

Canada – United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – États-Unis
Section canadienne

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the 72nd Annual Meeting of the Council of
State Governments' Midwestern Legislative Conference**

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Des Moines, Iowa, United States of America
9–12 July 2017**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 9–12 July 2017, Mr. Brian Masse, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), led a delegation to the 72nd annual meeting of the Council of State Governments' Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC) in Des Moines, Iowa. The other members of the delegation were Mr. Larry Maguire, M.P. and Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Tanya Dupuis, Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

The MLC, which meets annually, is a regional association of state legislators from 11 U.S. states and provincial legislators from four affiliate Canadian provinces (see the Appendix). The purpose of the MLC is to foster regional intergovernmental cooperation in the U.S. Midwest through considering common problems, exchanging information and ideas, sharing knowledge and experience, and – as appropriate – pursuing collaborative efforts to improve state government.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

Canada and the 11 MLC states have a mutually beneficial relationship. Approximately 1.7 million of the 9 million U.S. jobs that depend on Canada–U.S. trade are in the 11 MLC states, and Canada is the primary foreign export market for all U.S. Midwestern states. Goods valued at about \$91 billion were exported from the MLC states to Canada in 2016, and the value of trade in goods and services between the MLC states and Canada exceeded \$201 billion in that year. Recent data suggest that, in a 12-month period, more than 6.5 million Canadians visited the MLC states and spent \$1.6 billion.

The IPG aims to find points of convergence in respective national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage the exchange of information and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. Members of the IPG's Canadian Section meet regularly with their federal counterparts, and also attend meetings of U.S. governors and state legislators. At these events, Canadian delegates engage in conversations that help the Canadian Section to achieve its objectives, and that explain the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

Members of the Canadian Section found the MLC's 2017 annual meeting to be a valuable opportunity to discuss opportunities for Canada and the U.S. Midwest to collaborate on improving regional economic development. As well, members benefited from presentations on a variety of policy areas that are important for both Canada and the United States, including trade, agriculture, energy and border issues.

From the Canadian perspective, discussions of – and the resulting resolutions in relation to – two topics were particularly important: the commitment of the United States and Canada to the *North American Free Trade Agreement* (NAFTA), as well as continued encouragement of respect for the spirit of NAFTA by avoiding policies that

are inconsistent with the integrated nature of supply chains in, and the economies of, the two countries; and, recognizing that the United States and Canada are each other's largest suppliers of energy and benefit from the most secure and interconnected energy relationship in the world, the commitment of both countries to North American energy independence.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

During the MLC's 72nd annual meeting, the following concurrent sessions occurred:

- Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
 - Gene Editing and Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR)
 - The State of the Midwest's Rural and Agriculture Economy and Future of the U.S. Farm Bill
- Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee
 - Justice Reinvestment
 - The Impact of a Criminal Record on Hiring Decisions and Policy Strategies to Mitigate Barriers to Employment
- Economic Development Committee
 - Economic Development Trends and Initiatives in the Midwest Region
- Education Committee
 - Strategies for Building K-12 Systems That Personalize the Learning Experience
 - Strategies for Meeting the Learning Needs of the "Whole Child"
 - Update on State and Federal Education Policy
- Health & Human Services Committee
 - Options for Addressing Two Crises in Public Health: Opioid Addiction and Lead in Community Water Supplies
 - Whither Health Insurance and Medicaid?
- Midwest-Canada Relations Committee
 - The Canada-U.S. Relationship – NAFTA and Beyond
 - The Integrated Trade Relationship between Canada and the U.S.: Not Just an Advantage for Large Firms.

The meeting's plenary, and other sessions and presentations, were:

- Chair's Initiative: Strategies to Ensure Healthy Birth Outcomes

- Closing Session – Professional Development Workshop: Negotiation for Legislators – Managing Relationships and Conflict in the Legislative Arena
- Destiny and Demographics: Trends that Will Shape the Midwest and its States
- Featured Presentation – The Girls of Atomic City
- Featured Presentation – The Legacy of Norman Borlaug: Continuing to Inspire the Bipartisan Fight Against Hunger
- Fiscal Leaders Roundtable
- How Advances in Technology Can Transform State Government
- Keynote – The Legacy of America’s Great Migration
- The Changing Political Landscape.

