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Subject: Alcohol Laws; Water Infrastructure; Toxic Substances Control Act Reform; Telematics; Texting While Driving, Out-of-State Students

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States Review Longstanding Alcohol Laws

In recent years, many jurisdictions have modernized and eased longstanding alcohol restrictions. In June, both Colorado and Pennsylvania enacted laws that were described as the biggest changes to the industry since Prohibition was repealed. "I don't think there's any question that in the last 10 to 15 years, there's been quite an uptick in wanting to change many of these laws," said Steven Schmidt, senior vice president of public policy and communications at the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association. "A lot of it seems to be focused on providing more access around the country."

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States Keep Some Regulatory Authority under Revised Toxic Substances Act

On June 22, 2016, President Obama signed into law the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, or H.R. 2576, which provides for a major overhaul of the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act. The chief concern for states in the bi-partisan negotiations that led to the passage of H.R. 2576 was that the bill would preempt states' ability to regulate chemicals within their borders. While H.R. 2576 gives the EPA greater authority over chemical regulation, it still allows state regulation of the chemical industry.

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Getting the Lead Out: Upgrading Infrastructure for Safe Water

In the wake of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, cities, states and the federal government are taking a closer look at the status of water infrastructure in the U.S. and its ability to deliver healthy and safe drinking water to residents. A recent *USA Today* report analyzing data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found that over the past four years, close to 2,000 water systems in all 50 states showed excessive levels of lead in water testing results.

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Telematics Technology Drives Innovation in Insurance Industry

During a recent webcast presented by The Council of State Governments in collaboration with The Griffith Insurance Education Foundation, experts discussed vehicle telematics technology and its impact on the insurance industry. "Telematics can allow for the measurement of actual driving habits based on a vehicle's real-time driving data, and that appears likely to have a significant impact on traditional auto insurance models in the years ahead," Sean Slone, CSG director of transportation and infrastructure policy, said in the introduction to the webcast.

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States Take On Texting While Driving

Driver distraction is a leading factor in many crashes and texting is one of the most common distractions. State leaders have taken action. In 2007, Washington became the first state to ban texting while driving. Nine years later, 46 states and the District of Columbia have passed bans.

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Public Universities Increasingly Pursue Out-of-State Students

America's public state universities were established primarily to serve the residents of their respective states, but recent findings show that state institutions are increasingly appealing to out-of-state students.

Opponents of this practice have concerns that certain in-state applicants are being neglected and left behind. An analysis of 100 state universities, including the flagship institution of each state and one additional prominent public university, shows that from 2004 to 2014, 74 saw declines in in-state freshmen as a share of total enrollment.

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SNAP Participation Rates Down in 42 States

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, provides assistance to millions of low-income American individuals and families to help purchase groceries. During the Great Recession SNAP benefits were used more frequently as unemployment rose and financial markets tanked. The American economy, however, has made a significant comeback over the last few years. Monthly averages of individuals receiving SNAP benefits have also largely declined in recent years.

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Institute Aids Communities Coping with Natural Disasters

When Hurricane Ike hit Harris County, Texas, in 2008, the damage was substantial. Harris County began its recovery process, but the county quickly encountered difficulties with contractors regarding code review and safety standards. That's when the Institute for Building Technology and Safety, or IBTS, stepped in. IBTS provided assistance on creating a standard operating procedure for construction management and helped complete the necessary reconstruction work. Following their success in Harris County, IBTS created a tool that was accessible to public officials across the country.

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Human Trafficking--How States are Responding

Tuesday, July 19, 2 p.m. EDT
FREE CSG eCademy Webcast
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Nuclear Waste Policy: Searching for Solutions

Tuesday, July 26, 2 p.m. EDT
FREE Webinar Presented by CSG
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Tuesday, Aug. 16, 2 p.m. EDT
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Adopting Medicaid Policies to Encourage Long-Acting Reversible Contraception

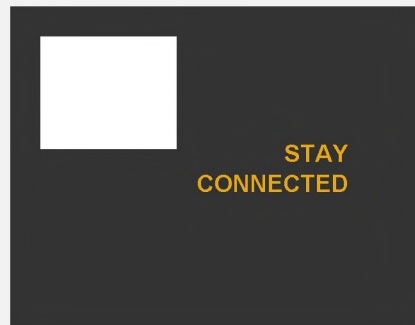
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