



EAST

Housing: The Policy Cornerstone



CSG EAST
64th Annual Meeting &
Regional Policy Forum

Providence, Rhode Island ★ August 17-20, 2025

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CSG EAST 64th Annual Meeting & Regional Policy Forum

Providence, Rhode Island ★ August 17-20, 2025



Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome! Thank you for joining us at CSG East's 64th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum in Providence, Rhode Island. Although it is the smallest state in the union, Rhode Island's attractions are vast, from Newport's Gilded Age mansions to Providence's famous restaurants and cultural gems.

The theme for this year's meeting is **Housing: The Policy Cornerstone**. Housing has emerged as one of the most important policy issues legislators in our region face. In addition, CSG East policy committees will meet to discuss a wide array of other issues affecting the region too, including Agriculture and Rural Development, Canada-U.S. Relations, Education and Workforce Development, Energy and Environment, the Council on Communities of Color, Fiscal Policy, Health, Territorial Relations, and Transportation.

We are very excited to meet our colleagues from around the CSG East region here in Providence and look forward to showcasing all that our beautiful state has to offer.

Sincerely,



REP. JOSEPH SHEKARCHI
Speaker of the House | Rhode Island
2025 CSG East Co-Chair



SEN. VALARIE LAWSON
President of the Senate | Rhode Island
2025 CSG East Co-Chair



REP. CHRISTOPHER R. BLAZEJEWSKI
House Majority Leader | Rhode Island
Host Committee



REP. MICHAEL W. CHIPPENDALE
House Minority Leader | Rhode Island
Host Committee



SEN. JESSICA DE LA CRUZ
Senate Minority Leader | Rhode Island
Host Committee



General Information

Meeting Venue

OMNI PROVIDENCE HOTEL

One West Exchange Street, Providence, Rhode Island

Conference Registration

NARRAGANSETT LOBBY

Rhode Island Hospitality Desk // NARRAGANSETT LOBBY, 1ST FL

Rhode Island Host Office // EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM, 3RD FL

CSG East Policy Office // BLACKSTONE, 3RD FL

CSG Staff Office // WATERPLACE I, 2ND FLOOR

Speakers' Briefing Room // ROTUNDA, 2ND FLOOR

Registration Hours

Saturday, Aug. 16 // 1-5 P.M.

Sunday, Aug. 17 // 7:30 A.M.-5:30 P.M.

Monday, Aug. 18 // 7 A.M.-5 P.M.

Tuesday, Aug. 19 // 7 A.M.-5 P.M.

Dress Code

Meetings // BUSINESS CASUAL

Spouse/Guest Program // CASUAL

Executive Committee Dinner // BUSINESS CASUAL

Opening Event // CASUAL

Receptions // BUSINESS CASUAL

Rhode Island State Dinner // BUSINESS CASUAL

CSG advocates the responsible use of alcohol and designated drivers by all participants at CSG functions.

Meeting App

Planning each day at the 2025 meeting is easiest with the CSG East Annual Meeting Conference app! Use your mobile phone or tablet to access the app and:

- Receive push notifications, important reminders, and meeting announcements throughout the meeting.
- Read each morning's daily newsletter.
- Customize your meeting agenda and see upcoming events throughout the meeting.
- Network with your colleagues throughout the CSG East region, connect with other attendees, and more.
- Learn more about this year's speakers.
- Keep a floor plan handy for navigating the meeting.
- Give feedback on the Annual Meeting through the app.

To access the meeting app:

- Download **Cvent Events** from the [App Store](#) (Apple) or [Google Play](#) (Android)
- Search "CSG East" and login with the email you used to register.





About CSG East

CSG Mission

The Council of State Governments (CSG) is the nation's only regionally based, multibranch organization serving all 50 states, and commonwealths, as well as U.S. territories. Since the creation of CSG in 1933, state officials have turned to the organization as an impartial source of information to help them meet the challenge of governing. As a national organization representing all three branches of state government, CSG is uniquely suited to identify innovative approaches to common problems facing states.

CSG Eastern Regional Conference (CSG East)

The CSG East office, located in New York City since 1937, serves legislative, executive, and judicial branch officials from the 11 eastern states that span from Maine to Maryland, as well as officials in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the eastern Canadian provinces of

Québec, New Brunswick, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. CSG East educates policymakers about issues of concern to the region, encourages multistate problem-solving and partnerships, and promotes regional interests at the federal level.

The Annual Meeting & Regional Policy Forum

The CSG East Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum brings together policymakers from all branches of government who are within the member jurisdictions of CSG East to connect with experts from the private sector and academia to address a range of critical public policy issues facing the region. This unique event serves as a vehicle for enhanced regional cooperation and communication and enables attendees to share ideas and network and across state and national borders.