This report summarizes the plenary and selected concurrent discussions that occurred at the MLC’s 72nd annual meeting.

THE INTERGRATED TRADE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANADA AND THE U.S.: NOT JUST AN ADVANTAGE FOR LARGE FIRMS

Jeanne Broad, *Michigan Economic Development Corporation*

- Michigan’s economy depends greatly on trade and investment with Canada and Canadian businesses; an estimated 259,000 jobs in Michigan are a result of the bilateral relationship.
- Michigan is a leading producer of motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts, and Canada is its primary consumer; data suggest that the value of Michigan goods exported to Canada totalled \$23.5 billion in 2016, of which \$5 billion was motor vehicle parts, \$2.6 billion was automobiles and \$ 4.9 billion was trucks.
- Data suggest that, in 2016, Michigan’s imports of goods from Canada were valued at \$48.3 billion, of which \$4.2 billion was motor vehicle parts and \$26.5 billion was automobiles.
- In 2016, about 2,295,700 Canadians visited Michigan and spent approximately \$469 million.

Gabrielle Gerbaud, *Minnesota Trade Office*

- Bilateral goods trade demonstrates the importance of supply chains to the U.S.– Canada economic relationship.
- An estimated 174,200 jobs in Minnesota depend on trade and investment between the United States and Canada.

- According to recent data, 293 million automobiles were exported from Minnesota to Canada in 2016, and optical, medical and precision instruments exported from the state to Canada were valued at \$230 million.
- Small Minnesota businesses believe that Canada’s market provides a good “training ground” because of Canadian regulations; once these businesses “master” these regulations, they move to other markets, such as Mexico.
- In 2016, an estimated 805,400 Canadians visited Minnesota and spent almost \$225 million.
- U.S. Midwestern states need to maintain competitiveness in the auto sector because of that sector’s potential impact on other businesses within the supply chain.
- The uncertainty of the NAFTA negotiations is making small businesses very nervous.
- Efficient border infrastructure is needed to facilitate the flow of goods and people across the U.S.–Canada border.
- The U.S. Midwestern states believe that the issue of Americans and Canadians crossing into the other country on a short-term basis to work should be addressed during the NAFTA negotiations.
- There is a critical need to educate citizens, employers and employees about the benefits of the U.S.–Canada relationship.
- The United States and Canada should devote greater efforts to communicate the benefits of NAFTA; in particular, state legislators should engage in outreach in order to support trade and local governments.

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT

Grace Beil Call and Michelle Rodriguez, *Council of State Governments Justice Center*

- U.S. policymakers are considering ways to improve criminal justice outcomes in order to reduce correctional costs.
- Because public safety is multidimensional, there is a need to study, learn from and treat the reasons underlying criminal behaviour.
- Community solutions can be less expensive than correctional costs.

THE CANADA-U.S. RELATIONSHIP – THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT AND BEYOND

Jim Dickmeyer, *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*

- The NAFTA negotiation process will likely be very long and difficult.
- The U.S. Congress is likely to play a role in trade negotiations due to the legislation that provided trade promotion authority.

Christopher Sands, *Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies*

- The rhetoric regarding the NAFTA negotiations has changed over time; initial comments focused on the need to completely redraft NAFTA, then it was said that the agreement should be “tweaked.”
- It is very difficult for businesses and state legislators to predict the nature and extent of the changes that will be made to NAFTA.
- Chapter 16 of NAFTA permits the temporary cross-border movement of business travellers; during the NAFTA negotiations, the United States and Canada should address the difficulties that exist when workers try to cross the shared border.

Kim Campbell, *Mkmarin Trade Services, Inc.*

- Trade and investment have changed since NAFTA came into force in 1994.
- For many Americans, it is not just free trade that is important; trade must also be fair.

NEED NOT APPLY? THE IMPACT OF A CRIMINAL RECORD ON HIRING DECISIONS AND POLICY STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Stephanie Akhter and Chidi Umez, *Council of State Governments Justice Center*

- Most incarcerated individuals return to the community when they are released from prison; meaningful employment is critical to the successful reintegration of these individuals and to their efforts to be crime-free.
- The U.S. Midwestern states need strategies to develop employment opportunities for incarcerated individuals who are released into the community.
- For incarcerated individuals who have been released into the community, the risk of re-arrest dissipates over time; after seven years of remaining arrest-free, such an individual has a risk of offending that is similar to that of the general population.
- Studies show that an incarcerated individual who is gainfully employed upon release from prison is less likely to reoffend, as well as to have improved mental

health, fewer “risky” behaviours and more “social” activities; these outcomes are particularly likely when earnings are both above average and stable.

