

2011 Legislative Summit
National Conference of State Legislatures

San Antonio, Texas

Wednesday, August 10, 2011

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

STATE PENSIONS: THE FINANCIAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This session will explore the current funding situation of state pensions, the legal framework that in many states limits policymakers' ability to revise state retirement plans as readily as the private sector can, and recent calls for increased federal regulation of state pensions.

Moderator: Representative Lana Gordon, Kansas
Co-Chair, NCSL Labor and Economic Development Standing
Committee; Chair, Kansas House of Representatives Committee on
Economic Development

Speakers (in this order) Kil Huh, Pew Center on the States, Washington, D.C.
Amy Monahan, J.D. University of Minnesota Law School,
Minneapolis, Minn.
Michael Bird, Senior Federal Affairs Counsel, NCSL

Handouts:

Center for State and Local Government Excellence, *State and Local Pensions: An Overview of Funding Issues and Challenges* (Washington, January 2011).

<http://www.slge.org/>

Monahan, Amy, "Public Pension Plan Reform: The Legal Framework," Legal Studies Research Paper Series, Research Paper 10-13. University of Minnesota Law School, 2010.

<http://lhc.ca.gov/studies/activestudies/pension/UniversityofMinnesota.pdf>

Munnell, Alicia H., et al., *The Funding of State and Local Pensions: 2009-2013* (Washington, D.C., Center for State and Local Government Excellence, April 2010).

<http://www.slge.org/>

Pew Center on the States, *The Widening Gap: The Great Recession's Impact on State Pension and Retiree Health Care*. (Washington, D.C., April 2011).

http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/initiatives_detail.aspx?initiativeID=85899358839

Biographies:

Michael Bird, National Conference of State Legislatures

Michael Bird is the Senior Federal Affairs Counsel for the National Conference of State Legislatures, an organization for which he has worked for 25 years. In his current capacity, Michael coordinates NCSL lobbying activities on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. He also serves as NCSL's liaison to congressional leadership offices and the White House.

In his two decades at NCSL, he has worked on issues ranging from agriculture to water policy, spending the bulk of his time on appropriations, budget and tax matters.

Michael came to NCSL with a wide range of state legislative experience gained in his journeyman work that started with the Illinois General Assembly. He followed that with tours of duty with the Colorado, Arizona and U.S. Virgin Islands Legislatures. His on-the-scene state legislative career ended with the Oklahoma Legislature where he served three years as the Fiscal Director for the state Senate.

His past experience includes a variety of campaign management activities, volunteer work and teaching. Michael and his family reside in Fredericksburg, Virginia. He is a graduate of Loyola University of Chicago and is a native Illinoisan.

Representative Lana Gordon, Kansas

Representative Gordon is in her sixth term representing Topeka in the Kansas House of Representatives where she is chair of the Economic Development committee and a member of Education, Local Government, Health and Human Services, the Joint Committee on Arts and Cultural Resources, and the Joint Committee on Economic Development.

Additionally, Representative Gordon currently serves on The Kansas Inc. Board of Directors, the Governor's Council on Travel and Tourism, State Holocaust Commission, the Older Worker's Task Force of Kansas, the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council, and is a sustaining member of The Junior League of Topeka. On the National level, Lana is currently serving as a Co-Chair of the Labor and Economic Development Committee for the National Conference of State Legislators, is a member of The National Foundation of Women Legislators and serves on the NOWL Board, and serves on a Selection Committee for the Council of State Government's Bowhay Legislative Leadership Institute. When not in session, Lana works at ISS Facility Services as an Account Manager.

Lana Gordon was born in Kansas City, Missouri, and lived in Prairie Village, Kansas. She graduated from Shawnee Mission East High School and holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the University of Kansas.

Kil Huh, Ph.D., Pew Center on the States

As a research director for the Pew Center of the States, Kil Huh manages the Center's state fiscal research agenda. He oversees project teams of researchers, policy analysts, journalists and consultants to conceptualize, design and implement research and analysis across 50 states to inform state policy-focused efforts of a wide range of issues, including state tax systems, public sector retirement benefits and mortgaging lending.

Huh has led innovative research such as *The Trillion Dollar Gap: Underfunded State Retirement Systems and the Roads to Reform*, *The Clean Energy Economy: Repowering Jobs, Businesses and Investments Across America*, and *Defaulting on the Dream: States Respond to the America's Foreclosure Crisis* that have directly informed national and state policy discussions. He made key contributions to Pew's report on states; overseas absentee voting systems, *No Time to Vote: Challenges Facing America's Overseas Military Voters*, which affected enactment of the federal authorization bill.

Previously Huh worked at the Fannie Mae Foundation, most recently as the director of Policy and Consulting, and as associate editor for *Housing Policy Debate*, an award winning peer-reviewed journal. He holds a B.S. in urban regional studies from Cornell University, a master's of urban planning from New York University, and both a master's in philosophy and a Ph.D. in urban planning from Columbia University.

Amy Monahan, J.D., University of Minnesota Law School

Professor Monahan joined the Law School faculty in Fall, 2009, after serving as a Visiting Professor during the 2008-09 academic year. She teaches and writes in the areas of federal taxation and employee benefits law. Her current research interests include employer-provided health care, health insurance regulation, and retirement plans.

Professor Monahan received her B.A. from The Johns Hopkins University in International Studies, with university and departmental honors. She received her J.D. from Duke University School of Law, where she was the Managing Editor of the *Duke Journal of Comparative & International Law*. Following law school, she practiced with Sidley Austin LLP in Chicago. She has previously taught at Notre Dame Law School, and was an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri School of Law from 2004-2009.

Professor Monahan served as the Chair of the American Association of Law Schools' Section on Employee Benefits during 2008-09. She has published numerous law journal articles on employee benefits in public and private sectors.