Meeting Agenda

Saturday, August 16

1:15-2:15 p.m.

Budget Committee

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

For members of the Budget Committee only

2:30-3:30 p.m.

Strategic Planning Committee

BRISTOL/KENT 3RD FL

3:45-4:45 p.m.

Annual Meeting Committee

BRISTOL/KENT 3RD FL

6:15 p.m.

Depart for Executive Committee Dinner

MAIN HOTEL ENTRANCE

6:30-9:00 p.m.

Executive Committee and Corporate Contributors Dinner

BILTMORE BALLROOM, 17TH FL, GRADUATE HOTEL
11 DORRANCE STREET, PROVIDENCE, RI

By invitation only

Sunday, August 17

7:30-8:45 a.m.

Breakfast

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

9:15-11:30 a.m.

Executive Committee

NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

11:45-12:30 p.m.

Nominations Committee

SOUTH COUNTY, 3RD FL



Meeting Agenda (continued)

12:30–2:00 p.m.

Lunch

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

For all attendees and guests not attending a policy session lunch

12:45–2:30 p.m.

Policy Committee Meetings / Lunch

(five concurrent 1-hour, 45-minute sessions)

1. Agriculture and Rural Affairs

PROVIDENCE II & III, 3RD FL

Annual Policy Roundtable

Open forum moderated by CSG East committee co-chairs

PRESIDING

- Senator Brian Pettyjohn, Delaware
- Senator Judy Schwank, Pennsylvania

2. Canada-U.S. Relations

PROVIDENCE I & IV, 3RD FL

Investing in Semiconductor Research and Development

What joint initiatives can the U.S. and Canada take to promote research and development in the semiconductor sector and drive innovation? What strategies can the U.S. and Canada employ to ensure their semiconductor and AI collaboration remains adaptable and effective in the face of rapidly evolving technologies and global trends? How can we mitigate the effects of the tariffs and restriction of technology development on semiconductor development?

PRESIDING

- Assemblymember Billy Jones, New York; Co-chair, CSG East Canada-U.S. Relations Committee
- MPP Laurie Scott, Ontario; Co-chair, CSG East Canada-U.S. Relations Committee
- Adam Boltik, program manager, Office of International Commerce, New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs; Chair, CSG East Eastern Trade Council

3. Council on Communities of Color

NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

Annual Policy Roundtable

How can Black and Brown communities take advantage of growing “green economy” and AI industries? Emerging Artificial Intelligence and resilience/clean energy markets

are quickly evolving and may shape the future in several key ways. With that in mind, how do Black and Brown communities access these workforce development, small business creation, and economic growth opportunities? Audience members will be encouraged to join in the discussion.

SPEAKERS

- Toni Coleman Brown, founder, Network for Women in Business
- Representative Chris Rabb, Pennsylvania
- Rev. Jon Robinson, senior program director, Smart Surfaces, Metropolitan A.M.E. Church, Washington, D.C.

4. Education and Workforce Development

NEWPORT/WASHINGTON, 3RD FL

How Do the Early Years of Learning Shape Later Academic Performance?

Whether in preschool, daycare, or at home, what children learn in their earliest years sets the foundation for future academic success. While education policy components are each viewed under individual lenses, in practice, specific learning blocks and developmental milestones work in concert, continuously building upon one another, allowing the learner to achieve the next step in academic growth.

This panel will explore how childcare and early childhood education programs can embed developmentally appropriate learning to promote success in grade-level education. Panelists will consider both Canadian and U.S. strategies and discuss how continuity from “birth-to-three” learning to preschool translates to success in grades K-3. Further, they will discuss opportunities to leverage finance and policy infrastructure to enhance or expand early childhood learning options.

PRESIDING

- Senator Hanna Gallo, Rhode Island; chair, CSG East Education and Workforce Development Committee

PANELISTS

- MNA Marie-Belle Gendron, Member of National Assembly and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Families, Québec
- Representative Kate Farrar, deputy majority leader, Connecticut
- Caroline O’Neal, CEO, Reading Assist

Meeting Agenda (continued)



5. Housing

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

How States Work with Municipalities to Incentivize and Enforce Housing Development

Join the Housing Committee for a broad discussion of how states are working with municipalities to increase housing production. Investigate the incentives and enforcement mechanisms that states have deployed to curb exclusionary zoning and streamline the production of affordable and diverse housing options. New Jersey updated its “fair share” procedures and launched a new initiative to help build a variety of new housing. Connecticut created a statewide authority to establish Housing Growth Zones in partnership with municipalities, pursuing transit-oriented development and restoring vibrancy to downtowns and main streets. Massachusetts developed a 5-year housing plan, created a program offering a “menu” of reform options to municipalities, and utilizes an appeals process to ensure affordable housing is developed across the state. These significant state innovations and policies from elsewhere will be discussed. Open discussion will follow and attendees will be invited to ask questions or share their own insights.