- For incarcerated individuals, “job readiness” usually includes education, training, the development of “soft skills” and transitional job placements.
- Incarceration affects the offender, but also his/her family and community.
- Studies show that serving time in jail reduces the annual earnings of a male incarcerated individual by 40%.
- The justice system’s “revolving door” can be broken by developing an incarcerated individual’s work skills, engaging with potential employers, reducing employment barriers and encouraging fair hiring practices.
- An estimated 70 million Americans, which represents approximately 33% of adults, have a criminal record.
- Individuals with criminal records face a distinct set of barriers to joining the workforce; about 87% of U.S. employers conduct background checks, and the United States’ economy loses up to \$82 billion annually in gross domestic product when incarcerated individuals cannot find meaningful employment when they are released.
- When compared to other applicants, the employment-related repercussions of having a criminal record are more pronounced for African-American applicants.
- White applicants with a criminal record are more likely to receive an interview than are black applicants without criminal records.
- U.S. states have complex laws for clearing criminal records; seven states permit the clearance of some misdemeanor convictions, 28 states allow the clearance of some misdemeanor and felony convictions, and 15 states prohibit the clearance of criminal records.
- Between 2009 and 2014, a total of 31 U.S. states broadened the scope and impact of criminal record clearance policies.

Bonnie J. Mroczek, *Butterball Farms*

- Best practices from the corrections and workforce development fields should be bridged and integrated in order to improve employment outcomes for incarcerated individuals who are returning to the community.
- In order to increase community engagement, all community services should be included and employers should be engaged in public–private partnerships; as well, consideration should be given to the establishment of job centres within county jails.

- Local and state “fair chance” hiring policies should be expanded; currently, 28 U.S. states and more than 150 cities have adopted such policies.

FEATURED PRESENTATION: THE GIRLS OF ATOMIC CITY

Denise Kiernan, *Author*

- During World War II, young women were recruited from across the United States to work in factories in a “secret” city; they were promised “good” wages and were assured that their efforts would contribute directly to the United States’ war efforts.
- The American women recruited during World War II to work in a “secret” city were working for the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and were helping to build the atomic bomb; they often earned lower wages than their male counterparts, were forbidden from discussing their work or their whereabouts, and were asked to perform secretarial jobs and fulfill mathematical and chemistry-related responsibilities.

KEYNOTE: THE LEGACY OF AMERICA’S GREAT MIGRATION

Isabel Wilkerson, *Author*

- America’s great migration, which took place between 1916 and 1970, was a rapid and large movement; 6 million African-Americans fled such states as Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana in order to settle in the United States’ Midwest, Northeast and Western states, thereby providing themselves with greater freedoms.

DESTINY AND DEMOGRAPHICS: TRENDS THAT WILL SHAPE THE MIDWEST AND ITS STATES

Linda Jacobsen, *Population Reference Bureau*

- Major demographic changes are underway in the United States, including in relation to aging, diversity, disability and disease, among others.
- In the United States, the population growth rate has slowed since 2000.
- The U.S. Midwestern states are experiencing a brain drain of college-educated individuals, which gives rise to the need for more employment opportunities to prevent them from leaving their home state.
- At present, older Americans comprise 20% of the population in nearly 33% of U.S. counties; in five U.S. states, more than 15% of the population is aged 65 or older.

- By 2030, the United States will have only three working-age adults for every person aged 65 or older.
- By 2030, more than one in five Americans will be aged 65 or older, but the number of children will still outnumber the number of seniors.
- By 2060, the United States will have 98 million senior citizens, a doubling since 2016; for them, there is a need for home health care, adult day care opportunities, appropriate transportation options, and high-quality housing facilities, including assisted living and care for those with dementia.
- U.S. seniors are increasingly living with dementia, which affects 25% of Americans aged 80 or older and is the United States' costliest medical condition; these individuals are increasingly likely to live alone with a declining support system.
- The costs of Medicare and social security are rising, and are projected to be 12% of the United States' gross domestic product by 2050; there is a need to control these costs.

