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**Subject:** Natural Gas Infrastructure; International Trade; Veterans Funding; Teacher Preparation; Health Care License Portability

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**Issue: 40**

**November 16, 2015**

#### **Upgrading America's Natural Gas Infrastructure for Safety and Reliability**

Recent pipeline accidents, such as those in Allentown, Pa., and San Bruno, Calif., have raised concerns about pipeline safety and the consequences of the aging natural gas infrastructure in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, more than 50 percent of the natural gas pipelines in the United States were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s, with some constructed even earlier.

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#### **Obama Shores Up International Trade Agenda**

Bipartisan agreements in Congress are rare these days. But after months of back-and-forth negotiations and parliamentary positioning, both chambers and parties applauded the passage of key international trade legislation—most notably the renewal of Trade Promotion Authority, or TPA. CSG Federal Affairs Director provides an update on key international trade agreements and their implications for states.

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#### **Serving America's Veterans: Congress Passes Appropriations Bill**

On the eve of Veterans Day, Congress took a major step in supporting the nation's 22.3 million veterans by passing the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations, or MilCon-VA, bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. The first of 12 appropriations bills to pass both chambers of Congress in 2015, the Senate version provides \$82 billion in discretionary funding for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Pentagon construction projects.

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#### **State Strategies for Shaping Effective Teacher Preparation Programs**

The importance of ensuring effective teacher preparation programs, or TPPs, continues to be an issue of significant interest to state policymakers. As the focus of teacher education increasingly shifts from training to preparing, several states are undertaking new approaches to identifying and promoting successful TPPs. This webinar Nov. 19 at 2 p.m. EST will focus on these and other strategies by Southern states to ensure teachers are well-prepared for the classroom.

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## Energy Production & Exports

Just six states produce more than 50 percent of the energy generated by the U.S. Texas accounts for nearly one-fifth of the nation's energy production. The U.S. ranked second in total energy production in 2012--behind China and ahead of Russia. Three of the top five global exporters of crude oil in 2013 were in North America: Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

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## Health Care Without Borders

The lack of access to quality and affordable health care in rural areas, coupled with disparities in access to newer technologies, medicines and treatment options, contribute to rural communities being perilously underserved. Recent conversations on how best to meet the challenges of providing health care to Americans have spurred innovation through the utilization of the interstate compact mechanism as a means to reduce long-term barriers to the process of gaining licensure in multiple states.

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## State, Local Governments Win High-Speed Chase Qualified Immunity Case

In its second opinion of the term, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a police officer should have been granted qualified immunity when he shot at a car whose driver had led police on a high-speed chase to stop it instead of waiting to see if spike strips worked. In *Mullenix v. Luna*, Israel Leija Jr. led officers on an 18-minute chase at speeds between 85 and 110 miles an hour after officers tried to arrest him.

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## Hotel Room Block and Early Registration Deadline is Today!

The deadline to reserve your room in the CSG room block at the Omni Hotel and to register for the conference at the discounted registration rate is today, Nov. 16. Don't miss out on your opportunity to attend one of the premier conferences for state government officials across the nation, Dec. 10-13 in Nashville, Tenn.! To register for the conference and reserve your room at the Omni Hotel in Nashville, visit the 2015 CSG National Conference website.

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## State Strategies for Shaping Effective Teacher Preparation Programs

Thursday, Nov. 19, 2 p.m. EST  
Presented by CSG South/Southern  
Legislative Conference

**REGISTER HERE**

## School Accountability Measures for States and Communities

Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2 p.m. EST  
Presented by CSG West

**REGISTER HERE**

## SLC State Pensions: Latest Developments

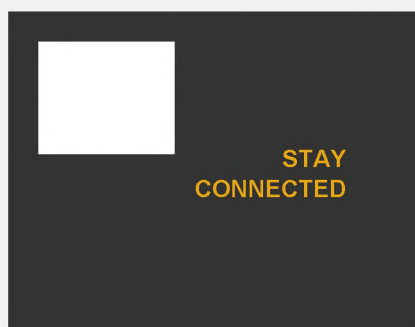
Thursday, Dec. 3, 2 p.m. EST  
Presented by CSG South/Southern  
Legislative Conference

**REGISTER HERE**

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**See Full Calendar**

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