PRESIDING

- Senator Brian Kavanagh, New York; chair, CSG East Housing Committee

SPEAKERS

- Noah Kazis, assistant professor, University of Michigan Law School
- Chris Kluchman, director of livable communities, Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
- David Kooris, executive director, Connecticut Municipal Development Authority
- Colleen Velez, director of special programs, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

2:30-3:00 p.m.

30-minute break

3:00-4:45 p.m.

Policy Committee Meetings

(five concurrent 1-hour, 45-minute sessions)

1. Energy and Environment

NEWPORT/WASHINGTON

Rising Utility Bills and the Urgency of Grid Investment: A State Policy Response

As utility bills continue to climb across the region, state officials are under increasing pressure to deliver both immediate relief and long-term solutions. This panel will explore how energy affordability is linked to the urgent need for strategic grid planning and infrastructure investments in reliability and capacity. Together, the panelists will provide insight into how state policy can drive coordinated responses that address affordability, resiliency, and the energy systems of our future in the East.

PRESIDING

- Senator Meghan Kallman, Rhode Island; CSG East Energy and Environment Co-Chair

SPEAKERS

- Representative Christopher Rabb, Pennsylvania
- Michael Downey, deputy chief operating officer, Energy Futures Initiative (EFI) Foundation
- Sonia Griffen, research analyst, EFI Foundation
- Asim Z. Haque, senior VP for governmental & member services, PJM Interconnection

Meeting Agenda (continued)

2. Health

PROVIDENCE I & IV, 3RD FL

General Overview of Healthcare in Ontario

An open forum discussion to explore what regional members are doing to promote health and healthcare, as well as legislative session highlights from several states including policies to promote primary care.

PRESIDING

- Senator Gustavo Rivera, New York; Chair, CSG East Health Committee

SPEAKERS

- Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Maryland
- Reginald Parson, deputy director, Paid Family and Medical Leave Program, Maine Department of Labor
- Laurie Scott, MPP Legislative Assembly of Ontario

3. Territorial Relations

SOUTH COUNTY 3RD FL

Ecosystem Based Adaptation: Strategies for Preserving and Restoring Natural Ecosystems

Natural features such as coral reefs, mangroves, and forest cover dot the coastlines of U.S. Caribbean territories and offer enhanced resilience to climate change and natural disasters. Hear from territorial leaders on how they are acting to preserve these ecosystems and even restore them to promote resilience for years to come.

PRESIDING

- Senator Milton Potter, Senate President, U.S. Virgin Islands; Co-chair, CSG East Territorial Relations Committee
- Senator Carmelo Ríos, First Vice President, Puerto Rico; Co-chair, CSG East Territorial Relations Committee

4. Transportation

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

Funding an Efficient Transportation Network

Join the Transportation Committee to explore ways that states are funding dynamic and fiscally sustainable transportation networks. A search for alternatives to declining fuel tax revenues has led policymakers to consider a range of new funding sources. Hear experts discuss pilot programs for mileage-based user fees, or vehicle miles traveled fees, and their potential to fill critical budget gaps. Learn more about the innovations and challenges persisting across the growing network of multimodal transportation, which includes public transit, regional rail, bicycle lanes, and more, as public officials continue to prioritize access and safety. Amid budget

constraints and diminished ridership, discuss how public transit agencies are investigating creative options, pursuing new funding sources, and focusing on the economic advantages that transit provides. This session includes time for Q&A discussion and attendees will be invited to share insights from their own jurisdictions.

PRESIDING

- Senator Patrick Brennan, Vermont; chair, CSG East Transportation Committee

SPEAKERS

- Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto, Connecticut Department of Transportation; president, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- Senator Lou DiPalma, Rhode Island; chair, Senate Finance Committee
- Jared Johnson, Boston office director, Toole Design

5. Emerging Criminal and Youth Justice Challenges in the Eastern Region: A Policymaker Roundtable

PROVIDENCE II & III, 3RD FL

Join fellow legislative leaders for a facilitated roundtable on pressing criminal and youth justice challenges facing the Eastern region. The session will include a high-level overview of key state and regional criminal justice trends followed by a candid, solutions-focused discussion. Participants will explore shared challenges, exchange insights on what's working, and discuss the policy approaches that would make the biggest impact in their states. The session will also explore effective messaging strategies and provide tailored resources to strengthen policy responses and collaboration across the region.

