



Roadmap to the Future

**A Report of the
2008–09 Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee
to the
National Conference of State Legislatures**

Acknowledgements

The Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee had a highly successful year in 2008-09, completing work on many issues affecting the nation's legislative staff and making strong progress on additional issues. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many people, including all of the legislative staff who served as members of LSCC and its workgroups and generously gave of their time and talent to advance NCSL's work during the year.

I particularly would like to thank those who served as chairs of subcommittees and workgroups – Laura Devivo, Cathy Fernandez, Ken Levine, Gilbert Loreda, Wade Melton, Linda Pittsford, and Tim Rice; Martha Carter, who served as Staff Chair of the Standing Committees, and my intrepid fellow officers – Immediate Past Staff Chair Sharon Crouch-Steidel, and Staff Vice Chair Nancy Cyr. I would also like to thank NCSL's superb staff who supported LSCC's work, including Larry Morandi, Brian Weberg, Karl Kurtz, Karen Hansen, Nancy Rhyme, Ron Snell, Diane Chaffin, Doug Sacarto, Gene Rose, Deana Blackwood, Paul Parsons, Carl Tubbesing, and Bill Pound.

Gary VanLandingham, Staff Chair

Roadmap to the Future

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The Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee has worked over the past year to study and address key issues facing NCSL and the nation’s legislative staff. While substantial progress has been made on many fronts, the long–term nature of many of these issues will require ongoing efforts. This document summarizes the work of LSCC’s four subcommittees and six working groups over the 2008–09 year, and presents recommendations that lay out a roadmap for addressing these systemic issues in the future.

An important part of LSCC’s work was the completion of a two–year study that revisited the *Legislatures of the Future: Implications of Change* report that was issued in 2000. That report was the culmination of several years’ work examining driving forces in the areas of demographics, economics, technology, and politics, and envisioning possible scenarios of how these forces would affect state legislatures over the next 25 years. The scenarios were not intended to predict the future; rather, they called attention to trends and possibilities. The report sparked several efforts within NCSL to actively protect and strengthen the legislative institution.

For the past two years, the LSCC Legislative Institution Subcommittee has worked to reevaluate the driving forces and consider the implications of these forces on legislative staff both within states and NCSL. The remaining LSCC subcommittees and workgroups have worked to craft recommendations to address these issues as well as to monitor and strengthen other NCSL services and programs that serve legislative staff.

Key Challenges

As Bob Dylan once sang, “The times, they are a changin’”. The Legislative Institution Subcommittee identified and examined several key challenges that will substantively affect legislative staff and NCSL in coming years. These challenges include

- the pending retirement of the Baby Boom generation and high turnover in legislative staff, which threaten the loss of institutional knowledge and will require expanded professional development programs to address;
- declining public understanding of representative democracy, which threaten support for legislatures and can make it harder to recruit new legislative staff;
- limited participation by two large and key groups of legislative staff – partisan and personal staff – in NCSL programs;
- the continuing impact of term limits in many states, which are changing the balance of power between the legislative and executive branches in those states and changing the roles of legislative staff;
- far-ranging technology changes, which present both challenges and opportunities to NCSL and legislative staff; and
- the high probability of persistent and growing budget shortfalls in states, which will increase stress on state legislatures and limit the ability of staff to travel to NCSL meetings.

Collectively, these challenges will substantially increase the need for NCSL’s services to legislative staff and state legislatures, but also will reduce the resources available to meet these needs. They will create new opportunities to provide services to staff and legislatures using innovative technologies, but will also require developing different models for delivering these services. The stakes are high. Failing to address these challenges would weaken state legislatures and diminish NCSL’s effectiveness. However, proactive efforts to manage these challenges can help ensure that NCSL, state legislatures, and representative democracy remain strong positive forces in the American governmental system.

