
From the Editors

THE BIG ISSUES OF 2020

Gridlock in Congress May Mean Opportunity for States

New year, new approach.

We've typically used the first issue of the year to identify the topics we think will be hot in the coming legislative sessions in capitols across the country. But this year, instead of cranking out yet another top 10 list, we asked ourselves, What are the issues states will be forced to deal with because Congress has failed to act?

For many observers, the term "Congress" has become synonymous with gridlock and toxic partisanship, inaction and party before all else. In our cover

story, *Governing* magazine writer Alan Greenblatt says the situation is unlikely to change anytime soon. That means more inertia in Congress and more issues that you, the nation's state lawmakers, will have to tackle this year with little to no help from your congressional counterparts.

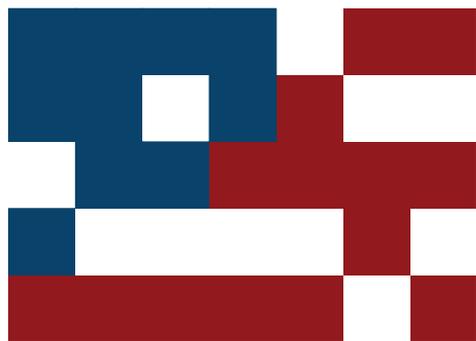
Gridlock in our nation's capital, however, opens up opportunities for states to experiment, and that's not necessarily a bad thing. "My preference has been, and always will be, that states are where the

bulk of public policy should occur," says Wisconsin Speaker Robin Vos (R), NCSL's president. So, where is Congress happy to let states take the lead? Turn to page 10 to find out.

Then turn to the "Innovations" column on page 20. A bipartisan U.S. House panel is seeking ways to modernize Congress. For help, they've turned to state legislatures—and NCSL.

There might be hope for Congress yet.

—Julie Lays and Kevin Frazzini



MAKING THE MAPS

THE NCSL SEMINARS ON REDISTRICTING

When it comes to redistricting, the learning curve is steep. Let us help you and your team prepare for this complex, once-a-decade task.

**MAY 7-10, 2020
LAS VEGAS**

SEPT. 10-13, 2020
PORTLAND, ORE.

REGISTER TODAY!

[WWW.NCSL.ORG/
REDISTRICT](http://WWW.NCSL.ORG/REDISTRICT)