5-6 p.m.

First-time Attendee Orientation/Reception

NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Departures for opening event

HOTEL MAIN ENTRANCE

6:00-9:30 p.m.

Opening Event: Clam boil Dinner at the Rhode Island State House



Meeting Agenda (continued)

Monday, August 18

7:30-8:45 a.m.

Breakfast

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

8:45-11:15 a.m.

Concurrent Policy Sessions

(three 2-hour, 30-minute sessions)

1. Agriculture and Rural Affairs

PROVIDENCE II & III, 3RD FL

What a Waste—the not-so-hidden side of animal agriculture

According to the latest data, U.S. livestock and poultry operations generate an estimated 1.4 billion tons of waste annually. Where does all this waste go? What protections are in place to limit the environmental impact of animal food production? And what can legislators do to better control the potential dangers to health and the environment?

Discuss how effective the current regulations governing the disposal of animal waste are and what states are doing to find better solutions to the growing problem.

SPEAKERS

- Peggy Hall, Esq., Ohio State University, Director of the OSU Agricultural and Resource Law Program
- Rep. Nicholas Germana, NH House of Representatives, Environment & Agriculture Committee
- Mr. Scott Clemens, Twinn Buttes Consulting

2. Housing

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

Increasing Housing Supply and Investing in Critical Infrastructure

In recent years, legislators seeking to unwind the housing crisis have found success in passing regulatory reforms and innovative financing programs. This two-panel session features state legislators and other experts with a variety of recommendations for building and preserving housing and creating financial tools to support affordable developments and critical infrastructure.

PRESIDING

- Senator Brian Kavanagh, New York; chair, CSG East Housing Committee

Meeting Agenda (continued)

A. Regulatory Reforms to Diversify and Increase Housing Supply

Recent legislative actions have targeted reforms ranging from building codes and designs to zoning and land use. These actions streamline the development of new housing, allow the building of more naturally affordable housing types, and lower costs by leveraging the value of publicly owned land or land near transit. Join this session to discuss these latest regulatory reform initiatives along with the increasing role of land banks and community land trusts in preserving long-term affordability.

SPEAKERS

- Tim Love, founding principal, Utile Design
- Rep. June Speakman, Rhode Island; Second Vice Chair, Municipal Government and Housing Committee
- Kim Graziani, technical assistance senior advisor, Center for Community Progress

B. Investing in Housing and Critical Infrastructure

Onerous regulations are not the only things impeding new housing starts. Public and private-sector officials alike have pointed to gaps in sufficient financing and a lack of critical infrastructure, such as public water and sewage lines, as key hurdles to increasing housing supply. In response, states are innovating with new financial tools, such as tax increment financing, housing trust funds, production funds, and state-level tax credits. These tools, combined strategically with public-private partnerships, can contribute to the capital stacks of development projects. Additionally, multiple states are exploring the role of social housing and public development financing models. Join the legislators and policy experts at the forefront of these efforts to learn about financial innovations that might be useful in your jurisdiction.

SPEAKERS

- Senator Alison Clarkson, Vermont; chair, Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs
- Maurice Coleman, senior vice president, Bank of America
- Paul Williams, executive director, Center for Public Enterprise

3. Council on Communities of Color

NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

Policy Roundtable: K-12 Education Quality in Black and Brown Communities

K-12 schools serving majority Black and Brown populations are often among the most underfunded and deficient in

the country. What are the keys to rebuilding and improving them? Audience members will be engaged and encouraged to join in the discussion.

SPEAKERS

- Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Maryland; vice-chair, CSG East Council on Communities of Color
- Peter Groff, chief strategist, MCG2 Consulting
- Representative Darisha Parker, Pennsylvania

11:15 a.m.-11:30

15-minute Break

11:30 a.m.-1:55 p.m.

Opening Ceremony / Plenary Luncheon Housing: The Policy Cornerstone

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

- Welcome from the 2025 Co-chairs, Speaker Shekarchi and Senate President Lawson
- Presentation of Colors, Rhode Island State Police Honor Guard
- The National Anthems of Canada and the United States, Todd Angilly, Opera Tenor, anthem singer for TD Garden and the Boston Bruins.

Housing intertwines with numerous facets of society and accounts for a crucial portion of household budgets. Elevated costs and restricted access to affordable options have led to diminished health, employment, educational, and environmental outcomes for the residents of urban, suburban, and rural communities. Rising levels of homelessness strain the capacity of shelter systems and healthcare providers while businesses have struggled to find employees who can afford to live within proximity to work. High costs of housing also cast doubt upon the rising generation's hope to achieve homeownership and reduce the effectiveness of available subsidy dollars to develop affordable housing, workforce housing, or fund essential programs, such as rental vouchers.