Boomer retirements and staff turnover. State legislatures will experience high turnover in legislative staff over the next few years due in part to the pending retirement of the Baby Boomer generation. NCSL’s 2008 national survey of legislative staff found that at least 15% were planning to retire within five years while another 14% of nonpartisan staff and 20% of partisan staff were planning to leave their jobs over this period to pursue other opportunities. This turnover will be particularly high at the senior staff level as Boomers are frequently in leadership positions due to their long legislative tenure. As a result, legislatures will likely experience significant gaps in skills and institutional knowledge unless high quality professional development programs are available to prepare new staff for the roles they will soon assume. The need for professional development will likely be further magnified because younger staff have been counseled throughout their lives that they should plan to change jobs every few years; as a

result, fewer staff may choose to serve their professional careers in legislative positions. The generational change also will affect NCSL, as many Boomers have been strong supporters of the conference over their careers. Accordingly, vigorous outreach to new staff will be needed to ensure that they understand the role of NCSL and its programs. The current economic downturn may have a short-term impact in reducing staff turnover, but will not change the overall driving force and the challenges it will create.

Limited public knowledge of legislatures. In recent decades, civics education has been largely removed from school curricula, and the level of public understanding of the role of state legislatures is low. This creates a threat to representative democracy (as evidenced by the increased use of citizen initiatives) and makes it more difficult to recruit outstanding graduates to legislative staff positions. While NCSL is working to address this issue through the Trust for Representative Democracy, legislative staff members have not played a substantial role in this effort to date.

Large underserved legislative staff groups. While NCSL offers a wide range of services and professional development programs for legislative staff, two large groups have been underserved to date – partisan and personal staff. NCSL’s 2009 census of state legislative staff found that there are over 11,000 personal staff, and partisan staff make up the majority of total legislative staff in almost half of the states. These staff groups often cannot travel, do not fit well into the current organizational structure of staff sections, and typically have a low participation rate in NCSL programs. However, these staff members often have the most contact with elected legislators and are in leadership roles in many states. It is important to develop effective programs to serve these staff and promote their involvement in NCSL, as well as the LSCC.

Term limits. NCSL’s research has shown that terms limits result in the loss of institutional knowledge within legislative chambers and a shift in power from elected legislators to the executive branch and lobbyists. In many states, the increased legislator turnover has also led to increased turnover in legislative staff positions, particularly at the leadership levels, as new members often seek to bring their own staff into these positions. This increases the need for NCSL to provide effective outreach efforts and professional development training programs for both legislators and staff.

New technologies. Many new technologies are being developed and deployed that are disruptive to incorporate into legislative workplaces but also open many opportunities. Legislatures and staff must learn how to effectively use technologies such as social networking and distance learning tools that offer

expanded communication capabilities for legislators and the public but also create new workloads and time demands. It will be important for NCSL to develop ways to harness the power of these tools and deliver high quality just-in-time professional development programs for elected legislators and staff.

Budget constraints. Even before the current recession took hold, there were limitations on the ability of legislative staff to travel to NCSL activities and professional development programs; surveys have shown that the majority of legislative staff have never attended an NCSL program. These constraints will increase markedly as most projections indicate that states will face critical revenue shortfalls for many years. If NCSL's programs are to reach more than a small proportion of those in need of these services, it will be critical to develop ways to deliver high quality professional development programs to staff and legislators who cannot travel.

Recommendations

In light of these issues, the 2009-09 LSCC subcommittees and workgroups offer the following recommendations to guide future LSCC and NCSL activities.

- **LSCC should place a priority on monitoring and supporting professional development programs for legislative staff, particularly those who cannot travel.** Key action steps needed over the next few years include
 - 🔑 supporting staff section professional development seminars and encouraging staff sections to hold joint meetings as feasible to help meet hotel minimums during this period of travel restrictions;
 - 🔑 promoting the use of e-learning programs to serve staff who cannot travel, compiling lessons learned in using these technologies to deliver high quality professional development programs, and monitoring the use of Foundation resources available for e-learning;
 - 🔑 supporting marketing for the Legislative Staff Management Institute (LSMI) through staff section newsletter articles and in discussions with staff in home states;
 - 🔑 developing ongoing professional development programs for staff who have attended LSMI, such as continuing the virtual LSMI book club; and
 - 🔑 in 2010, reconsidering whether to support resumption of the Seminar for Legislative Staff Executives (SMLS), and if so, supporting marketing for the program.

