

CSG-WEST PROJECTS



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON RIVER GOVERNANCE

CO-CHAIR
Karen Fraser
Senator
Washington



CO-CHAIR
Bruce Chandler
Representative
Washington

The Legislative Council on River Governance (LCRG) is a cooperative association of legislators from the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. LCRG provides a forum for legislators from the four states of the Columbia River Basin to discuss their common environmental and commercial interests in the River and its tributaries.



BORDER LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

CHAIR
Denise Moreno Ducheny
Senator
California



VICE CHAIR
Ramiro Flores Morales
Diputado
Coahuila

The Border Legislative Conference (BLC) provides a forum for ongoing collaboration among legislators of the 10 U.S.-Mexico border states. Administered in cooperation with CSG-WEST's regional partner in the South, The Southern Legislative Conference, the BLC aims to empower border legislators to engage in the binational agenda, provide direction in the development of shared solutions, and address the unique challenges and opportunities of the border region. The BLC also seeks to establish strategic partnerships with multi-level governments to strengthen and improve border communities.

The Council of State Governments-WEST (CSG-WEST) provides a nonpartisan platform for regional cooperation among the legislatures of the 13 western states, creating opportunities for legislators and staff to share ideas and experiences as well as institutional linkages with other elected political leaders throughout the region.

Based in California where it was founded 63 years ago, CSG-WEST's membership is composed of the legislatures of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Associate members include the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia and the Pacific islands of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam.

Programs

- The **Western Legislative Conference** brings together legislators from western states to learn from each other and collaborate on issues of regional concern such as water, public lands, energy, and transportation.
- The **Western Legislative Academy** is an intensive professional development program designed to support newer western state legislators to become more effective leaders and to strengthen legislative institutions.
- **WESTRENDS** is a regional leadership board comprised of one legislator from each western state that addresses demographic, economic and cultural trends shaping the West.
- The **Legislative Service Agency and Research Directors Committee** provides nonpartisan western staff leaders management training and opportunity to share best practices.

Projects

- The **U.S.-Mexico State Alliance Partnership** is a collaborative, multi-branch program aimed at strengthening cooperation among state officials and institutions of both countries. The Partnership promotes and convenes binational exchanges among border legislators, attorneys general, treasurers, Lt. Governors and other officials to enhance the role of state officials to address shared public policy concerns that transcend international borders.
- Pursuing cooperative solutions to issues that arise along the 2000-mile U.S.-Mexican border is the focus of the **Border Legislative Conference**, which is composed of state legislators from California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and the six Mexican border states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, Coahuila and Tamaulipas.
- CSG-WEST acts as a convener for the **Legislative Council on River Governance**, a cooperative association of legislators from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana on water, environment and energy issues along the Columbia River Basin.
- CSG-WEST joined the Wyoming Legislature as a co-sponsor of the **Western States Energy and Environment Symposium** that brought together legislative leaders and energy committee chairs from all 13 western states to discuss the West's energy future. One of the out-boxes for the final report will be the CSG-WEST Energy and Environment Committee.
- The **Modernization and Strengthening of the Capacity of the Western Electrical Grid** is a project in cooperation with the Western Governors' Association and the U.S. Department of Energy that will provide substantial financial support for western state legislator involvement in the policy decisions affecting transmission of electrical power that impacts eleven western states as well as British Columbia and Alberta in Canada and northern Baja California in Mexico.

The Council of State Governments-WEST

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CSG-WEST is the Western Regional Office of The Council of State Governments (CSG), a national nonpartisan organization serving multiple branches of state government officials and staff.
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"Serving Western Legislatures"

The Council of State Governments-WEST 2010 Leadership



CHAIR
Rich Wills
Representative
Idaho



CHAIR-ELECT
Marcus R. Oshiro
Representative
Hawaii



VICE CHAIR
Rosie Berger
Representative
Wyoming



IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
Jose Campos
Representative
New Mexico



WLA 2009 Class President
John Sapien
Senator
New Mexico

Each year CSG-WEST conducts a professional development training program for a select group of western state legislators in their first four years of service. The goals of the Western Legislative Academy (WLA) are: 1) to help newer legislators become more effective and 2) to build stronger state legislative institutions. The Western Legislative Academy brings together a faculty of outstanding academics, nationally known corporate and public trainers to work with Academy participants who come from each of our 13 western states. Members of the Academy are selected on the basis of their dedication to public service, desire to improve personal legislative effectiveness and commitment to the legislative institution.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE AGENCY/ RESEARCH DIRECTORS COMMITTEE



CHAIR
Pamela Varni
Executive Director
Legislative Affairs
Alaska



VICE CHAIR
Mike Christensen
Director, Office of
Legislative Research and
General Counsel, Utah

This committee is made up of leaders of the professional, nonpartisan staff of western state legislatures. Each year, these staff leaders gather for professional management training, and members maintain informal contact throughout the year. The goal of the committee is to develop and share practices that will result in the best possible customer service to lawmakers in a positive and professional workplace environment.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



CHAIR
Rich Wills
Representative
Idaho



CHAIR-ELECT
Marcus Oshiro
Representative
Hawaii

The Executive Committee serves as the Board of Directors of the Council of State Government-*WEST* (CSG-*WEST*), reviewing the work and activities of the policy committees, adopting policy positions for the organization and annually selecting participants for the Western Legislative Academy. The committee is comprised of four CSG-*WEST* officers, the presiding legislative officers and ranking minority leaders in each chamber of the 13 western states, the chair and vice chair of CSG-*WEST* policy committees, and other legislators appointed by the presiding legislative officer in each chamber of each member state.

WESTERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE POLICY COMMITTEES



CHAIR
Ronda Rudd Menlove
Representative
Utah

EDUCATION



VICE CHAIR
Nancy Todd
Representative
Colorado

With education taking up large shares of budgets in every state, this committee provides a forum for discussion of innovative programs and sharing of best practices amongst Western legislators. Encompassing the preschool through post-secondary learning years (P-20), preparing today's youth for an ever globalized economy has a very different set of challenges than in past decades. Teachers/professors and administrators must figure out the most cost-effective ways for students to acquire 21st century skills and prepare themselves for tomorrow's competitive world. All the while having to meet federal requirements and be competitive for opportunities such as Race to the Top and dealing with ever shifting demographics of the student body. The Education Committee welcomes all state legislators who are concerned about the pivotal decisions they must make, and jointly find the solutions for the best possible outcomes to advance the state of education in their respective districts.



CHAIR
Jackie Dingfelder
Senator
Oregon

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT



VICE CHAIR
John Schiffer
Senator
Wyoming

This committee examines policies that ensure the reliable production, generation, and transmission of the West's fossil and renewable energy resources which are vital to the region's economy and that maintain the environmental integrity of the West's land, air and water resources. The committee collaborates with the Western Governors' Association (WGA) and the Western Interstate Energy Board (WIEB) to promote and support sustainable energy policies. It also tracks and explores the impacts of world energy development and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 on the West.



CHAIR
Maxine T. Bell
Representative
Idaho

FISCAL AFFAIRS



VICE CHAIR
Kyle Yamashita
Representative
Hawaii

The fiscal affairs committee provides a forum for chairs and members of the West's finance and appropriation committees to exchange ideas and experiences on issues affecting state budgets as well as the region. Fiscal issues associated with the impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, revenue forecasting, performance-based budgeting, state fiscal trends, e-commerce and taxation are among the issues before this committee.

WESTRENDS



CHAIR
Kim Gillan
Minority Whip
Senator
Montana



VICE CHAIR
Beth Kerttula
Minority Leader
Representative
Alaska

The WESTRENDS Board is composed of one legislator from each of the 13 western states. It provides a forum and an opportunity to evaluate the direction and velocity of trends that affect the quality of life in the West. In a region that is increasingly defined by rapid change, WESTRENDS focuses on the implications for policy makers of the demographic, economic and cultural trends that are shaping the West. The WESTRENDS Board also recognizes the need for a continental perspective in its work since the West is the only region that borders all the nations of North America.



CHAIR
Carolyn Allen
Senator
Arizona

FUTURE OF WESTERN LEGISLATURES



VICE CHAIR
Sam Hunt
Representative
Washington

This committee considers issues that impact the institution of the legislature. Initiatives, redistricting, public perceptions of legislatures, term limits, the media, Internet communications and other forces have had serious impacts on legislative authority and effectiveness. Legislators from around the West meet with experts in interactive forums to discuss the personal and institutional dimensions of the legislature and the legislative experience. Lawmakers will consider actions and ideas that will strengthen western legislative institutions from within and without.



CHAIR
Jim Keane
Senator
Montana

TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION



VICE CHAIR
Janice Arnold-Jones
Representative
New Mexico

This committee focuses on the issues related to the movement of people and goods throughout the West and through the airports or seaports of the region that integrate to the global supply chain. The committee investigates the critical transportation issues facing the West, particularly the impacts of exploding population growth combined with aging transportation infrastructure. The committee takes the lead for western legislators in working with the Western Governors' Association (WGA) and the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO) in support of the SAFETEA-LU and its reauthorization, the Essential Air Service Act (EAS), and the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funding for western infrastructure projects. As the only region that borders both Canada and Mexico, the committee works with these organizations in support of trade corridor and economic competitive strategies to improve commerce and trade between the NAFTA countries.



CHAIR
Kelvin D. Atkinson
Assembly Member
Nevada

WATER AND PUBLIC LANDS



VICE CHAIR
Craig Johnson
Representative
Alaska

This committee provides western legislators a forum to discuss growing and competing demands of western water and public lands. The West holds the vast majority of our country's federal lands and has experienced the highest level of population growth, thereby straining the region's limited water resources. Committee members engage in policy discussions and information exchange about how to better manage water and public land resources in the West. The committee also promotes partnerships with regional organizations such as the Western Governors' Association (WGA), Western States Water Council (WSWC), and others in an effort to develop robust regional strategies to address western water and public land issues.