June 2020

THE FISCAL LINK: Your Online Connection to the Latest Fiscal Information in the States

NCSL & National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices (NALFO) Updates

✓ Check out this recent blog on state Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) spending by NCSL’s Fiscal Affairs program director, Mandy Rafool.

✓ New and updated NCSL webpages:
  
  o NCSL has created a new COVID-19 Legislative Tracking Database and Data Visualization. Topics include, but are not limited to, budget and revenue, commerce, criminal justice, education, employment, finance, public health, housing and homelessness, retirement, legislative operations, and more.

  o The Fiscal Affairs program has updated the COVID-19 revised revenue projections webpage to include a new map and chart of fiscal year general fund revenue declines.

✓ Join NCSL on June 5 at 2:30 p.m. ET/11:30 a.m. PT for a webinar on the record unemployment rate and what it means for the future of state workforces. Register today.

✓ NCSL’s annual Legislative Staff Management Institute is adapting to an all-digital experience, which means this experience has never been more affordable and accessible for legislative staff. But hurry, as the deadline to apply is June 5.

State News & Reports

✓ Hawaii. The Office of the Auditor identified more than $483 million in excess moneys within 57 special and revolving accounts to potentially transfer to the state’s general fund or repurpose.

✓ Maryland. In a report examining the impact of COVID-19 on state government, the Department of Legislative Services found an increased demand for entitlement programs, a 4% reduction of individuals in the correctional system, and a $255 million loss in FY 2020 higher education revenues.
✓ **New York.** The Division of the Budget released an *economic impact assessment* of COVID-19. The analysis outlines industry shocks and compares the current period to previous flu and recession periods in history.

✓ **North Carolina.** The Fiscal Research Division and the Office of State Budget and Management revised the state’s forecast for FY 2021 downward by 9.9%.

✓ **Oregon.** The Office of Economic Analysis presented a new forecast estimating considerable downward pressure through the 2027-2029 biennium. The full report can be found [here](#).

✓ **Rhode Island.** In a memorandum to the governor and legislative leaders, the Revenue Estimating Conference decreased FY 2020 and FY 2021 revenues and projects nonfarm payrolls to remain below pre-COVID levels until 2023.

**Federal News & Reports**

✓ On May 28, [additional guidance](#) on eligible expenditures for the Coronavirus Relief Fund was released by the U.S. Department of Treasury.

✓ A newly released [interim economic projection for 2020 and 2021](#) by the Congressional Budget Office estimates that real gross domestic product will contract by 11% in the second quarter of this year.

✓ Unemployment rates were higher in April in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, [according the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

✓ A new report issued by the Congressional Research Service examines issues and policy options to assist small businesses during the Great Recession and current relief efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Other Items of Interest**

✓ The Pew Charitable Trusts released a 50-state report examining how state budgets react to natural disasters. The report comes with a corresponding fact sheet for state policymakers. Pew also released a new [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#), containing clearinghouses in nine social policy areas, including behavioral health, education, and homelessness.

✓ The Lincoln Land Institute of Land Policy released report of current trends in the property tax, including on property tax actions taken by states and local governments in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

✓ As states begin reopening from lockdowns, [Reuters Graphics](#) compared foot traffic patterns by state and industry from SafeGraph. The article found Americans visited parks, restaurants and gas stations first, while schools, bars and fitness centers remained closed in many states.

**Additional Resources**

✓ Visit the [NCSL Fiscal Affairs Program homepage](#).
✓ Visit the [NALFO homepage](#).
✓ Consult a list of legislative fiscal offices that maintain a webpage.
✓ Join NALFO’s Listserv.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for The Fiscal Link, or know a legislator or legislative staff person who should be added, just ask Emily Maher or Erica MacKellar.

NOTE: Links to external websites and reports are for information purposes only and do not indicate NCSL’s endorsement of the content on those sites.