- **LSCC should place a high priority on strategic marketing of NCSL activities and resources to legislative staff, with particular outreach targeted towards partisan and personal staff.** This should include the following efforts to make existing resources and services readily accessible to legislative staff.
 - 🔑 NCSL should place electronic versions of its publications on staffing issues on its website to promote their ready access. These include the *Model Code of Conduct for Legislative Staff*, *Succession Planning in the Legislative Workplace*, and *Embracing Diversity in the Legislative Workplace*. Making these resources available for download will increase their accessibility and use.
 - 🔑 NCSL should strategically organize these resources on its website for various target audiences to increase accessibility and use.
 - 🔑 NCSL should highlight efforts by states that are addressing staffing issues on the website and in *State Legislatures*.

- **LSCC should expand the role of legislative staff who serve as state ambassadors to include providing orientation sessions on NCSL and its services to new legislators and staff and promoting NCSL participation.** As part of this effort, LSCC should work to develop resources for state ambassadors including videos and narrated presentations that they can use to conduct orientation sessions. This should include updating the *NCSL and You* publication and the NCSL webpage “About NCSL”. State ambassadors also should be regularly contacted to provide updates on state legislative events and to identify key potential legislators and staff who should be targeted with outreach efforts. The ambassador program should be promoted through the staff sections, and NCSL state assignment staff should regularly reach out to designated staff ambassadors to supplement their efforts during their annual state visits.

- **LSCC should continue to promote means for increasing participation of personal staff within NCSL.** These efforts should include sponsoring regional training sessions for personal staff, developing e-learning programs targeted at these staff, and/or creating a staff network for personal staff.

- **LSCC and its officers should take steps to increase partisan staff representation within NCSL’s programs and organizations.** These actions should include

-  expanding appointments of partisan staff as standing committee officers and encouraging their participation in NCSL professional development programs such as LSMI;
 -  encouraging partisan staff participation in staff sections and offering targeted programs for these staff at section professional development conferences; and
 -  exploring creating staff networks for partisan and personal staff.
- **LSCC should promote e-learning technology use to expand programs and resources available for staff who cannot travel.** These steps should include
 -  expanding efforts to use already deployed technologies to provide access to existing materials, including encouraging staff sections and standing committees to post electronic versions of meeting presentations and handouts on the NCSL website;
 -  investigating using social networking technology applications such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Ning to provide networking benefits to staff who cannot travel (networking is the top reason given why staff attend meetings); and.
 -  expanding current efforts to provide NCSL staff development programs at the state level where training programs can reach large numbers of staff who cannot travel, including staff from multiple staff organizations and partisan and member staff. While states would incur costs hosting such training, it might be less expensive than having staff travel to a meeting and would enhance a state's return on their dues paid.
- **NCSL should assign a position, possibly shared between its technology, communications, and meetings programs, to promote e-learning and support the staff sections' and standing committees' efforts to use these technologies.** In order for e-learning programs to become integrated into NCSL's overall activities, it will be important to establish an internal champion for this technology. This person should have this function assigned as one of their core responsibilities and should identify opportunities for e-learning programs and work with NCSL units to develop and conduct these programs. For e-learning programs targeted at legislative staff, the staff sections should develop content based on needs of their members and work with NCSL to identify the most appropriate technology to use and to manage the technical implementation of the effort. For example, if a staff section wished to provide distance training on *Mason's Manual*, the American Society for Legislative Clerks and Secretaries (ASLCS) would

assemble the requisite experts and materials and work with NCSL to determine whether a narrated slide show or perhaps a live webinar would work best to deliver the content. NCSL would take on the primary role of putting the content into a form to match the technology. Staff sections and NCSL should explore using e-learning program fees to offset the costs of the programs as appropriate; this would likely be most applicable to staff sections that require regular in-service training hours (the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society and Legal Service Staff Section).