Policymakers have renewed focus on resolving these cross-sector challenges precipitated by the lack of housing. Collaboration between housing, transportation, and environmental agencies aim to reduce costs with streamlined development processes, new construction designs, and other innovations. Rhode Island, in particular, has made housing a major priority, as noted in its comprehensive 5-year housing plan to create development goals and incentives, identify zoning and land use reforms, and invest in strategic infrastructure.

Meeting Agenda (continued)

Join this session to unpack emerging policies and strategies with the state government officials and policy experts at the forefront of this issue.

INTRODUCTION

- Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the House, Rhode Island

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

- Jenny Schuetz, vice president of Housing, Arnold Ventures, author of *Fixer-Upper: How to Repair America's Broken Housing Systems*

MODERATOR

- Anthony Flint, senior fellow, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; author of *This Land: The Battle over Sprawl and the Future of America*; host of Land Matters podcast

PANELISTS

- Secretary Deborah Goddard, Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing
- Senator Brian Kavanagh, New York; chair, Committee on Housing, Construction, and Community Development
- Jenny Schuetz, vice president of Housing, Arnold Ventures, author of *Fixer-Upper: How to Repair America's Broken Housing Systems*



1:55-2:15 p.m.

20-minute Break

2:15-4:45 p.m.

Concurrent Policy Sessions

(Four 2-hour, 30-minute sessions)

1. Federal Funding in Education: How do Federal Dollars Impact State Education Spending?

NEWPORT/WASHINGTON, 3RD FL

In the 2021-2022 academic year, the average American public school drew nearly 14 percent of its funding from the federal government, with some schools receiving up to 75 percent of their total revenue from Washington. Funding streams come from a variety of programs, the largest pools going toward disadvantaged students, special education, and child nutrition. To offset proposed changes to the federal funding and regulatory structure, elected officials must recognize and prepare for the potential impact to their local schools, budgets, and state and local policy frameworks.

This discussion will provide an overview of key federal education funding streams, the fiscal interaction between federal and state governments, and opportunities for state education policy leaders to mitigate disruptions.

Following the panel discussion, the CSG national director of federal affairs will share updates and respond to questions about federal policy changes relevant to state and provincial leaders.

MODERATOR

- Jamal Nelson, national director of federal affairs, The Council of State Governments

PANELISTS

- Johnny W. Collett, former assistant secretary, U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
- Elson Nash, lead consultant, Education Commission of the States
- Jennifer Schiess, senior partner and policy and evaluation leader, Bellwether

Meeting Agenda (continued)

2. Transportation Panels

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

This two-panel session examines the need for critical infrastructure investments across the transportation sector as well as opportunities for transportation policies to support housing and community development initiatives. Join state and federal officials alongside policy experts to discuss the latest policy developments.

PRESIDING

- Senator Patrick Brennan, Vermont; chair, CSG East Transportation Committee

A. Investment Priorities for Critical Transportation Infrastructure

Aging infrastructure and high development costs have led policymakers to consider new strategies for financing these critical investments. Hear from the U.S. Department of Transportation about the federal government's infrastructure priorities and funding opportunities for states. Explore state efforts to bolster climate resilience, invest in workforce development, and provide the upgraded and modernized infrastructure required for safe and efficient mobility across a vast, multimodal transportation network.

SPEAKERS

- Connor Torossian, deputy assistant secretary of inter-governmental affairs, U.S. Department of Transportation
- Leslie Richards, professor, University of Pennsylvania; former secretary at Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; former chief executive officer at Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

B. Safer Streets, Parking Reform, and Transit-Oriented Development

States have increasingly pursued comprehensive policies to address the escalating costs of housing and transportation. These efforts aim to accelerate the production of housing, foster vibrant downtowns and main streets, and improve pedestrian safety on roads. Vision Zero and Complete Streets are initiatives to reduce traffic deaths and injuries by re-examining street designs with a heightened focus on pedestrian mobility, including walking and cycling. Similarly, transit-oriented development policies seek to reduce housing costs by streamlining development in areas accessible to public transit, while simultaneously diminishing reliance on private vehicle ownership and reducing traffic congestion. Parking reforms have been introduced or enacted by several states, often targeting transit-accessible areas, to redirect investments towards housing, roadway maintenance, and other community improvements.

