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**Subject:** Stateline's 2016 Review: The Five Biggest Issues Facing States in 2016

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Stateline's 2016 Legislative Review | [View online](#)

*Explore the most pressing issues of 2016  
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Stateline's annual Legislative Review looks at policy and politics in the states since legislatures began their work in January. See below for our coverage of [the top five issues on state agendas](#) in 2016:

#### 1. Criminal Justice Reform

In many states, criminal justice reform was at the top of the policy agenda in 2016. In some states the focus was on prison conditions, sentencing, and support for former inmates. Others sought to change the way police officers do their jobs.

#### 2. Opioid Abuse

Even as they struggled to provide treatment to opioid addicts,

many states passed laws designed to prevent addiction by stanching the flow of prescription painkillers.

### 3. Minimum Wage

More cities and states acted to raise the minimum wage. But incremental hikes and "circuit breakers" may blunt the impact.

### 4. Family and Medical Leave

The struggle to balance work and family obligations consumes families across the U.S. So far only five states have approved comprehensive family and medical leave laws. Why haven't supporters been able to gain more traction?

### 5. Protecting Privacy

Amid mounting worries about drones, data breaches and other high-tech issues, many states took action to prevent people's private information from ending up in the wrong hands.

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