- **LSCC should continue to assess courseware for e-learning.** New e-learning technologies are regularly being developed by vendors, and capabilities are rapidly increasing. Consequently, it will be important to periodically survey the field to identify what e-learning tools are available that can best meet the needs of staff sections, Standing Committees, and NCSL. One area that has promise but needs additional exploration is on-line courses, which could help meet the training hour needs of National Legislative Program Evaluation Society and Legal Service Staff Section members.
- **The e-learning guide should be widely disseminated and LSCC should promote e-learning potentials and opportunities.** The LSCC, the Standing Committee officers, and the Staff Section Officers should be provided copies of the guide. LSCC should also regularly demonstrate use of e-learning technologies, such as by holding 'virtual meetings' between full LSCC meetings. This would help LSCC and staff sections become used to e-learning and break down the fear of the unknown about these technologies. LSCC should also have experts available (together with NCSL staff) to assist staff sections as they begin to use e-learning technologies, answer questions, and provide problem-solving; a little hand-holding can go a long ways in getting people comfortable with using e-learning.
- **An LSCC e-learning resources page should be updated and maintained.** Legislative staff need a single place to access both instructional material for conducting e-learning as well as a place to access e-learning programs already produced. For example, most of the e-learning programs produced by NLPES are likely of interest to members of other staff sections. The NCSL website should provide ready access to a single portal that contains both an archive library of developed e-learning and a selection of newly created programs. The site should be arranged topically so that offerings can be scanned with a minimal amount of time and effort. Once updated, the site should be heavily promoted. The Professional Development page of the

legislative staff portal of the NCSL website could provide this access to e-learning.

- **LSCC and staff sections should identify appropriate non-NCSL e-learning opportunities and identify them to members as a resource.** A large volume of free high quality and appropriate e-learning professional development programs is already available on the internet; the best examples are management and leadership programs that are available through podcasts, webinars, and narrated slideshows. Staff sections and standing committees should identify good programs relevant to their membership and send links to these programs while noting that NCSL does not endorse the material. This will help avoid reinventing the wheel and developing e-learning programs when similar ones have already been developed by other sources.
- **Legislative staff should become partners in NCSL's civics education efforts.** A pilot project for staff participation in Project Citizen will begin in the fall of 2009, and it should be encouraged and monitored. Not only does legislative staff participation broaden those efforts, it provides opportunities to promote legislative staff careers to students.
- **To promote continuity of effort, standing committee core officers should to prepare a transition memo each year** for the next year's officers describing the year's successes, unmet goals, and recommendations for continued action. In addition, a formal position, Immediate Past Chair of the Standing Committees, should be established to provide continuity between outgoing and incoming core officers. The standing committee workgroup should be continued to provide an ongoing forum to discuss issues facing legislative staff roles in the standing committees.
- **LSCC should maintain a focus on the future in its deliberations,** and should promote this focus within staff sections, standing committees, and staff networks to identify current and future organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- **LSCC should take additional steps to preserve its own institutional knowledge.** This should include posting reports from previous years on the website, and creating an ongoing advisory council where past chairs are utilized as advisors and mentors.

- **LSCC should monitor implementation of TIMMS and develop strategies to improve data quality and use of the system to further staff outreach and training.** TIMMS is still a work-in-progress. The goal is for the system is to be the single source of data on NCSL members, and its committees, staff sections, and other divisions. However, some member lists are still maintained separately and user updates are still not available. LSCC should continue to follow implementation of TIMMS and work with NCSL staff to define the needs of legislative staff.
- **LSCC should continue to monitor the redesign of the NCSL website.** The site is still a work-in-progress, but feedback on the redesign has been generally very positive. However, all planned functionality has not yet been implemented. LSCC should continue to monitor the website's development and help ensure that it meets staff section needs.
- **LSCC should monitor progress and promote use of the 50-state Bill Status system.** Last year, NCSL implemented, with STATENET, the ability to search the text of bills and resolutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Congress. This service is available only to members of NCSL. STATENET scheduled periodic training courses and provided remote training over the Internet. This training is available on NCSL's website. A link to this on-line training should be added to the e-Learning Multimedia Library page.

