

**From:** The Council of State Governments <data@csg.org>  
**To:** Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov  
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**Subject:** Civics Test; Farm Bill; SCOTUS Rulings; Needle Exchange; Ballot Selfies

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**Issue: 22**

**June 29, 2015**

### **Some States to Begin Using Naturalization Test in High Schools**

High school students in Arizona, Idaho, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee and Utah will soon have to pass a civics exam--the same exam used to quiz immigrants who want to become United States citizens--in order to graduate.

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### **New Programs Planted in 2014 Farm Bill**

Even though the 2014 Farm Bill hasn't undergone an extreme makeover, its implementation looks daunting because of the sheer number of program changes being made at once. Two of the most complicated program changes yet to roll out are the Price Loss Coverage and Agricultural Risk Coverage programs.

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### **SCOTUS Rules on Same-Sex Marriage, ACA, Other Cases Impacting States**

For much of the past week, the Supreme Court has been issuing opinions at a dizzying pace. Four cases in particular impact states directly. Rulings on same-sex marriage and Affordable Care Act affect everyday life. Other rulings on what license plates may say and access to hotel registry information have not garnered as much attention, but have important impacts on states as well.

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### **Doctor Says, 'We Need to Rationalize Care'**

At a recent CSG eCademy session, "**Delivering Better Health Care for Less**," Dr. Jeffrey Brenner-executive director of the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, a 2013 MacArthur Fellow and family physician-said this generation's state leaders would have to work to transform the Medicaid system.

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### **New York and Alaska Rank Highest in Per Pupil Education Spending**

Per pupil spending for the U.S. in fiscal year 2013 was \$10,700-less than 1 percent more than in 2012-according to a recent report released by the Census Bureau. New York spent the most per student (\$19,818) followed by Alaska (\$18,175), the District of Columbia (\$17,953), New Jersey (\$17,572) and Connecticut (\$16,631).

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### **Needle Exchange Programs**

Although federal funding is not available for needle exchange programs, 16 states and the District of Columbia have provisions explicitly authorizing needle exchange programs. There are also a number of states with laws that either decrease barriers to the distribution of clean needles or altogether remove syringes from the list of drug paraphernalia.

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### **Ballot Selfies Present Debate for Lawmakers and Voters**

If you're thinking about posting a picture of yourself and your recently cast ballot in an upcoming election you may want to think again. Forty-four states currently have laws in place preventing public display of a cast ballot.

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### **Fifteen Bills Included in 2016 Suggested State Legislation**

The CSG Committee on Suggested State Legislation convened on June 19, and June 20, 2015, to review 74 bills on the second docket of the 2016 SSL cycle. The committee approved 15 bills to be included in the 2016 volume, including legislation from Arizona on civics education graduation requirements, the Uniform Voidable Transactions Act from [Kentucky](#) and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact from [Wyoming](#).

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### **CSG Midwest: Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC)-70th Annual Meetings**

July 12-15, 2015

Bismarck, N.D.

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### **CSG South: Southern Legislative Conference (SLC)-69th Annual Meeting**

July 18-22, 2015

Savannah, Ga.

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### **CSG West 68th Annual Meeting**

July 28-31, 2015

Vail, Colo.

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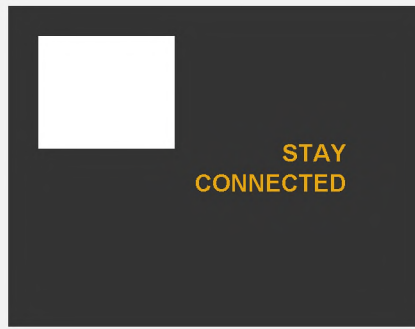
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The Council of State Governments

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