

Canada – United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – États-Unis
Section canadienne

Report of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

National Governors Association Annual Summer Meeting

Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America

July 24-26, 2019

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 24–26 July 2019, the Honourable Senator Michael L. MacDonald, Co-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), led a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians to the annual summer meeting of the National Governors Association (NGA) in Salt Lake City, Utah. The other members of the delegation were the Honourable Senator Yuen Pau Woo, Vice-Chair of the Canada–United States IPG, as well as the Honourable Mike Lake, P.C., M.P., the Honourable Tony Clement, P.C., M.P. and Irene Mathyssen, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Miriam Burke, the Canadian Section’s Executive Secretary, and Ms. Tanya Dupuis, Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

Founded more than a century ago when President Theodore Roosevelt gathered state governors in order to discuss the nation’s resources, the NGA is the collective voice of U.S. governors from the 50 states, three territories and two commonwealths. It is also a public policy organization that represents the governors on Capitol Hill and before the U.S. Administration on federal issues that affect them, and that develops and implements solutions to public policy challenges.

The NGA meets in the winter and summer each year. This year’s NGA Chair, Montana Governor Steve Bullock chose “Good Jobs for All Americans” as his theme for the NGA’s 2019 activities. At the conclusion of the meeting, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan became NGA Chair, and revealed that his initiative for NGA 2020 activities would be “Infrastructure: Foundation for Success”.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

At the July 2019 meeting, delegates spoke with a number of governors about a range of issues, including the nature and value of the trade and investment relationship between Canada and individual states. Members of the IPG spoke with Governors Kate Brown (Oregon), Steve Bullock (Montana), Tony Evers (Wisconsin), Larry Hogan (Maryland), Asa Hutchinson (Arkansas), and Henry McMaster (South Carolina).

Interactions with governors and other participants enable Canadian members of the IPG to help find points of convergence in respective national policies, initiate dialogue on points of divergence, encourage exchanges of information and promote better understanding on shared issues of concern. The meeting also provided the IPG’s Canadian Section with an important means by which to provide input to, and gather information about, state-level issues that affect Canada.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

The following sessions were held at the NGA’s 2019 summer meeting:

- Good Jobs for All Americans
- Improving Outcomes for Disconnected Youths
- Investing in Resilience
- Cybersecurity Workforce Development
- Driving the Conversation: Safer and Smarter Roadways
- Early Learning Return on Investment
- Innovative Strategies for Rural and Disinvested Communities
- Infrastructure: Foundation for Success

This report summarizes some of the points that were made at selected sessions.

GOOD JOBS FOR ALL AMERICANS

Montana Governor Steve Bullock, *NGA Chair*

- Montana Governor Steve Bullock's NGA Chair initiative examines how technological developments and new job skill requirements are changing workforce needs.
- During the NGA's annual meeting, Governor Bullock released a guide on how state leaders can play a key role in identifying solutions and developing an action plan to ensure that Americans are better prepared to meet evolving workforce demands, find higher paying jobs, develop new skills and support the country's economy.
- In addition to changing workforce needs, state leaders also need to address the shortage of meaningful wages in many U.S. states; nearly 60% of Americans have not yet seen a pay increase this year.

Jamie Merisotis, *Lumina Foundation*

- In order to meet fast-changing workforce requirements, the development of the American talent pool should be a priority.
- Radical changes should be made to the education system as more jobs require higher education qualifications.
- In addition to changing workforce demands, income inequality should also be addressed.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTHS

Oregon Governor Kate Brown

- Estimates show that nearly five million people between the ages of 16 and 24 are “disconnected,” meaning that they are not enrolled in an educational program or taking part in the workforce.
- America needs to do a better job of helping its disconnected youth population.
- Homelessness, health problems, violence and criminality are just some of the many barriers the disconnected youth population is currently facing.
- The state of Oregon has decided to tackle these barriers one by one through legislation. State Senate Bill 1008 was signed into law in July 2019 and it will reform youth sentences by making prevention and rehabilitation a sentencing priority.

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson

- In Arkansas, many disconnected youths came from foster care; there were so many youths in foster care at one point that the state did not have enough foster homes.
- The state of Arkansas decided to create an initiative called “Restore Hope”; this initiative increased foster care parent participation by 15% and reduced the overall number of youths in need of foster care.
- The state of Arkansas is making meaningful efforts to help its youth population move as quickly as possible into the workforce by ensuring that young people are adequately trained for the needs of the workforce.