None of these recommendations are revolutionary, and to some degree or another, actions are already underway to address many of them. However, addressing the driving forces affecting state legislatures, their staff, and NCSL will require a long-term focus. These recommended steps will enhance NCSL and its position as the premier source and resource for legislative staff. That, in turn, will strengthen the legislative institution that we all serve.

Discussions of Specific Issues Addressed by LSCC during the Year

Developing E-learning Opportunities for Legislative Staff

LSCC dedicated significant effort to developing e-learning capabilities for legislative staff and members. The work had two components.

Developing e-learning technology capabilities. LSCC and NCSL worked to identify technologies that balance cost, quality, and ease of use. This included reviewing numerous software packages and services, including NCSL's existing

webinar contract with WebEx. After much analysis, NCSL recommended contracting with an alternative vendor, Infinite, which offers similar services at a significantly lower cost. NCSL has entered into a month-to-month contract with Infinite and has been using its webinar service on a test basis. NCSL has continued to contract with WebEx, however, as its health program needs to use the customer support features offered by WebEx, and NCSL cannot fully begin to use Infinite until a technical problem with participant registrations is resolved, which should happen in the fall of 2009. Once this problem is resolved, NCSL can fully deploy Infinite, which should provide more affordable access to e-learning.

Developing e-learning content. LSCC also worked with staff sections and standing committees to identify professional development content that is needed and appropriate for distance learning. Each staff section was contacted through presentations and emails to the Staff Sections Officers. While several staff sections expressed interest, most efforts were delayed or have not yet begun. One staff section, NLPES, developed a plan and a schedule of e-learning efforts for the year. Also, several NCSL Standing Committees have regularly used webinars for dissemination of information on committee topics.

During the year, NLPES produced 10 e-learning programs, including those focused on supporting legislative agency management, providing skills training for evaluation staff, and providing “desk direct” training on demand to member offices. NLPES has produced ten programs to date, including four podcasts and six narrated slide presentations. Several of those programs, including Succession Planning and Finding Cost Savings, are available on the professional development web page. Other programs, including Interviewing Skills and promoting the section’s 2008 seminar in Madison, WI,, are available on the NLPES homepage.

LSCC also directly produced one webinar entitled Innovative Budget Savings: A Webinar for our Challenging Times, which was held in March 2009 and made [available](#) on the NCSL website for on-demand viewing. Producing this webinar was instructional for everyone involved, which led to the idea of developing *The Staff Section Members’ User Guide to Actually Producing an E-learning Event*. This guide, which is targeted for completion by September 1, 2009, will provide direction for staff sections and Standing Committees to help them start producing e-learning programs with little know-how and limited resources.

NCSL’s experience with e-learning has shown that marketing is a critical part of successful efforts. Even the highest quality and most beneficial e-learning product serves no purpose if its intended audience is not aware of its availability.

Identifying the target audience for each e-learning program and aggressively marketing the program to these groups using tools such as staff section listserv, newsletters, and web pages is highly important; tools such as podcasts can also be useful.

Also, as expected with a new approach to providing services, it is important to evaluate each program to identify lessons learned and what works well and what does not. Staff sections and standing committees choosing to develop e-learning programs should include an end-of-session survey to assess how well the technology worked, the number of individuals attending the programs, the quality of the material presented, and suggestions for improvements and future e-learning programs. NCSL's two webinar providers can both provide this feature, or a simple on-line survey can be emailed to participants. NCSL staff can assist in developing the survey.

