the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and an unfortunately ever-growing list of others who lost their lives and were denied justice, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus has stepped forward to say: “Enough.”

No one is going to solve this problem for us. It’s up to us to make a difference and lead our colleagues to meaningful change.

For the last few months, we have taken on the daunting task of trying to figure out a practical, policy-driven approach to address systemic racism in Illinois. On Sept. 1, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus formally introduced our four pillars of policy:

• criminal justice, violence reduction and police accountability;
• education and workforce development;
• economic access, equity and opportunity; and
• health care and human services.

PROBLEMS WITH PROCUREMENT

Each pillar warrants a thorough review and discussion. But today I’m focused on one that, in all honesty, goes a long way toward addressing all the others: the economic pillar.

We are committed to making sure our state’s procurement process is more equitable for the Black community. In 1989, the Business Enterprise Program was created to encourage the state to use its economic power to spur growth and participation among Black-, minority-, disabled- and veteran-owned businesses.

The modest goal was for 20 percent of state contracts to fall into this category.

Let’s be clear. That 20 percent goal is a minimum standard. It’s the lowest possible passing grade. It’s not success. It’s a floor, not a ceiling.

What we’ve too-often found is the waiver process, intended to be a last resort, makes it too easy to skirt the goals and requirements. And once contracts are awarded, they tend to be renewed, and the goal and vision of success are lost.

Furthermore, our licensing process allows the state to keep giving money to companies or entities that refuse to fulfill the diversity principles we outlined in our laws.

Those are only two of the glaring issues with Illinois’ procurement process. When you mix in historic redlining, payment delays and how hard it is for Black people to attain capital, it is no secret why the process does not work.

It is time to consider a different route. The Illinois Legislative Black Caucus is exploring the idea of developing Commission on Equity and Inclusion that will be charged with overseeing our state’s procurement process.

It is our intention to make it clear that we expect to see results from using our state’s procurement process to uplift our neediest communities. I do not know how we expect anyone else to support our minority businesses if we, as a state, are not investing in their growth to back up our own words and commitments.

Sen. Kimberly Lightford has served as Senate majority leader since 2019. She is a Democrat from the Chicago suburb of Maywood.
NEW CSG STUDY ASSESSES STATES’ OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING POLICIES IN LIGHT OF ONGOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As states continue dealing with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a new study from The Council of State Governments provides recommendations for easing occupational licensing as a key step toward making public health systems more resilient. The study reviews workforce shortages, current licensure requirements and interstate compacts, and emergency policies in areas such as telehealth and expanded scopes of practice.

The CSG study recommends that states consider allowing paperless online license application and renewal, paperless licenses and online continuing education credits.

Given the recent emphasis on telehealth services during the pandemic, the study also recommends that states:

- improve policies to allow license holders to practice across state lines, especially in telehealth settings;
- reduce restrictions on the types of providers allowed to treat patients via telehealth;
- enact policies allowing asynchronous technologies and remote patient monitoring;
- provide reimbursement parity for telehealth providers under both private insurance and Medicaid policies; and
- ensure telehealth visits can be allowed to take place in a patient’s home, school or workplace.

The report is available at licensing.csg.org/reports/161.

CSG’S REMAINSIGNED 2020 NATIONAL CONFERENCE CONTINUES ONLINE THROUGH MID-DECEMBER

CSG is offering online sessions for state legislators and other policy leaders on most weekdays through Dec. 18.

Topics being covered range from equity, health, resilience and international trade to the benefits of public sector apprenticeships and how the use of language affects representation and inclusion of marginalized populations. In addition, CSG’s national Healthy States and Future of Work task forces are reporting on their work and findings. These bipartisan task forces include many state legislators from the Midwest. Kansas Sen. Carolyn McGinn serves as co-chair of the Future of Work task force.

CSG’s “remainsigned” National Conference also includes numerous sessions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as how interstate compacts are being used or can be used to ease shortages of supplies and workers. The agenda, along with registration information and session recordings, is available at csg.org/2020/.

CSG JUSTICE CENTER HELPS KANSAS LEADERS RE-EVALUATE STATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Recommendations will be ready for legislative consideration for 2021 session

The Council of State Governments’ Justice Center is helping leaders in Kansas identify ways to save taxpayer dollars and then reinvest those savings in proven strategies that control corrections costs and enhance public safety.

