

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 Annual Winter Meeting
of the National Governors Association (NGA)**

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Washington, D.C., United States of America
23–25 February 2018**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 23–25 February 2018, the Honourable Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), led a delegation to the annual winter meeting of the National Governors Association (NGA) in Washington, D.C. The other members of the delegation were Senators Anne Cools and Scott Tannas, Mr. Kerry Diotte, M.P., Vice-Chair and Mr. Marc Serré, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Miriam Burke, the Canadian Section’s Executive Secretary, and Ms. June Dewetering, Senior 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, which meets in the winter and in the summer each year, is supervised by a chair, vice chair and executive committee, and governors participate on five issue-related standing committees: Economic Development & Commerce; Education & Workforce; Health & Human Services; Homeland Security & Public Safety; and Natural Resources.

The theme for the NGA’s activities in 2018 – including the winter and summer meetings – is “Ahead of the Curve: Innovation Governors.” This initiative has been selected by NGA Chair Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

Members of the IPG’s Canadian Section have been attending the winter and summer meetings of the NGA for several years. At this meeting, delegates spoke with a number of governors –Governors Steve Bullock (Montana), Doug Burgum (North Dakota), John Carney (Delaware), Dennis Daugaard (South Dakota), Mary Fallin (Oklahoma), Gary Herbert (Utah), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), Larry Hogan (Maryland), Matt Mead (Wyoming), Butch Otter (Idaho), Brian Sandoval (Nevada), Phil Scott (Vermont), Rick Snyder (Michigan), Bill Walker (Alaska) and Scott Walker (Wisconsin) – about the nature and value of the trade relationship between Canada and their states, among other issues. Among these governors, they had more private, “off-the-record” meetings with Governors Doug Burgum, John Carney and Butch Otter.

Their interactions with governors enable members of the IPG’s Canadian Section to achieve better the aims of finding points of convergence in respective national policies, initiating dialogue on points of divergence, encouraging exchanges of information and promoting better understanding on shared issues of concern. Moreover, the NGA

meetings provide the 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 2018 winter meeting:

- The Intersection of Innovation and International Partnerships: NGA Future and NGA Global
- Keynote Address by the Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia (Plenary Session 1 – International)
- The Future of Food and Agriculture (Plenary Session 2 – Agriculture)
- The Opioid Crisis: What's Working and Where Do We Go Next (Plenary Session 3 – Health)
- Ahead of the Curve: Innovation Governors and Addressing the Skills Gap (Plenary Session 4 – Innovation)
- Keynote Address by the Honourable Nana Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana
- Pathways to Prosperity: The Future of Innovation in Higher Education (Plenary Session 5 – Workforce and Education)
- Caring for Our Veterans Through Innovative Treatment and Rehabilitation (Plenary Session 6 – Veterans)
- Economic Development and the Future of Work (Plenary Session 7 – Economic Development Planning).

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

THE INTERSECTION OF INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: NGA GLOBAL

During the discussion at the inaugural session of NGA Global, U.S. governors – including Governors Hogan and Sandoval – and premiers, ambassadors and other representatives from a number of countries highlighted such issues as the following:

- The top priorities for all subnational governments include economic development, job creation, workforce development, education and trade; national governments play a lead role regarding the international economic policies that affect all of these priorities.
- While national governments help to establish the “conditions for success,” it is often subnational governments that “get the job done.”

- Leaders at all levels of government should share best practices, and collaborate in pursuing common economic and other goals.
- When subnational and national decisions makers are determining their international priorities, attention should be paid to areas of strength, and to their comparative and competitive advantages.
- Trade missions increase a government’s international “footprint,” and should occur regularly to key countries to “make connections and keep them alive.”
- Undertaking “follow-up” activities once a trade mission has ended is critically important, and might occur through a permanent “on-the-ground” presence.
- Political decision makers can “open doors” in other countries for businesses.
- In foreign countries, while business connections are important, linkages should also be made with educational institutions and regarding tourism opportunities, among others.
- Businesses need access to the right number of employees with the right skills; the private sector should work with educational institutions when curricula are being developed.
- Apprenticeships, co-op placements and other forms of on-the-job training can be an aspect of workforce development.
- All “modern” countries have both an infrastructure deficit and inadequate capital to address the deficit; some countries are pursuing innovative financing models, including private–public partnerships.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE MALCOLM TURNBULL, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, AND COMMENTS BY AUSTRALIA’S SUBNATIONAL LEADERS

Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, *Prime Minister of Australia*

- The relationship between Australia and the United States “came of age” 100 years ago, when the countries were World War I allies; for a century, the two countries have been “mates.”
- Australia and the United States have an unbreakable trust, and are side by side in all major conflicts; the countries have common objectives regarding Afghanistan, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Philippines, etc.
- The sharing of intelligence between Australia and the United States saves Australian and American – and other – lives around the world.