Monitoring the Legislative Staff Management Institute. LSMI continues to operate successfully but will need increased marketing support in 2010 in light of ongoing state budget crises. The 2008 program had 57 applicants compared to 35 applicants in 2005; 31 persons were accepted to the program and subsequently attended the institute. Since 2005 when the program moved to Sacramento, 129 legislative staff representing 30 states have participated in the program. LSMI continued to receive very high participant evaluations in 2008. LSMI also sponsored an on-line book club for LSMI alumni in October 2008, in which participants were invited to read *Tribal Leadership* by LSMI faculty and participate in an on-line discussion for about two weeks. This effort was successful but participation was somewhat limited.

Due to increased costs, LSMI requested, and LSCC approved, increasing the tuition fee from \$1,950 to \$2,250. This was the first increase in tuition since the program's move to Sacramento in 2005. NCSL has not received negative feedback resulting from the \$300 tuition increase.

Applications to the 2009 LSMI program were substantially down compared to the prior year – 23 legislative staff applied for the program and all were accepted. This is below the optimum class size of 30, and reflects the fiscal crisis facing most states and resultant cutbacks on staff travel.

As the fiscal situation of states is unlikely to materially improve in 2010, LSCC will need to increase its marketing support for the program to keep it viable for the next few years. When the program was moved in 2005, LSCC sponsored articles on the program in staff section newsletters and asked the staff section

officers to help promote the new program. These efforts should be reinvigorated in 2010 to help maintain the needed attendance level for the program.

The 2008 LSMI session was the fourth year of a five-year contract between NCSL and the University of Southern California and Sacramento State University. NCSL, with the committee's concurrence, negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement to renew the contract for another three years, thus extending the agreement to 2012. At that time, NCSL will issue a Request for Proposals to rebid LSMI sponsorship.

Due to the drop in applications to the 2009 program, the option of expanding LSMI to include a second session was postponed until state fiscal conditions improve.

Considering the Senior Management Leadership Seminar. Historically, NCSL has offered this weekend seminar for senior legislative staff every two years, with the most recent session held in 2007. Although participants consistently give the program high ratings, it is expensive to provide, registration has been low, and revenues have not covered seminar costs. Consequently SMLS was not held in 2009 (historically it has been offered every two years).

LSCC surveyed the program's target audience – legislative directors, deputy directors and senior managers – to identify reasons for the low participation in the program and assess interest in future SMLS opportunities. Three significant observations emerged from the survey: most respondents had little awareness of the program, but supported it in concept; the timing of the seminar significantly influences decisions to attend; and personal marketing to legislative managers is essential, such as telephone calls to potential participants from the staff chair and/or the NCSL executive director.

Current state fiscal conditions preclude scheduling SMLS at this time. However, the LSCC should consider whether the program should be held in 2011 (it has historically been held in non-election years); if a decision is made to reconstitute the program either as a stand-alone seminar or as part of another NCSL event, a comprehensive marketing plan involving personal contact with senior legislative managers should be developed.

Addressing staff section conference issues. LSCC worked to address issues staff sections had encountered with Conference Direct, NCSL's meeting planning contractor; these problems included concerns with facility costs and arranged hotel and meeting space. NCSL revised its contract with this vendor to enable any staff section to opt out of participating with Conference Direct; NCSL staff will

provide meeting support services to staff sections that exercise this option. The subcommittee and NCSL staff also developed a checklist to assist staff sections in planning future professional development seminars and an annual performance evaluation of Conference Direct.

LSCC also modified the policy on staff section meeting profits and losses. In 2008, LSCC and the Executive Committee adopted a policy in which staff sections would retain profits from staff section seminars while NCSL would absorb losses. At that time, potential losses were projected to be minimal. However, legislative travel restrictions led several staff sections to cancel planned 2009 seminars, incurring major cancellation penalties. To avoid a major NCSL financial loss, LSCC and the Executive Committee adopted an amended policy that provides that staff sections will retain future meeting profits but also absorb losses, with the caveat that sections will be allowed to retain a minimum balance of \$3,000 in their meeting accounts, with NCSL absorbing losses above this level. In the event that NCSL is able to recoup such losses by rescheduling another meeting in the location, the affected staff sections will negotiate with NCSL to reach a mutually satisfactory allocation of the recovered funds.

