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**To:** Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov  
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**Subject:** Medicaid Expansion; States' Fiscal Health; Supreme Court Cases; Top Five Issues Facing States in 2016

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**Issue: 44**

**January 11, 2016**

#### **South Dakota, Feds Work Toward Plan to Expand Health Care Access**

South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard may find that the third time is the charm as he negotiates with the federal government to live up to its treaty obligations to provide health services to the state's Native Americans. Twice before in recent state history, governors have tried and failed to solve the longstanding problem, which results in a massive cost shift to state revenues to pay for health care for many Native Americans.

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#### **States Fiscally Stable, but Juggling Priorities**

As 2016 begins, states are fiscally stable--and the financial situation appears to be pretty good in many cases--but challenges loom ahead as few states have been able to restore cuts made during the Great Recession and resources remain limited. While states have experienced modest revenue growth averaging roughly 3 percent over the past six years, state budgets, when adjusted for inflation, have not fully recovered to pre-recession levels.

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#### **SCOTUS Hears Oral Arguments on Affirmative Action, Redistricting**

In December, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in two of its most significant cases of the term so far for states: the first concerning affirmative action, the second related to legislative redistricting. It is difficult to predict what the court will do based on oral arguments, but it is the only clue the court offers.

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#### **Managing Solid Waste through Product Stewardship Laws**

Product stewardship laws have a goal of reducing the environmental, safety and health impacts of consumer products. Originally focused on batteries, these laws are being applied to more consumer products and states are structuring them in different ways. Tune in Tuesday, Feb. 2, at 2 p.m. EST for a CSG eCademy webcast featuring Chaz Miller of the National Waste and Recycling Association, who will provide an overview of product stewardship laws in the states and discuss emerging issues and trends.

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### **Public Pensions Remain a Priority**

Public pensions will continue to be a major area of concern for many states in 2016 as accounting requirements and the financial assumptions used to calculate how much a state must pay into their systems transition. Despite recent strong investment returns, new accounting standards and state reforms that have led to a reduction in unfunded liability for a majority of states, shortfalls are expected to remain between \$800 and \$900 billion in 2016, which means pensions will remain a big fiscal concern for state leaders.

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### **States to Watch in 2016: Transportation Funding**

Eight states—Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah and Washington—raised their gas taxes in 2015. Two other states—Kentucky and North Carolina—made adjustments to their gas tax mechanisms to make revenues more reliable. Despite all that activity, 2016 also could see a large number of states join the club.

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### **Top Five Issues Facing States in 2016**

The Council of State Governments has released its annual listing of the top five issues legislators will face this session in education, workforce development, energy and the environment, federal affairs, fiscal and economic development, health, interstate compacts, transportation, and international affairs.

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### **CSG Welcomes New National Officers!**

We look forward to working with these outstanding new officers in the coming year:

- Gov. Jack Markell, Delaware  
2016 CSG National President
- Sen. Beau McCoy, Nebraska  
2016 CSG National Chair
- Sen. Kelvin Atkinson, Nevada  
2016 CSG National Chair-elect
- Sen. Robert Stivers, Kentucky  
2016 CSG National Vice Chair
- Gov. Brian Sandoval, Nevada  
2016 CSG National Immediate Past President
- Sen. Carl Marcellino, New York  
2016 CSG National Immediate Past Chair

**Will Public Sector Collective Bargaining  
Survive This Supreme Court Term?**

Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2 p.m. EST

Presented by the State and Local Legal  
Center

**REGISTER HERE**

**Managing Solid Waste through Product  
Stewardship Laws**

Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2 p.m. EST

FREE CSG eCademy Webcast

**REGISTER HERE**

**States to Watch in 2016: Transportation  
Funding**

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m. EST

FREE CSG eCademy Webcast

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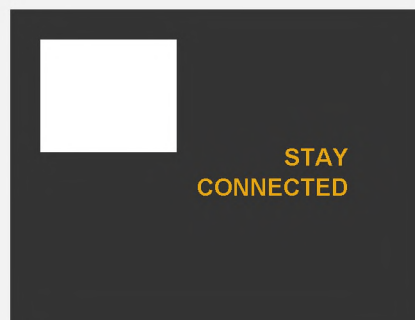
**See Full Calendar**

Founded in 1933, The Council of State Governments is our nation's only organization serving all three branches of state government. CSG is a region-based forum that fosters the exchange of insights and ideas to help state officials shape public policy. This offers unparalleled regional, national and international opportunities to network, develop leaders, collaborate and create problem-solving partnerships.

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