- Australia and the United States are much “larger” than the sum of the “state” parts.
- Australia and the United States are bound by business, education and other “ties”; as well, the countries have networks of personal trust, and have common political values.
- Like the United States, Australia defines its national identity not by race, religion or ethnicity, but by freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, etc. and the spirit of enterprise that they enable.
- Freedom, security and opportunity are “institutions” that are hard to build but are easy to “break.”
- Since World War II, the United States has guided global cooperation, helped to create the global trading system, and enabled collective security and prosperity, as well as economic growth, innovation and human advancement.
- Australia wants to work with the United States regarding reforms to the World Trade Organization.
- For Australia, an open, inclusive, prosperous Indo-Pacific region that is a single trade zone is a goal.
- The “easy lure” of protectionism must be avoided; more trade means more jobs and greater investment.
- Strategic competition should not create rival economic blocks, and large states or countries should not engage in coercion directed against those that are smaller.
- The Australia–U.S. trade balance is “significantly” in the United States’ favour, and the economies of the two countries are helping each other to “thrive.”
- Governments have an obligation to provide security and freedom, which are mutually reinforcing; from that perspective, the key is determining the level and type of security that are needed to enable freedom.
- Innovation is the key to productivity and thereby growth, prosperity, and a rising standard of living and quality of life.
- The United States is “unrivalled” in its innovation and commercialization; the U.S. states play a role in ensuring the existence of a workforce that enables innovation.
- The United States’ recent federal tax reductions will lead to greater investment, and thereby more and better jobs.
- Australia is reducing its corporate taxes.

- Australia wants to be among the world's top 10 defence sector exporters.
- Australian and American companies should work together in other countries.
- Companies that are competitive and law-abiding should be enabled to succeed.
- "America First" does not mean "America Alone."
- The United States' leadership is in the world's interest and in the United States' interest.
- The United States' commitment and strategic power have come at a cost to it, and the world should not take its "extraordinary" contributions for granted; it is reasonable to expect other countries to "pull their weight" and to contribute "their fair share."

Premier Daniel Andrews, *Government of Victoria*

- Innovation is "strong" in the State of Victoria, including in the biotechnology, medical research and cybersecurity sectors.
- Private–public partnerships are popular in the State of Victoria.
- The State of Victoria engages in asset recycling as one way to finance infrastructure.

Premier Mark McGowan, *Government of Western Australia*

- The mining sector is important in the State of Western Australia.
- Many companies locate their headquarters in the State of Western Australia because it is located in the same time zone as 60% of the world's population.

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, *Government of Queensland*

- There are many opportunities for Australia and the United States to work together collaboratively and to share ideas.
- The State of Queensland is continuing to diversify away from agriculture and other resources, and there are opportunities regarding renewable energy and technology.
- People should be educated for the jobs of the future.
- The jobs of the future are created through innovation.
- Collaboration can lead to better outcomes.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian, *Government of New South Wales*

- The State of New South Wales has an innovative approach to asset recycling, which enables some infrastructure needs to be met.
- Social impact investing is significant in the State of New South Wales.

Chief Minister Michael Gunner, *Government of Northern Territory*

- Australia's Northern Territory is very engaged with Asia; geographically, it is closer to a number of Asian countries than it is to its country's capital, Canberra.
- People want to be able to invest across state borders with ease.

Chief Minister Andrew Barr, *Government of Australia Capital Territory*

- Australia's Capital Territory is seeking to attract new capital and investment.
- Australia's Capital Territory has a strong space sector.

THE OPIOID CRISIS: WHAT'S WORKING AND WHERE DO WE GO NEXT

Secretary Alex Azar, *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

- The United States' federal government should complement and empower the efforts of its states.
- U.S. states are "on the front line" of the opioid crisis.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has the following five-part strategy for addressing the opioid crisis:
 - Improve the understanding of the crisis through improved public health surveillance and data.
 - Support research on pain and addiction.
 - Focus on best practices for pain management.
 - Promote the use of drugs that reverse overdoses.
 - Enhance access to treatment and recovery services.

Following the presentation by Secretary Azar, the *Los Angeles Times'* Noam Levey moderated a discussion among the U.S. governors about the United States' opioid crisis.

Governor Tom Wolf, *State of Pennsylvania*

- The United States' opioid epidemic is a medical crisis; it is not a moral failing.
- Prescription drugs are gateway drugs.