Sponsoring mega-sessions at the Legislative Summit. Mega-sessions, which are co-sponsored by all LSCC staff sections, have proven to be an excellent way to hold high quality programs on issues that affect all legislative staff. The LSCC sponsored three Mega-sessions at the 2009 Legislative Summit:

- *Stepping Up to the Plate: Confronting Ethical Problems Head On;*
- *Doing More With Less: Become a Creative Innovator; and*
- *Building a Thriving Organization.*

Creating district staff training programs. LSCC worked to sponsor a Personal and District Office Legislative Staff Seminar, which was scheduled for February 5-7, 2009, in Dallas Texas. However, the meeting was cancelled due to the inability of staff to travel. A similar training program was scheduled for the first day of the Legislative Summit in Philadelphia. The cost for the seminar will be \$99 for the day if participants are not registered for the full conference.

Given the large number of legislative staff who serve in this role (over 11,000 nationwide), it will be critical to continue to develop training programs for this population. An option to be pursued when national economic conditions permit would be to hold regional training programs for personal and district staff annually. Potential regions for future meeting were discussed: Pacific Northwest

(Oregon), Northeast (Maryland, Virginia or Washington, D.C.) and the Southeast (Florida).

Addressing standing committee issues. LSCC formed a special workgroup on the standing committees composed of both former core officers and other staff to examine ways to strengthen staff participation in the standing committees. This is a longstanding issue as relatively few legislative staff other than appointed officers attend Standing Committee meetings throughout the year. This will likely be a continuing challenge in coming years, particularly with travel restrictions in many states.

To address these challenges, the workgroup coordinated with the standing committee staff officers to provide outreach to appointed committee officers both prior to the orientation meetings and throughout the year. The orientation meeting was well attended by staff officers, and a special ‘staff only’ session was held at the orientation to discuss ways that staff officers could maximize their participation in the standing committee process. After the orientation meeting, calls and emails were sent to staff officers who could not attend to encourage their participation throughout the year. Staff lunches were also scheduled at each standing committee meeting to provide a forum for staff to discuss issues and ways to maximize staff involvement in the standing committee process. The core officers maintained regular contact with committee staff chairs throughout the year.

To improve continuity between incoming and outgoing standing committee staff officers, the outgoing officers (staff chairs and vice chairs) should prepare a transition memo each year describing successes as well as unmet goals. Finally, the Standing Committee Workgroup should be continued in the future to examine ways to further enhance the role of legislative staff in the standing committees and to monitor the standing committees’ use of Foundation e–learning funds.

Expanding Project Citizen. LSCC worked to develop a pilot project to add a legislative staff component to Project Citizen. In six states – Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, and Virginia – legislative staff will work with Project Citizen to incorporate a civics education program in middle and high schools. Staff will work with individual classrooms in which students will identify a public policy problem, research the issue, assess possible solutions, and present recommendations to address the problem. LSCC should monitor and promote this effort.

Supporting State Ambassadors. To support the work of legislative staff who serve as NCSL state ambassadors, LSCC scheduled a meeting of state

ambassadors at the Legislative Summit Program. At the meeting, ambassadors were provided materials, including a narrated slideshow that they can use to provide orientation sessions for new staff and legislators in their home states. The narrated slideshow discusses NCSL's structure, website, and options for legislative staff to participate in NCSL through staff sections, listservs, and standing committees. Given the importance of state ambassadors LSCC should continue to promote the role of this function. Resources for ambassadors, including the narrated slideshow, should be placed on the NCSL website.

Preserving institutional memory. LSCC developed and updated manuals for new standing committee officers, staff section officers, and overall staff officers to clarify their roles and responsibilities and pass on institutional knowledge. It will be important to update these materials periodically in the future.

