From the Expert— CSG Puts the Power of Knowledge at Your Fingertips

By Jennifer Horne [1]
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Got a policy question? The Council of State Governments has the answer.

And now, that information will be easier to access. CSG last week unveiled its new Knowledge Center, an interactive policy tool and clearinghouse that puts years of policy knowledge and resources at your fingertips.

The Knowledge Center [3] makes it easier for policymakers and other visitors to the CSG Web site to find specific policy information. It better reflects the breadth and depth of CSG’s policy work by including archival materials and related information such as Capitol Ideas articles and Capitol Ideas newsletter articles.

Visitors to the site are now able to view all the information available on any topic from across CSG's network of organizations and offices, including Capitol Research policy briefs, Capitol Ideas magazine articles, Suggested State Legislation, resolutions, charts and tables, meeting presentations and regional publications. The site will continue to grow to include archival documents, such as Book of the States articles, and will soon also offer the ability to search, customize and interact with various data CSG collects, from unemployment rates to legislator salaries.

Site visitors can navigate through the Knowledge Center in several different ways, depending on their information need. To see recent additions, just browse the "Monthly Archive" section or the prominent "Featured Articles" section on the front page. Looking for a specific document? Just perform a keyword search. To see all of the policy products CSG has on a specific topic, browse the comprehensive list of policy terms, either broadly ("Health") or more narrowly ("Health - Medicare").

Individual items in the Knowledge Center now include several new features. Publishing in HTML format allows CSG to include links to other sources. Maps and other graphics can be embedded directly into the text of the article. PDF versions also will still be included to allow for easy printing. In addition, for the first time, CSG now provides access to the data included in any charts and tables with links to the underlying Excel spreadsheets.

When you find an item in the Knowledge Center that interests you, you can easily find similar items. The content management software that powers the site automatically identifies other articles with similar subjects, and lists them in the "More Like This" box to the right of the text. You can also find
other related items by using the tags at the bottom of every page. Click on a tag to bring up a new page that lists all the documents tagged with that keyword.

The Knowledge Center will also host Capitol Comments, the CSG blog. CSG policy and communications staffs will blog regularly about items in the news, new reports and publications, and other items that will interest visitors.

If you are currently using a feed reader or news aggregator, such as My Yahoo or Google Reader, the Knowledge Center provides numerous RSS feeds to help you stay informed by automatically retrieving the latest content on issues that interest you. RSS feeds are available for each policy topic or subtopic, and for publication series, so you could subscribe to a feed featuring only education-related topics or to one that automatically sends all new Capitol Research policy briefs to your feed reader.

Knowledge is power and CSG's new Knowledge Center puts knowledge at your fingertips.

CSG Resources

- Knowledge Center [3]

Tags:
- CSG Knowledge Center [4]
- E-Newsletter [5]
- Policy Area [6]

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