SPEAKERS

- Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr, Maryland; secretary, Maryland Transit Caucus
- Tony Jordan, president, Parking Reform Network
- John MacMull, director of communications and public affairs, Canadian Urban Transit Association

3. Consolidation and Private Equity in Health Care

PROVIDENCE I & IV, 3RD FL

The healthcare industry is experiencing significant consolidation and private equity investments for more than twenty-five years, raising concerns about the impact on access, quality, and outcomes. A health policy analyst will provide an overview of history, describe the current market, and summarize research related to the impact of consolidation and private equity nationally and on CSG East states, provinces, and territories. Participants will discuss their policy work to address the challenges.

MODERATOR

- Senator Gustavo Rivera, New York; Chair, CSG East Health Policy Committee

SPEAKER

- Erin Fuse Brown, JD, MPH, professor, Center for Advancing Health Policy Through Research, Brown University

RESPONDENT

- Melony G. Griffith, president and chief executive officer, Maryland Hospital Association
- Lucille Collard, MPP Legislative Assembly of Ontario

4. Fiscal Roundtable

PROVIDENCE II & III, 3RD FL

Leaders in all 50 states are grappling with uncertainty in federal funding across a wide array of programs. The CSG East annual fiscal roundtable has long been a forum for budget-writing officials and interested members to discuss the macro trends of the day and share ideas for promoting budget stability. In today's environment, how can Eastern members prevent fiscal disarray and better work with federal partners to maintain services in education, infrastructure, healthcare, and beyond? Join a presentation and lively discussion on how states can take a more proactive role in fiscal oversight.

SPEAKERS

- Ben Eikay, manager of state training and development, Carl Levin Center for Oversight & Democracy
- Ian McKnight, manager of state training and development, Carl Levin Center for Oversight & Democracy

Meeting Agenda (continued)

5-6 p.m.

ELA and Toll Fellows Reception
SOUTH COUNTY, 3RD FL

6-7 p.m.

Friends of Canada Reception
NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

7 p.m.

**WaterFire display on the River /
Dinner on your own**

Take a short walk to WaterFire, a unique installation at the edge of the Providence River, lit in honor of CSG East's member jurisdictions. This award-winning fire sculpture installation on the three rivers in downtown Providence has become a must-see for visitors and makes for a great way to start your evening exploring the city.

9:30-11:30 p.m.

SGAC reception
SOUTH COUNTY, 3RD FLOOR





Meeting Agenda (continued)

Tuesday, August 19

7:30-8:45 a.m.

Breakfast

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

8:45-11:15 a.m.

Concurrent Policy Sessions

(Four 2-hour, 30-minute sessions)

1. The Future of Nuclear in the East

PROVIDENCE II & III, 3RD FL

As demand for energy grows and supply remains largely stagnant, state leaders have started to search for all possible solutions to a growing energy shortage in the region. On February 5th, 2025, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania – along with other states from the National Association of State Energy Officials – committed to accelerating advanced nuclear projects as part of the “Advanced Nuclear First Mover Initiative.”

In this panel, we hear from NYSERDA’s John Williams on a regional initiative to advance nuclear power; Jon Grieves with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on advanced nuclear power reactors; Kathleen Capstick from 3Yankees on the national issue of managing spent nuclear fuel; and Paul Murray with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on the siting for an interim storage facility and transportation of spent nuclear fuel. If you work on energy issues, don’t miss this opportunity to be better informed on the future of nuclear energy in the region!

SPEAKERS

- Paul Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Spent High-Fuel and High-Level Waste Disposition, US Department of Energy (DOE)
- Kathleen Capstick, Director of Public & Government Affairs, Maine Yankee
- John Williams, Executive Vice President for Policy and Regulatory Affairs, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
- Jon Grieves, Deputy Director Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-power Production Facilities, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Meeting Agenda (continued)

2. Primary Care: Prevention Begins at Home – Support for Older Adults in the Community

PROVIDENCE I & IV, 3RD FL

A brief overview of programs and policies related to disease prevention and health promotion. Panelists will provide examples of community interventions that support healthy individuals and communities through program and policy innovations, innovative state programs related to food insecurity and food as medicine, mental and behavioral healthcare, infectious disease prevention through vaccine programs, and healthy older adult communities.

MODERATOR

- Bethany Hall-Long, University of Delaware; former Lt. Governor, Delaware

PANELISTS

- Brent Ewig, chief policy and government relations officer, Association of Immunization officers
- Dimple Patel, director, state public policy, Casey Family Programs

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

- Lucille Collard, MPP Legislative Assembly of Ontario

3. Reducing Veteran Homelessness with Supportive Housing and Mental Health Services

BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

State officials, community organizations, and housing developers have joined with veterans all over the country to successfully reduce the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in recent years. In 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated that 73,367 veterans were experiencing homelessness. The latest count, in 2024, was 32,882—more than a 50% reduction. These efforts rely on the development of supportive housing, both permanent and transitional, which provide veterans with shelter, health services, job training, financial literacy education, transportation, and other services. Elected officials have played a critical role in passing legislation to improve access to these benefits, often through the use of public-private partnerships. Join this panel of experts, including public-sector officials and housing providers, to learn more about supportive housing, funding sources, and the services needed to support the veterans community.