Johanna Bergan, *Youth MOVE National*

- Nearly one in eight people between the ages of 16 and 24 are disconnected; this is a healthcare issue, an employment issue, an education issue and an economic development issue.
- A disconnected young person does not possess the level of education or the job skills needed to be self-sufficient.
- A young person that is connected to educational opportunities and job skill training becomes empowered.
- More can be done at the national level to provide opportunities for the disconnected youth population to get engaged.

COMBATting HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Cindy McCain, *The McCain Institute*

- The McCain Institute's Combatting Human Trafficking Program seeks to raise awareness and correct misconceptions concerning human trafficking.
- Each year, there are nearly 40 million victims of human trafficking in the world.
- It is a misconception to think that human trafficking is solely an immigration issue.
- Human trafficking is an epidemic; it is not just happening overseas, it is happening locally in states across the United States. In fact, most children involved in human trafficking rings are trafficked across state lines.
- U.S. states need to work together to help the victims of human trafficking; more work can be done to allow and promote the sharing of best practices from state to state.
- First responders and health care practitioners need to be better educated so that they can recognize the signs of a trafficked child.
- Legislative changes are needed so that human trafficking convictions lead to longer periods of incarceration.

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey

- Human trafficking is a pervasive evil that affects every U.S. state and millions of people around the world.
- Human trafficking is not a partisan issue; to be effective against human trafficking, U.S. states need to work together.
- Governors should work collectively to make U.S. states safer; everyone has a role to play to end human trafficking, including local and state governments, the federal government, law enforcement agencies and the non-profit sector.

CYBERSECURITY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: STATES RISE TO MEET THE CYBER TALENT GAP

Jon Check, *Raytheon*

- Many challenges associated with cybersecurity workforce development need to be addressed nationally:
 - The American talent pool should be developed to attract a highly skilled and specialized workforce.
 - The United States should encourage higher education to support the hiring of a talented and robust cybersecurity workforce.
 - There should be an increase in public private partnerships to create more opportunities for practical and operational learning.

Rodney Petersen, *National Institute of Standards and Technology*

- In 2017, President Trump signed Executive Order 13800, *Strengthening the Cybersecurity of Federal Networks and Critical Infrastructure*, which laid the groundwork for the 2018 National Cyber Strategy.
- The cybersecurity workforce should be more diverse and inclusive.
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology is working to develop and promote a robust cybersecurity education training program.
- Cybersecurity education providers need to ensure that they are meeting the needs of employers both today and in the future.

Todd Thibodeaux, *CompTIA*

- More technical support workers are needed in cybersecurity, they are the most common positions available and will help to increase the overall cybersecurity workforce.
- Increased cyber training should be given to all employees within the cybersecurity workforce. Considering that a low-level human error can lead to a high-level breach, cyber training should be a priority for all employees.

EARLY LEARNING RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Oregon Governor Kate Brown and Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson

- When governors invest in the country's youngest citizens, there is a lifetime's worth of return in social services, economic productivity and positive health outcomes.

Geoffrey Nagle, *Erikson Institute*

- The American compulsory education system was created in 1850 and it has not significantly changed since that time.
- In the compulsory education system, children only start school at the age of five, but babies start to learn from the moment they are born.
- In order to address the learning gap between the ages of zero and five, educators are now being asked to make up for lost time by teaching more than one year's material per school year.

Cheryl Oldham, *U.S. Chamber of Commerce*

- Research in brain science shows that a child's experiences prior to the age of three lays the foundation for long-term outcomes in health and education.

- High-quality learning during childcare is a very important factor in early childhood education.
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is advocating for education reform in the United States; high-quality learning in early childhood education pays dividends by ensuring children are given the proper foundation for life.

