For state officials, knowing what lies around the corner is half the challenge, and the CSG Policy & Research team is committed to providing key insights and analysis on emerging issues across the policy spectrum to state officials. Each year, CSG policy experts take a look at the top issues facing states in education, energy and environment, fiscal and economic development, federal affairs, health, international affairs, interstate compacts, transportation and infrastructure, and workforce development.

Here’s a look at the most important topics on states’ workforce development agendas in 2017.

» Autonomous Vehicles
The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or NHTSA, recently issued guidance regarding autonomous vehicles, including a request to states for uniform policies on self-driving cars. With many state legislatures expected to take on the issue in 2017, state policymakers and the automotive and insurance industries will be looking for ways to avoid creating a patchwork of state laws on autonomous vehicles across the country. NCIC is exploring ways states can work together with the automobile and insurance industries to offer a collaborative path forward on this issue.

» Occupational Licensing Across State Lines
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the number of workers in licensed occupations has risen from 5 percent of the U.S. workforce in the 1950s to about one-quarter of the workforce today. For licensed workers practicing in multiple states, the licensing process can pose a significant challenge due to different rules, regulations, fee structures and continuing education requirements. As states and the federal government dedicate more time, resources and attention to the issue of occupational licensure, interstate compacts offer a proven path forward for states to work collaboratively to break down barriers while also ensuring that the quality and safety of services across a wide spectrum are not compromised.

» Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs
In July 2015, governors from across the nation came together to outline a collaborative response to prevent and address the opioid epidemic, including commitments to reduce inappropriate prescribing, creating prevention and treatment strategies, and sharing information. States may look to an interstate compact as a mechanism to codify the sharing of information across state lines to track irresponsible prescribers, to share law enforcement records, and even create a system to use treatment options—such as telehealth—across state lines.

» Infrastructure Development, Revitalization and Innovation
President Donald Trump has emphasized the need for rebuilding and innovating America’s aging infrastructure, which will require significant resources. In recent years, states have forged their own paths in infrastructure investment, following years of limited federal action. States will continue to explore innovative new ways to fund and implement infrastructure improvements in 2017, with compacts or other interjurisdictional agreements likely to play a role in the solutions they develop.

» Violent Crime Analysis
Each month across the United States, the number of unsolved criminal cases—from missing persons to homicides and sexual assaults—increases. The mobility of criminals has contributed to the rise in unsolved or “cold” cases. As states and members of the law enforcement community address the backlog of cold cases, one proposed tool to aid in investigations is the creation of an interstate compact that would empower law enforcement agencies in member states to gather, manage, analyze and share vital investigative information across state lines.

For more information on these topics and other top issues facing states, please visit » www.csg.org/top5in2017.
Colmon Elridge who directs CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts, is responsible for convening public- and private-sector leaders and other interested parties to identify areas of collaboration using the interstate compact and/or other means of multistate collaboration to address some of America’s most pressing needs. He previously worked as executive assistant and senior adviser to former Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, as executive director of the Kentucky Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and as chief of staff for the Kentucky Association of Mental Health Programs.

Get Involved

For more than a decade, The Council of State Governments’ National Center for Interstate Compacts, or NCIC, has been a leading resource for state governments—and leaders across various industries—to develop creative solutions to America’s most complex problems.

NCIC will host the CSG 2017 Interstate Compacts Summit, Dec. 14-16 in Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information about NCIC, please visit the CSG National Center for Interstate Compacts at csg.org/ncic or contact Colmon Elridge at celridge@csg.org.