PRESIDING

- Senator Sharon Carson, President of the Senate, New Hampshire; chair, CSG East Military and Veterans Affairs Committee

SPEAKERS

- Dan Bosley, governmental consultant, Soldier On; former Massachusetts legislator; former national chair of the Council of State Governments
- Assemblyman Steve Stern, New York; chair, Veterans' Affairs Committee
- Melissa Willette, New England region liaison, U.S. Department of Defense State Liaison Office
- Kasim Yarn, director, Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services

4. HBCUs as the Next Frontier in Higher Education Opportunity

NARRAGANSETT C, 1ST FL

Join the Council on Communities of Color for a roundtable discussion on supporting and strengthening HBCUs and other post-secondary minority-serving institutions (MSIs). How do policymakers transform these institutions into premier research centers or attract the recognition they deserve as historic cornerstones for these communities? What threats exist in 2025 and beyond and how can leaders address them proactively? *Audience members will be engaged and encouraged to join in the discussion.*

SPEAKERS

- Dr. M.C. Brown, executive director, Joyce Payne Center for Social Justice
- Representative Kendra Johnson, Delaware
- Delegate Karen Toles, Maryland



Meeting Agenda (continued)

11:15-11:30 a.m.

15-minute Break

11:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m.

Plenary Luncheon: The Primary Care Crisis

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

INTRODUCTION

- Senator Gustavo Rivera, New York; chair, CSG East Health Policy Committee

Although primary care is foundational in the delivery, organization, and financing of healthcare, health systems struggle with providing the level of access, care coordination, and comprehensive care needed to make it effective. Joe Telano, senior policy manager at the Primary Care Development Corporation, will review the state of primary care in the United States and current initiatives aimed at improving primary healthcare.

KEYNOTE

- Joe Telano, senior policy manager, Primary Care Development Corporation

MODERATOR

- Senator Gustavo Rivera, New York; Chair, CSG East Health Policy Committee

RESPONDENT

- Representative Susan Donovan, Rhode Island
- Laurie Scott, MPP Legislative Assembly of Ontario



2:00-5:00 p.m.

Off-site Policy Excursions

(five concurrent tours, roughly 3 hours each)

DEPART FROM THE HOTEL MAIN ENTRANCE

1. Agriculture and Rural Development

Tour to Farm Fresh Rhode Island, Johnson & Wales University

Join the Agriculture Committee to embark upon a culinary tour of Johnson & Wales University's College of Food Innovation and Technology—one of the nation's premier institutions for food education. Head towards the Harborside campus, sited on Narragansett Bay, and visit the Culinary Arts Museum, learning about the history of the modern food industry. Next, see their Food Innovation and Design Lab, where students study the art and science of product development. Afterwards, visit Farm Fresh Rhode Island, a nationally recognized nonprofit aiming to increase the availability and affordability of locally sourced foods. Go behind-the-scenes to learn more about their many programs, including Farmers Markets, Farm to School and Community Education, Hope's Harvest, Market Mobile, and their culinary job training program, Harvest Kitchen.

2. Education and Workforce Development

Tour of Building Futures: Growing the building trades through apprenticeships

The building trades face a skilled labor shortage. With the current skilled workforce nearing retirement age, employers and government officials seek to expand access to training for a new generation of skilled employees. Investing in the expansion of the building labor force also presents a key opportunity for increasing housing development.

Visit Building Futures, a pre-apprenticeship program that for almost two decades has prepared adults experiencing poverty for successful employment as registered apprentices in the building trades. Learn about these impactful registered apprenticeship programs and the registered apprenticeship model, which is growing in popularity regionally.

3. Housing

Providence Tour of Affordable Housing and Community Revitalization

**Due to active construction at some locations, all participants will need to wear closed-toe shoes and long pants. Safety gear will be provided as needed.*

Meeting Agenda (continued)

Join the Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing for a tour of recent housing developments and community revitalization efforts across Providence. Senior leadership will share insights throughout the tour, discussing affordable housing, financing tools, and innovative redevelopment strategies. Participants will visit several affordable housing sites, meeting with state and local officials, facility managers, and project stakeholders to discuss the operations, service delivery models, and community impact.