Enhancing communication with legislative staff. During the year, NCSL implemented an online newsletter that is sent to all legislative staff; this newsletter includes a "Chair's column" by the overall staff chair. In addition, the staff chair began to write regular columns that were submitted to staff section newsletters. These new communications channels enhanced LSCC's ability to communicate with legislative staff regarding national events, upcoming programs, and the benefits of participating in NCSL.

Enhancing NCSL's website. Over the past two years, LSCC and legislator members of the Executive Committee monitored and assisted NCSL's effort to fundamentally redesign its website to improve its usability and access to content. LSCC should continue to monitor efforts to enhance the website, which is a primary way of serving staff and legislators who cannot travel but need instant access to NCSL staff and materials, including the 50-state Bill Status System.

Reaching out to chiefs of staff. To preserve institutional memory and reach out to staff in these key roles, LSCC planned to conduct a roundtable with chiefs of staff from several states at which these persons would discuss the lessons they learned in their positions and the ways NCSL could seek to increase their participation. However, this effort was postponed due to the travel restrictions in effect in many states. The LSCC should seek to conduct this session in the future when state fiscal conditions improve.

Appendix — Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee Membership

Legislative Institution Subcommittee

Chair: Tim Rice, Illinois

Vice Chair: Philip Twogood, Florida

James Barber, Mississippi

Martha Carter, Nebraska

Holly Lyons, Iowa

Millicent MacFarland, Maine

Roger Norman, Arkansas

Linda Pittsford, Texas

L. Carol Shaw, North Carolina

Dick Sweet, Wisconsin

Tom Wright, Alaska

NCSL Staff: *Brian Weberg, Larry Morandi*

Marketing and Outreach Subcommittee

Chair: Wade Melton, Florida

Vice Chair: Margaret "Peggy" Piety, Indiana

Gwen Bailey, Virginia

Tony Beard, California

Barbara Fellencer, Pennsylvania

Janeen Halverson, Utah

Shirley Iorio, North Carolina

Julie Pelegrin, Colorado

Tara Perkinson, Virginia

Lisa Sandberg, Ohio

Pepper Sturm, Nevada

Kate Wade, Wisconsin

Gary Wieman, Nebraska

NCSL Staff: *Karen Hansen, Nancy Rhyme*

Professional Development Subcommittee

Chair: Cathy Fernandez, New Mexico

Vice Chair: Jamie Jo Franklin, Kentucky

Jacqueline Curro, Maryland

Duncan Goss, Vermont

Douglas Himes, Tennessee

Nandana Kalupahana, Hawaii

Phil Price, Arkansas

Clarence Russ, Louisiana

Kathy Schill, Minnesota

Patsy Spaw, Texas

Jimmetta Peoples, Alabama

Greg Gray, West Virginia

NCSL Staff: *Ron Snell*

Technology Subcommittee

Chair: Ken Levine, Texas

Vice Chair: Gary Schaefer, Louisiana

Michael Adams, Colorado

Jonathan Ball, Utah

Laura Clemens, Ohio

Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota

Michael Murphy, Alabama

Norman Moore, Arizona

Lisa Wallmeyer, Virginia

Dawn Reese, Pennsylvania

Jan Yamane, Hawaii

NCSL Staff: Diane Chaffin, Doug Sacarto

Website Review Workgroup

Chair: Sharon Crouch-Steidel, Virginia

Michael Adams, Colorado

Jonathan Ball, Utah

Nancy Cyr, Nebraska

Cathy Martin, North Carolina

Gary Schaefer, Louisiana

Gary VanLandingham, Florida

Lisa Wallmeyer, Virginia

Jan Yamane, Hawaii

NCSL Staff: Diane Chaffin, Doug Sacarto

Staff Section Officers

Chair: Linda Pittsford, Texas

Millicent MacFarland, Maine, President, ASLCS

Greg Gray, West Virginia; President-Elect, ASLCS

Nandana Kalupahana, Hawaii; President, NALFO

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