MLC CHAIR'S INITIATIVE: STRATEGIES TO ENSURE HEALTHY BIRTH OUTCOMES

Barbara Levy, *American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists*

- U.S. state legislators are recognizing the importance, for both babies and parents, of "healthy birth outcomes," a phrase that can include reducing the number of incidents of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, mentoring new parents and expectant mothers, providing public education and collecting data.
- There are more resources available regarding newborns than are available for expectant mothers.
- The United States' maternal mortality rate is higher than that for a third world country, especially for African-American women, and conditions – some of which cannot be predicted or prevented – can develop during pregnancy or shortly thereafter and result in maternal death; that said, some studies show that 60% of such deaths are preventable.
- Some indicators of maternal mortality are related to chronic stress, abortion-related complications, hemorrhaging, stroke, infections, severe hypertension, obesity, substance abuse, poverty and unintended pregnancies.
- Unhealthy pregnancies and unhealthy birth outcomes can be very costly for the United States, and ensuring that babies and mothers are healthy can help to decrease Medicaid costs.

- U.S. state legislators and legislatures should consider adopting policies and legislation to improve birth outcomes, and best practices regarding measures to help ensure “healthy birth outcomes” should be shared.

Lezlie Mestdagh, *Healthy Birth Day*

- Worldwide, there are 2.6 million stillbirths annually; at 2,800 stillbirths per year, Canada has fewer than the United States, at 24,000.
- Experts agree that education and additional research are key factors in reducing the number of stillbirths.

HOW ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY CAN TRANSFORM STATE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Bill Eggers, *Deloitte Center for Government Insights*

- All levels of government face similar challenges and must adapt to the rapidly changing world; an estimated 69% of U.S. government agencies believe that their digital capabilities are falling behind those of the private sector.
- Cognitive technologies can be used to redesign public-sector work; governments can save time and money by automating tasks, which will involve eliminating, redesigning and creating jobs.
- The extent to which state governments are sufficiently engaged with start-up companies and the technological community to transform government services should be examined with a view to improving the services provided to citizens and businesses.
- Most jobs can be automated; for example, e-discovery in the field of law is allowing one or two computers to perform the work of approximately 500 lawyers.
- “Millennials,” who comprise the majority of the workforce, have a “digital mindset.”
- There are currently three big revolutions – the 3Ds – in society and business: digital; data; and design.
- Digital delivery differs from the traditional ways in which governments deliver programs, and more simplicity and streamlining is needed; for example, the use of 3Ds enabled electronic forms to be simplified, thereby reducing the number of fraudulent unemployment claims.

**FEATURED PRESENTATION – THE LEGACY OF NORMAN BORLAUG:
CONTINUING TO INSPIRE THE BIPARTISAN FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER**

Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, *World Food Prize Foundation*

- A 1970 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate who is recognized for his devotion to increasing the world's food supply and food security, Dr. Norman Borlaug was a microbiologist, geneticist and plant pathologist who discovered disease-resistant wheat and worked to mass produce the wheat in order to feed the world.
- In 1986, Dr. Borlaug founded the World Food Prize, which recognizes an individual's efforts to increase the quality, quantity and availability of food in the world; to date, the award has been given to individuals from a broad range of countries, including Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Cuba, Denmark, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Israel, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- Dr. Borlaug's legacy seeks to inspire the next generation through the Global Youth Institute; 92% of students have pursued a degree in agriculture and science, and 77% of these students have chosen to pursue careers in agriculture.

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

Appendix

MEMBERS OF THE MIDWESTERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

U.S. States

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

Canadian Provinces

- Alberta
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Saskatchewan

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	72 nd Annual Meeting of the Council of State Governments' (CSG) Midwestern Legislative Conference
DESTINATION	Des Moines, Iowa, United States of America
DATES	9–12 July 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury, M.P. Mr. Larry Maguire, M.P. Mr. Brian Masse, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Tanya Dupuis, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 4,179.77
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 2,735.17
PER DIEMS	\$ 799.67
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 3,649.48
TOTAL	\$ 11,364.09