



## NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

*The Forum for America's Ideas*

February 2, 2015

The Honorable Deb Fischer  
U.S. Senate  
383 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Lankford  
U.S. Senate  
B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2350 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1211 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Debbie Smith**  
*Senate Assistant Minority Leader  
Nevada  
President, NCSL*

**Margaret 'Peggy' Piety**  
*Senior Staff Attorney  
Legislative Services Agency  
Indiana  
Staff Chair, NCSL*

**William T. Pound**  
*Executive Director*

### **RE: The Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act (S. 189/H.R. 50)**

Dear Senators Fischer and Lankford and Representatives Foxx and Sanchez:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we thank you for your leadership in introducing legislation that includes provisions to improve the information available on the cost of federal mandates on states, as required under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) of 1995 (P.L. 104-4).

In particular, NCSL supports language that creates a process to allow for an assessment comparing authorized levels of funding to the prospective cost of changes to conditions of federal assistance. NCSL is also pleased that this legislation would require identification of reasonably foreseeable indirect costs, expand UMRA's reporting requirements to independent regulatory agencies, and allow for congressional requests for regulatory "look-back" analyses of existing federal mandates.

Ongoing efforts to reign in federal deficits and manage the national debt has resulted in reductions in funding for state-federal grants and programs. While NCSL understands the importance of putting the nation on a sustainable fiscal path, it is important that these efforts do not result in the imposition of new or expansion of existing unfunded or underfunded intergovernmental mandates. The provisions referenced above are a key component in providing broader protections to states and localities and creating both awareness and accountability of federal mandates.

We commend you for your leadership in including these provisions in your legislation and we look forward to continue working with you and your staff as this legislation moves forward. For additional information, please contact Jeff Hurley (202-624-7753; [jeff.hurley@ncsl.org](mailto:jeff.hurley@ncsl.org)) in NCSL's Washington, D.C. office.

Respectfully,

Senator Richard Madaleno  
Maryland Senate  
Co-Chair, NCSL Budgets and Revenue Committee

Senator Ryan Silvey  
Missouri Senate  
Co-Chair, NCSL Budgets and Revenue Committee