

Leading Western Policy Organizations Share 'Principles to Clarify and Strengthen the State-Federal Relationship' with President-Elect Trump, Congressional Leadership

December 15, 2016: Five of the West's leading policy organizations shared 'Principles to Clarify and Strengthen the State-Federal Relationship' with **president-elect Donald J. Trump** and Congressional leadership. The principles advocate for state, local and federal government officials to work in a "true partnership."

The **Western Governors' Association, Conference of Western Attorneys General, Council of State Governments West, Western Interstate Region of the National Association of Counties,** and the **Pacific NorthWest Economic Region** collaborated on the formulation of the principles.

"The inauguration of a new Administration and the start of the 115th Congress presents an unusual opportunity to realign the state-federal relationship," said **James D. Ogsbury, Executive Director of the Western Governors' Association.** "Western Governors are eager to work in true partnership with the federal government and call upon the Administration to engage them in the development and execution of policy that impacts state authority."

The letter explains that the organizations seek to operate as "authentic collaborators" in the development and execution of policy. Highlights from the principles include:

- In the absence of Constitutional delegation of authority to the federal government, state authority should be presumed sovereign.
- Federal executive departments and agencies should not construe, in regulations and otherwise, a federal statute to preempt state or local authority unless the statute contains an express preemption provision.
- Each federal executive department and/or agency should be required to have a consistent and accountable process to provide states and localities with early and meaningful input in the development of regulatory policies that have federalism implications.
- The head of each federal executive department and agency should be required to designate an official responsible for ensuring that the federalism consultation process is executed appropriately and completely.

"I am pleased to work with the great organizations represented in this joint effort," said **Hawaii Attorney General Douglas Chin, Chair of the Conference of Western Attorneys General.** "I pledge that I will use my time as Chair to provide the new administration with input from the top legal and law enforcement officers of the Western states on the important issues common to the West."

"These federalism principles reflect our collective, multibranch western state interests to foster and promote a collaborative relationship with the incoming administration," said **Idaho State Representative Jeff Thompson, Council of State Governments West Chair.**

"By working with county governments as intergovernmental partners, federal officials can gain important local insights to strengthen public services for our shared constituencies," said

Commissioner Doug Breidenthal, President of the Western Interstate Region of the National Association of Counties. “Counties possess a wealth of practical, on-the-ground knowledge that should be actively sought out by federal agencies to inform policy.”

"I believe our states are laboratories of innovation and these principles encourage the vibrant and responsive partnership between local, state, and federal government that our citizens deserve from their public institutions," said **Matt Morrison, Executive Director of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region.**

Ultimately, the organizations encourage action on the principles by president-elect Trump, vice president-elect Pence, and the new Congress so that “the Administration can create a legacy of renewed federalism, resulting in a nation that is stronger, more resilient and more united.”

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CONTACTS

Western Governors' Association

Joe Rassenfoss, Communications Director
303-803-8008 or joe@westgov.org

Council of Western Attorneys General

Chris Coppin, Legal Director
505-589-5101 or Ccoppin@cwagweb.org

Council of State Governments -- West

Edgar Ruiz, Executive Director
(916) 553-4423 (x118) or eruiz@csg.org

NACo Western Interstate Region

Chris Marklund, Associate Legislative Director, Public Lands and Western Interstate Region
202.942.4207 or cmarklund@naco.org
David Jackson, Communications Director
(202) 942-4271 and Djackson@naco.org

Pacific Northwest Economic Region

Matt Morrison, Executive Director
(206) 443-7723 or matt.morrison@pnwer.org