1 | NEBRASKA

“We have to work together. The conservative and rural members need to work with the urban senators and the progressives to really get something done.”

Nebraska Senator Patty Pansing Brooks, (NP) on balancing the pressure farmers face with the needs of her urban district, from The Associated Press.

2 | KANSAS

“I feel like I am rearranging chairs on the deck of the Titanic.”

Kansas Senate President Susan Wagle (R) on the political peril that awaits lawmakers dealing with next year’s cash-strapped budget, in the Kansas City Star.

3 | PENNSYLVANIA

“Pennsylvanians have spoken. They recognize the once ugly stigma of cannabis is now just a part of history.”

Representative Jake Wheatley Jr. (D), who plans to introduce legislation this year that would fully legalize marijuana, from MarijuanaMoment.net.
There are 36 new presiding officers across 27 states and two territories this year due to retirements, term limits and chambers flipping after the midterm elections.

5 | ILLINOIS
Illinois Senator and NCSL President Toi Hutchinson (D) was named a “Public Official of the Year” by Governing magazine. Hutchinson, Colorado Representative Faith Winter (D) and Indiana Representative Karen Engleman (R) were recognized for exposing sexual harassment in legislatures. Hutchinson says harassment is a “deep-seated cultural thing” that can’t be legislated away. At least now, she says, “We’re all starting to talk to each other in ways we didn’t before.”

6 | NEW YORK
Crystal Peoples-Stokes (D) will be the first woman and first African-American to serve as majority leader in the New York Assembly. “As both the first woman & minority to hold this position in NYS’s long history,” she tweeted, “I will continue to put people before politics & proudly represent WNY & the Majority Conf.”

7 | NEVADA
Nevada will be the first state with a majority female legislature. Women hold 32 seats (23 in the house, nine in the Senate); men have 31. The state’s Supreme Court will have a female majority, as will its six-member congressional delegation. Women also broke the 50 percent barrier in the Colorado House, and they’ll make up two-thirds of the territorial Legislature in Guam.

8 | WASHINGTON
Washington Speaker Frank Chopp (D), the state’s longest-serving speaker, plans to give up his leadership post after the 2019 session. He intends to run for his House seat again. “I think it’s good to make the transition when you’re at a strong point and a high point,” he said.

9 | MASSACHUSETTS
Massachusetts Senate Clerk William Welch retired after 45 years. He served in the clerk’s office during the tenures of nine Senate presidents. “I tried to maintain the reputation of the office,” he said. “It’s always had a good one, and I didn’t want to do anything to downgrade that.”

10 | CALIFORNIA
Mac Taylor must like round numbers. At the end of December, he called it a career after 40 years in the California Legislative Analyst’s Office. Taylor was just the fifth person to serve as the legislative analyst since the office was created in 1941.