D.C. FLY-INS
As the voice of state legislatures in Washington, D.C., NCSL conducts Fly-Ins, bringing legislators to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress, the administration and other players involved in crucial state-federal issues. Here’s a look at two recent visits.

States’ Prescription for Controlling Drug Prices
As the federal government looks at ways to address the high cost of prescription drugs, Maryland Delegate Bonnie Cullison (D) and Texas Representative Tom Oliverson (R), above, met with members of Congress, congressional staff and officials from the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss drug pricing and transparency. Oliverson and Cullison were able to share their successes and challenges in passing prescription drug legislation. Staff from NCSL in D.C. joined them during their visit and hosted a briefing.

—Haley Nicholson and Margaret Wile

Green Light for Hemp?
Colorado Representative Jeni Arndt (D), co-chair of NCSL’s Agriculture Task Force, took part in a panel discussion on the hemp industry at the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research “Foster Our Future” meeting in Washington, D.C. The panel covered a plethora of issues the young industry faces following the legalization of hemp as part of the 2018 Farm Bill. Arndt, joined by staff from NCSL in D.C., also visited with key members of Congress during her visit to highlight the challenges states face in implementing U.S. Department of Agriculture rules on hemp. NCSL in D.C. advocated for the legalization of hemp, per NCSL’s National Agriculture policy.

—Ben Husch and Kristen Hildreth

A 101 on Working With State Legislatures
At the invitation of U.S. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D) of Maryland, NCSL in D.C. discussed the organization’s role in shaping federal policy with a bipartisan group of congressional staff. NCSL staff also took the opportunity to provide a “Legislatures 101” for the staffers, most of whom had not worked in a state legislature.

—Susan Frederick and Abbie Gruwell

FUTURE FLY-INS

Data Privacy: New York Senator David Carlucci (D), co-chair of NCSL’s Communications, Financial Services and Interstate Commerce Committee, will be in D.C. in March to discuss state efforts on data privacy. He will emphasize the need for Congress to work closely with states to preserve states’ current authority.

Election Security: In May, NCSL in D.C. will lead a coalition to encourage Congress and the administration to prioritize elections security.

THE LATEST FROM D.C.

$7.6B in Federal Highway Funds Successfully Restored for States
In case you missed it, a previously enacted $7.6 billion rescission in federal transportation funding, which would have affected states starting in July 2020, was repealed at the end of 2019. For the past year, NCSL in D.C. has worked with other state organizations, including the National Governors Association and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, to repeal the rescission.

—Ben Husch and Kristen Hildreth

State Authority Preserved on Transportation Network Company Regulation
A U.S. House bill that would have cut federal road funding to states by billions of dollars if they did not make certain changes to how they regulate transportation network companies, no longer contains any state penalties. The bill, however, still includes a “sense of Congress” for states to implement front and rear vehicle license plates. NCSL in D.C. lobbied members of Congress to remove the penalty and preserve state authority.

—Ben Husch and Kristen Hildreth

Continued Support for the National Guard for 2021
Virginia Delegate Terry Kilgore (R) and Nevada Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton (D), co-chairs of NCSL’s Labor and Economic Development Committee, sent a letter to U.S. Senate appropriators requesting continued support for the Army and Air National Guards in fiscal year 2021 appropriations. NCSL in D.C. is circulating this letter during Hill meetings.

—Jon Jukuri and Michael Quillen

ON THE RADAR

Real I.D.: Congress and the administration are looking to offer new flexibilities to states with the October 2020 compliance deadline approaching.

PFAS: The U.S. House of Representatives passed the PFAS Action Plan of 2019 to address some concerns about perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances widely used in manufacturing.