Governor Doug Ducey, *State of Arizona*

- For many people, addiction occurs after the fifth or sixth day of taking an opioid.

Governor Steve Bullock, *State of Montana*

- Opioids are becoming the United States' largest problem.
- People tend to "hoard" prescription drugs.
- Prescription drug registries are effective in reducing addiction.
- People should be educated about opioids and treatments for those who are addicted should be improved.

Governor Asa Hutchison, *State of Arkansas*

- The opioid crisis needs to be considered in a comprehensive manner, and broad-based solutions should be contemplated.
- Drug take-back programs are effective.

Governor Matt Bevin, *State of Kentucky*

- Efforts should be directed to reducing the number of people who become addicted to opioids.
- All relevant stakeholders should be involved in resolving the United States' opioid crisis; these stakeholders include those who are addicted and their family members, physicians, law enforcement officers and members of the judiciary.
- Establishing a three-day limit on initial prescriptions can be effective in limiting addiction.
- Opioid-related public service announcements should involve youth; youth have a better chance of "reaching" other youth.

Governor Roy Cooper, *State of North Carolina*

- The root of the United States' opioid crisis is opioid abuse.
- A lack of health insurance coverage can be problematic if the result is an inability for people to access the treatments they need to address their opioid addiction.

Governor Bill Walker, *State of Alaska*

- The medical community needs to be part of the solution to the United States' opioid crisis.

Governor Doug Burgum, *State of North Dakota*

- A whole-of-government approach is needed to address the United States' opioid crisis, and all relevant stakeholders must be involved in identifying solutions.

Governor Charlie Baker, *State of Massachusetts*

- Physical therapy, acupuncture and massage therapy should be available as alternatives to opioids for managing pain.
- In addressing the United States' opioid crisis, it is important to “stay the course” and “not take the foot off the pedal”; progress will occur, but it will take time.

Governor Phil Scott, *State of Vermont*

- Regarding opioids, the “legs” of the “four-legged stool” are prevention, treatment, recovery and enforcement.
- Opioid treatment centres should be adequate in number; if someone wants treatment, it should be easily accessible.

Governor Rick Snyder, *State of Michigan*

- Regarding the opioid crisis, there is a need for a change in culture; the focus should be helping, rather than incarcerating.

Governor Gary Herbert, *State of Utah*

- Databases can be used to monitor prescriptions that are being written for each individual.

Governor Larry Hogan, *State of Maryland*

- The United States' opioid crisis is a state of emergency that is akin to a natural disaster; consequently, it needs to be treated as such.
- Fentanyl and carfentanyl are “the coming wave.”

Governor Kate Brown, *State of Oregon*

- Almost everyone's life has been affected in some way by substance abuse.
- The stigma that may prevent people with an addiction from seeking treatment should be removed.

AHEAD OF THE CURVE: INNOVATION GOVERNORS AND ADDRESSING THE SKILLS GAP

Ginni Rometty, *IBM*

- Every company must reinvent and reposition itself because of technological change; as well, the ways in which people work must be reinvented.
- Responsible stewardship of new technology is important.

- Artificial intelligence is both the issue of our time and the opportunity of our time; it must be “ushered safely” into the world, with consideration given to the following:
 - Be clear about the purpose – for example, will artificial intelligence augment the efforts of humans?
 - Be clear about associated data – for example, who owns the data and their insights?
 - Prepare employees – for example, recognizing that all jobs will change, how many – and which – jobs will be displaced, and what skills will be needed for the jobs that remain?
- Artificial intelligence can understand, reason and learn.
- Artificial intelligence applications include tax law, medicine and regulatory requirements.
- Artificial intelligence can change the ways in which governments “work”; for example, call centres can use artificial intelligence to assist citizens.
- The blockchain, which is – conceptually – an immutable distributed ledger, can replace “middlemen”; its applications include digital currencies, shipping, food safety and the tracking of drugs.
- Blockchain technology will do for trusted transactions what the Internet did for information.
- An estimated 20% of the world’s information is searchable on the Internet; the remaining 80% is owned by businesses.
- The future will not be a world in which everyone must be a data scientist; that said, artificial intelligence and blockchain technology will change every job, and it is important to prepare for the changes that will occur.
- It is possible to get a “very good” job in the data economy with either a six-year high school diploma or less than a four-year college or university degree.
- Mid-career retraining will be important in the future, and learning and training must be lifelong.
- Businesses should define themselves as a solution, not as a product, and they should not “protect” their past.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE NANA AKUFO-ADDO, PRESIDENT OF GHANA