DRIVING THE CONVERSATION: SAFER AND SMARTER ROADWAYS

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer

- Traffic deaths are one of the leading causes of death nationally.
- Each year, close to 40,000 people are killed in motor vehicle crashes.
- 94% of those crashes are caused by human error and a significant portion of them involve some form of impairment from drugs or alcohol.
- Other causes contributing to traffic fatalities and injuries include distracted driving.
- Each day, approximately nine people in the United States are killed and one thousand persons are injured in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Dr. Grant Baldwin, *Centers for Disease Control*

- The main contributors to traffic related fatalities and injuries include speed, impairment and not wearing a seatbelt.
- Studies show that 50% of Americans who have died in car crashes were not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash.
- Data from the Centers for Disease control indicates that alcohol impairment continues to be a factor in a third of all traffic fatalities.
- 50% of Americans have self-reported that they drive 15 mph over the posted limited on highways and 10 mph faster on city streets.
- According to experts, a 5% percent reduction in speed could reduce automobile crashes by 30%.

Brian Barnard, *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's mission is to save lives, prevent injury and reduce economic loss associated with roadway accidents on U.S. highways.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is conducting vehicle safety research to identify new technology like OnStar that would help save more lives and prevent injuries.

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is also looking into motorist behavioural research related to distracted driving, impaired driving and the use of seatbelts.

Helen Witty, *Mothers Against Drunk Driving*

- The Washington Post has reported that in the last 19 years, more Americans have died in car crashes than in both World Wars.
- In the United States, impaired driving is still the number one cause of roadway fatalities.
- Despite progress made, there continues to be more than 11,000 deaths annually related to impaired driving.
- Deaths due to impaired driving are preventable; a consolidated effort by U.S. states could help to eliminate most impaired driving related deaths.

INFRASTRUCTURE: FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan

- The ability to move people, products and information is what drives America's economy.
- Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's NGA Chair initiative for 2019-2020 will, among other things, seek to find innovative approaches to building a more efficient and secure infrastructure system.
- The repair and modernization of the nation's aging infrastructure should be a priority; governors need to work together to improve the connectivity between all U.S. states, which is fundamental to the U.S. economy.
- The yearlong Chair's initiative will push to find solutions to traffic bottlenecks and seek public private partnerships in order to modernize the nation's aging infrastructure.
- The four pillars of the NGA Chair's initiative are the following:
 - Relieving congestion to boost economic competitiveness
 - Eliminating red tape and integrating smart technology
 - Protecting America's critical infrastructure
 - Leveraging private sector investments

Thomas F. Farrell, *Dominion Energy*

- Without reservation, the electricity sector is the most complex infrastructure system ever devised by mankind.
- The electrical grid is extraordinarily complex and unfortunately taken for granted by many Americans.
- The U.S. natural gas infrastructure is working well but it is increasingly complex to build new gas infrastructure.
- The regulatory process for new gas infrastructure is slowing down the overall process and could be improved. Most problems and delays with the implementation of new pipelines are related to the permit process.

Terry O’Sullivan, *Laborers’ International Union of North America*

- Labour workers are responsible for building roads, tunnels, bridges as well as the nation’s energy and water infrastructure.
- The repair and rebuild of the U.S. aging infrastructure will provide quality paying jobs to labour workers and help the U.S. economy.
- To address the issue of delays with the pipelines, the State of Alaska has put forward a bill that would work towards expediting the permit process.

William Calhoun, *Clark Construction Group LLC*

- The aging infrastructure system has been receiving failing grades since the 1990s.
- It is important to remember that the nation’s infrastructure system is the backbone of the American economy and directly impacts the economic output. Its modernization should therefore be a priority.

Shigeru Hayakawa, *Toyota Motor Corporation*

- It is difficult for a Japanese business to comment on the challenges of the American infrastructure, but Japan has a great interest in the improvement of the U.S. infrastructure.
- Infrastructure reform is a priority for Japanese companies doing business in the United States. Improvements in infrastructure would make it easier to do business in the United States.
- The U.S. infrastructure is an important facilitator of the work performed collectively by Japanese and American businesses.
- The Japanese have experience with building world-class infrastructure and could help guide the United States. In fact, many Japanese companies are already taking part in new U.S. infrastructure projects.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald,
Senator, Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	National Governors Association Annual Summer Meeting
DESTINATION	Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America
DATES	July 24-26, 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Michael L. MacDonald Hon. Yuen Pau Woo
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Mike Lake, P.C. Hon. Tony Clement, P.C. Ms. Irene Mathyssen
STAFF	Ms. Miriam Burke Ms. Tanya Dupuis
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 11,289.12
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 9,378.92
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,762.22
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 22,430.26