CSG has done this kind of data-driven, evidence-based work on justice reinvestment in seven Midwestern states (see map).

In Kansas, CSG is partnering with the Criminal Justice Reform Commission, which was created by the Legislature in 2019 (HB 2290). This group of state legislators and other leaders has been charged with analyzing all aspects of the justice system.

The 22-member panel includes Rep. Stephen Owens, who is serving as chair; Rep. Gail Finney and Sens. David Haley and Rick Winborn are the other legislators serving on the commission.

The CSG Justice Center presented its findings to the commission in October.

In their presentation, the Justice Center’s Patrick Armstrong, Racheal Druckhammer and Greg Halls focused on ways to prioritize prison for people who pose a threat to public safety. They also discussed increasing support for victims of crime, as well as strengthening community supervision and resources to change behavior and reduce recidivism.

Kansas is facing an unprecedented budget deficit and must prioritize corrections investments that work to reduce recidivism and maintain public safety. Among the Justice Center’s specific findings:

- In fiscal year 2019, the state spent an estimated $41 million to incarcerate people for drug offenses, and 27 percent of all admissions to prison for drug offenses were people with no prior felonies.
- The number of people in prison for drug offenses has increased three to four times more than the number of people in prison for other offenses.
- In FY 2019, the state spent an estimated $43 million to incarcerate people who violated conditions of their parole supervision.

Kansas is aiming to improve the overall outcomes of its criminal justice system through permanently interrupt cycles of recidivism. The Criminal Justice Reform Commission will deliver a final report and recommendations to the Legislature by Dec. 1.

CSG’s Justice Reinvestment Initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts. Its goal is to help policymakers conduct data-driven evaluations of current criminal justice policies, and then work with these leaders to make, and then, implement, recommended reforms.

IMPROVING JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY IS GOAL OF CSG WORK WITH INDIANA LEGISLATORS, OTHER LEADERS

The commission was created by state legislation in 2013. It has been charged with improving the status of children by studying issues related to vulnerable youths; making legislative recommendations; and promoting information sharing, best practices, policies and programs. It reports annually to the General Assembly, governor and chief justice of the Indiana Supreme Court.

The Council of State Governments was founded in 1933 as a national, nonpartisan organization to assist and advance state government. The headquarters office, in Lexington, Ky., is responsible for a variety of national programs and services, including research, reference publications, innovations transfer, suggested state legislation and interstate consulting services. The Midwestern Office supports several groups of state officials, including the Midwestern Legislative Conference, an association of all legislators representing 11 states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin) and the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. The provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario are MLC affiliate members.
A number of graduates of CSG Midwest’s Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development serve as chairs, vice chairs and ranking members of fiscal-related committees and subcommittees this bennium.

ILLINOIS

INDIANA

IOWA

KANSAS

MICHIGAN

MINNESOTA

NEBRASKA
Sen. Lou Ann Linehan (class of 2018) • Sen. John Stinner (class of 2016)

NORTH DAKOTA

OHIO

SOUTH DAKOTA

WISCONSIN

Please submit Alumni News to Laura Tomaka, CSG Midwest program manager for BILLD. She can be reached at ltomaka@csg.org.
CSG Events

CSG Midwestern Legislative Conference Webinars for Region’s Legislators
Visit csgmidwest.org to find dates of upcoming webinars and view recordings of past webinars on public policy, professional development and leadership training.

CSG National Conference
Virtual sessions through December 18, 2020
Contact: Kelley Arnold ~ kamold@csg.org
630.925.1922 | csg.org

Midwestern Legislative Conference Annual Meeting
July 11-14, 2021 | Rapid City, South Dakota
Contact: Cindy Andrews ~ candrews@csg.org
630.925.1922 | csgmidwest.org

Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development
July 30-August 3, 2021 | Minneapolis, Minnesota
Contact: Laura Tomaka ~ ltomaka@csg.org
630.925.1922 | csgmidwest.org

CSG Henry Toll Fellowship Program
August 20-24, 2021 | Lexington, KY
Contact: Kelley Arnold ~ kamold@csg.org
800.800.1910 | csg.org

Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus Annual Meeting
September 24-25, 2021 | Quebec City, QC
Contact: Lisa Janairo ~ ljanairo@csg.org
630.925.1922 | greatlakeslegislators.org

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