Honourable Nana Akufo-Addo, *President of Ghana*

- A new form of partnership between Ghana and the United States is needed, and there is a desire to move away from the mindset of dependency, which is not good for the donor or the donee.
- Ghana is determined to move from poverty to prosperity and a dignified existence within a generation.
- Ghana is undergoing an economic and industrial transformation; at the same time, social rights are being respected.
- In Ghana, there are many opportunities for U.S. capital and technology
- Ghana has abundant natural resources, including iron ore and manganese, but it is important to add value and not merely be an exporter of raw resources.
- Ghana is developing strategic sectors based on its natural resources, and is making systematic efforts to develop its oil and gas reserves.
- In Ghana, public education is now free and health care is accessible for all citizens.
- Ghana, which has an infrastructure deficit, is embarking on an “aggressive” private–public partnership model.
- Now is the time to “look at” Africa; now is not just the “rise of Asia,” but also the “rise of Africa.”

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY: THE FUTURE OF INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Michael Crow, *Arizona State University*

- Most of the education systems in the U.S. states are rigid, fixed and largely incapable of “knowing how” to modernize.
- “Dropout” is a derogatory term that is used to describe someone who left an educational institution that was incapable of modernizing.
- Innovation is now central to everything, yet it is largely anachronistic to an academic culture.
- Educational institutions exist for students and communities, not for faculty; in essence, faculty are a means to an end.
- The United States needs an adaptive education system that changes as the external environment changes, and the system should modernize at the rate of economic change.

- Academic excellence and educational access should be combined in a single institution.
- From an access perspective, public educational institutions should be accessible to everyone.
- Because technological advancement will always be a part of the future, and the pace of that advancement will continue to accelerate, one priority for countries should be having an agile workforce.
- Educational institutions should be assessed on such outcomes as the number of graduates, the amount of research, the number of learners, cost, etc.
- Efforts should be devoted to identifying “what it takes” to be successful in the future.

Kevin Carey, *New America*

- New educational models are needed to help students secure better jobs after graduation.
- The United States’ federal and state governments have a common interest in identifying the returns on their investments in education.
- Better data are needed about education, labour markets and the labour force.
- Apprenticeships are an old idea that has current relevance.

CARING FOR OUR VETERANS THROUGH INNOVATIVE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

Secretary David Shulkin, *U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*

- The United States’ federal and state governments should work together in supporting the country’s veterans; for example, they could collaborate regarding telehealth expansion, initiatives to prevent falls, expedited claims settlement, veteran cemeteries and veteran homelessness, among other areas.
- The United States’ veterans are aging, and will need more – and perhaps different – services as they get older.
- Among the priorities regarding the United States’ veterans are the following:
 - providing veterans with greater choice about where and how they access care and other services;
 - modernizing systems and facilities, such as e-records and buildings;
 - improving the timeliness of services and the transparency of access;
 - allocating resources to the services that are important to veterans; and

- preventing suicides by veterans, including through timely access to services that help to save lives.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

Brad Smith, *Microsoft*

- Opportunity gaps exist throughout the United States, and some are being left behind.
- In the United States, the two important technological gaps are access to broadband and digital skills.
- Access to broadband has become a necessity of life, and it needs to be treated in that way, including with the development of a national strategy to eliminate the broadband gap; broadband is important for precision farming, telemedicine and digital learning, among other uses.
- More than 25 million Americans are estimated to be without access to broadband, and this number is likely an underestimate; 19 million of these Americans live in rural areas.
- In 21 U.S. states, more than one third of the population lacks access to broadband.
- Better data are needed to identify U.S. homes that lack broadband access.
- An increasing number of U.S. jobs require a degree in computer science, which gives rise to a need to ensure that computer science courses are offered to students.
- The United States needs a “digital Marshall Plan”; the public and private sectors should work together in new ways, and efforts should be directed to ensuring that rural areas have access to broadband.

Kathleen McLaughlin, *Walmart Foundation*

- Businesses exist to serve society, and they maximize their performance when they maximize their contributions to society.
- In the long run, the interests of business and the interests of society converge.
- Some Americans want to earn while they learn and learn while they earn; lifelong learning while working is the way of the future.
- Technological change is affecting jobs; it is important to focus on the future of work in light of artificial intelligence, automation, etc.
- Technology can be used to accelerate learning.

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
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Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	National Governors Association Winter Meeting
DESTINATION	Washington, D.C., United States of America
DATES	23–25 February 2018
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Anne C. Cools The Hon. Scott Tannas
HOUSE OF COMMONS	The Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Mr. Kerry Diotte, M.P. Mr. Marc Serré, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Miriam Burke, Executive Secretary Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 9,164.27
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4,915.88
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,637.60
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 7,071.47
TOTAL	\$ 23,789.22