

From: RGPPC <RGPPC@rgppc.org>
To: RGPPCRGPPC@rgppc.org
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REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS

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Taxes and Budget

Lottery transfers \$64M to Arizona beneficiaries ([AZ Business Magazine](#)) - Governor Doug Ducey and the Arizona Lottery are announcing a record breaking third quarter transfer of funds to statewide community organizations for fiscal year 2016. More than \$64 million was transferred to Lottery beneficiaries in the third quarter, which is approximately \$20 million more than the average quarterly transfer. The increase is a result of record sales during the third quarter, driven by the \$1.5 billion Powerball jackpot. Since July 2015, the Arizona Lottery has transferred more than \$145 million back to the State of Arizona and is on track to surpass its fiscal year 2016 goal of distributing more than \$184 million dollars. "This announcement is exciting news for Arizonans who directly benefit from the programs and community organizations funded by the Arizona Lottery," said Governor Ducey.

Kansas Legislature narrowly passes budget, ending 2016 session ([The Lawrence Journal-World](#)) – Kansas lawmakers worked into the wee hours of the morning Monday to end the 2016 session after passing a \$6.3 billion budget for the upcoming fiscal year, a budget that is roughly \$22 million out of balance. That's because current revenue forecasts show the state will not receive enough tax revenue to pay for all the spending in the bill, and lawmakers did not raise any new revenue to cover the shortfall. Despite sweeping millions of dollars out of the state highway fund and delaying several major highway projects, and making significant cuts to state funding for higher education, the bill calls on Gov. Sam Brownback to find another \$92 million in additional cuts and efficiency savings in order to leave the state with an ending balance of about \$70 million.

Energy and Environment

Branstad opens door to sales tax for water quality ([The Des Moines Register](#)) – Gov. Terry Branstad will renew his campaign for statewide water quality projects, and he's opening the door to a new sales tax for conservation and outdoor recreation programs. The Republican governor suggested Monday he was willing to explore enacting a three-eighths of one cent increase in state sales taxes, but without increasing the overall tax burden on Iowans. That idea was floated near the end of the 2016 legislative session by Sen. David Johnson, R-Ocheyedan, who proposed offsetting the sales tax increase with income tax cuts, making it revenue neutral. "I don't think Iowans want to see their taxes increased, but we are going to be willing to look all kinds of things. The three-eighths of a cent is something we would be willing to consider, but there are other ways to do it," Branstad told reporters Monday at a post-session news briefing.

Economic Development

Branstad to sign Israel anti-boycott bill ([The Des Moines Register](#)) - Gov. Terry Branstad said Monday he will sign a bill that prohibits state funds from being directly invested in companies that boycott Israel. The Republican governor said he plans a formal bill-signing ceremony for House File 2331, which was passed by the Iowa Senate last week after winning approval earlier in the legislative session from the Iowa House. The legislation is intended to counter efforts of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement. A host of Palestinian political groups, unions and others began in 2005 to encourage companies and government entities to boycott goods produced in Israel and divest from financial holdings there.

Gov. Bevin Announces Mattress Manufacturer Will Expand In N. Ky. ([Eagle Country Online](#)) - A fast-growing mattress manufacturer is set to open a new production facility in northern Kentucky. Governor Matt Bevin has announced that Sherwood Bedding will locate a 174,000-square-foot mattress production factory in Walton. Sherwood Bedding, an independently owned manufacturer based out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, will invest approximately \$11.1 million toward the operation. The company's fourth U.S. factory, Sherwood Midwest, could open as soon as next month in Boone County, and is expected to create up to 150 jobs.

(Ohio) Distillers toast proposal that would let them sell food, drink at distilleries ([Cleveland.com](#)) – Distillers in Ohio's fledgling micro-distillery industry are backing a proposed law that would let them sell food, open their doors for

tourism trade and bolster their businesses. The proposal would make two changes to Ohio's law, raising the amount of gallons of liquor small distillers can sell a year and, more importantly, allowing the permits that would allow micro-distillers to have food and drink establishments, similar to those already allowed at wineries and breweries. The micro-distillery business started to grow a few years ago when the state changed permitting rules to allow more locations. Since 2012, the industry has grown from just a couple of distilleries in Ohio to more than 30.

Public Safety

How Md. helps kids with parents in prison ([The Baltimore Sun](#)) – In April 2015, Governor Hogan charged the Children's Cabinet with improving outcomes for the children and families of incarcerated parents. The action plan included flexible funding for local jurisdictions and coordinating state activities. One example is the departments of public safety and human resources working together on visitation between foster youth and their incarcerated parent. The public safety department also provides several programs to strengthen family relationships, including Reading Unites Families, Girls Scouts Beyond Bars, Family Mediation and Family Days. On a local level, we are increasing the capacity of Maryland's 24 Local Management Boards to provide services to the families and children of incarcerated parents. The Governor's Office for Children provided training on promising strategies, including those mentioned in the Casey Foundation report, and the Children's Cabinet also made funding available for critical programming.

(New Mexico) Governor, CYFD visit RR to announce effort to help families in need ([The Rio Rancho Observer](#)) – Gov. Susana Martinez and representatives of the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department have debuted a website and resource for those who want to help families and children in need. "Pull Together.org" is a website that guides New Mexicans to existing resources for those who need help raising a child, for those who would like to provide resources for a child in need or for those who would like to speak out about a case of child abuse. The website lists nonprofits, local agencies and businesses in each county that can help families in need. Tips for parents with infants, school-aged children or teenagers are available on the website, as well as lists of upcoming family activities. For those who want to help families in need, the website includes information about a foster child backpack program as well as information for those interested in adopting or fostering a child.

Education

Gov. Christie announces annual lead testing for all NJ schools ([PIX 11](#)) – Lead testing is coming to all New Jersey schools, amid nationwide contamination concerns and questions surrounding the accountability of school districts who may have failed to report test results to parents. Governor Chris Christie made the announcement this afternoon and asked state legislators to add \$10 million to the fiscal year 2017 budget to pay for it. In addition to annual testing, Christie is ordering all public schools: "to post all test results and immediately notify parents if testing shows elevated levels of lead. Schools must also provide parents with a description of any steps the school is taking to ensure safe drinking water will remain available to all of their students," stated the Governor.

Healthcare

Oklahoma Autism Insurance Bill Sent to Governor for Signature ([The Insurance Journal](#)) - Legislation that requires health insurers to cover the treatment of children with autism has received final legislative approval in the Oklahoma House. The House voted 65-26 for House Bill 2962 and sent it to Gov. Mary Fallin for her signature. The bill requires coverage for the screening, diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder in children younger than 9 years old. Under the measure, children would have access to applied behavior analysis for up to 25 hours a week, with a limit of \$25,000 a year. Autism spectrum disorder affects how a person processes sensory information and their ability to interact and relate to others. Oklahoma is one of only seven states in the nation that does not require insurers to cover autism.

Lawmakers push back on Obama drug pricing initiative ([The Hill](#)) - A group of 242 lawmakers is calling on the Obama administration to scrap a proposal aimed at fighting high drug prices. The proposal to change how Medicare pays for certain drugs has been controversial, drawing concern from both sides of the aisle in Congress. At issue is a five-year pilot program that would change the way Medicare Part B pays for drugs. Currently, Medicare Part B pays doctors the average price of a drug, plus 6 percent. The administration warns that system gives doctors an incentive to prescribe higher cost drugs, so they can get paid more. The pilot program would reduce the 6 percent add-on to 2.5 percent, plus a flat fee of about \$16.

States Urged to Reduce Pregnancy-Related Deaths ([Pew Stateline](#)) - The relatively high percentage of American women who die as a result of pregnancy, which exceeds that of other developed nations, is prompting a new national prevention campaign that is relying on the states to take a leading role. The key element in that effort is to encourage all states to go beyond the information provided on a typical death certificate by having mortality review panels investigate the causes behind every maternal death that occurs during pregnancy or in the year after delivery. The hope is the investigations will reveal systemic causes for at least some of the deaths and lead to preventive measures to save the lives of more would-be or new mothers. A number of studies suggest that one in three maternal deaths is preventable.