Begin the tour at Summer Street, a permanent supportive housing development by Crossroads Rhode Island, which will offer comprehensive supportive services to formerly unhoused adults. Next, visit a rehabilitation project serving at-risk families and youth. Continue the tour and learn about the community-driven transformation of a blighted property into vibrant affordable housing, highlighting the power of public-private collaboration, historic reinvestment, and resident-focused planning. Explore two new construction projects, one of which is among the first-ever recipients of the State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. The other, located in the I-95 Redevelopment District, is a mixed-use development featuring both market-rate and subsidized units near transit and other amenities. The tour concludes upon return to the Omni Providence Hotel.

TOUR LEADERS

- Secretary Deborah Goddard, Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing
- Peter Asen, director of housing production and preservation, Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing

4. Economic/Trade

Behind the scenes in the Franchise Food Service Sector

Attendees will have the opportunity to visit a local Dunkin' franchise, approximately a 10-minute drive from the hotel. The store visit will provide the opportunity to see a Dunkin' from behind the scenes, meet local Dunkin' franchisees, hear about their business, and learn why the franchise business model is so important to state economies and communities. The visit will provide a practical look at day-to-day operations within a working store environment.

Afterwards, the tour will continue to a Dunkin' bakery where attendees can meet additional Dunkin' franchisees, tour the facility and observe operational workflows and back-of-house processes. Following the tour, the group will gather in the on-site conference room for a focused discussion on franchising, including a Q&A session with participating franchisees.

5. Health

Brown Medicine Primary Care Practices

Participants will be required to sign a consent form before joining this tour

Primary Care Physician leaders from Brown Medicine will share their experiences and work with RI State Government. For more than 10 years, Rhode Island's legislative and executive branches have been engaged in efforts to improve the organization, delivery, and financing of primary care services. Join colleagues in visiting an exemplary primary care program that models an academic-service partnership for population based primary care and explore the role RI state government played in creating a primary care program that "...supports the four-part aim of better care, better health, and lower cost for patients, and joy in work for providers and staff." Learn how state government has helped to assure 365-day access to sick visits, chronic care management programs, and building care teams that support providers in delivering high-quality care and meet members of those care teams.

6:30-9:30 p.m.

2025 Rhode Island State Dinner

NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

Close out the meeting with the Rhode Island State Dinner, our final evening event of the 2025 program.





Meeting Agenda (continued)

Wednesday, August 20

7:30-8:30 a.m.

Executive Committee Closing Business Session
BRISTOL/KENT, 3RD FL

8:30-10:00 a.m.

Farewell Brunch Plenary: Fireside Chat with Elizabeth Beisel
NARRAGANSETT AB, 1ST FL

MODERATOR

- Margery O'Brien, director Capitol TV

SPEAKER

- Elizabeth Beisel, three-time Olympian, former Olympic swim team captain, and the best-selling author of *Silver Lining*.

From a small-town girl with a dream, to winning Olympic medals, Rhode Island's own Elizabeth Beisel provides a compelling glimpse inside an Olympian's life as never seen before. Despite her huge success in the sport, Elizabeth struggled with doubts, failures, and injuries throughout her entire swimming career. Take a look inside the pressures that come with being an Olympian, and how Elizabeth mentally conquered the stress of competing at the highest level for over a decade. She is relatable, open, and honest, and her storytelling will leave you feeling emotional and inspired to pursue your own dreams, no matter who you are.

Elizabeth will be joined on stage by Margery O'Brien, journalist and Director of Capitol TV for a "fireside chat" with questions from the audience.

The Council of State Governments is a non-partisan organization of state officials from all three branches that provides a forum for members of any party affiliation to share best practices. We do not advocate for or against specific legislation.

In Memoriam

"I can assure you, public service is a stimulating, proud, and lively enterprise. It is not just a way of life, it is a way to live fully."

- Former United States Representative Lee Hamilton, Indiana



Senator Dominick Ruggerio

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, RHODE ISLAND

Senator Ruggerio had a long and distinguished career in public service that began working in the office of Lieutenant Governor Thomas DiLuglio, and then at the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. First elected to the Rhode Island General Assembly in 1980, and to the Senate in 1985, Senator Ruggerio served as Senate Majority Whip, Deputy Majority Leader, and Majority Leader from 2010-2017. In 2017 Senator Ruggerio became the Senate President and he is the longest serving legislator in Rhode Island's history. Until his recent untimely passing, Senator Ruggerio was also CSG East's 2025 co-chair.



Senator Bill Doyle

VERMONT

A long-time, active member, and ardent supporter of CSG East, Senator Doyle served as the CSG East Co-Chair in 2009. Doyle began serving the public on the Montpelier School Board and became its chair after three years. He began serving in the Vermont State Senate in 1968 and retired after 48 years becoming Vermont's longest serving state legislator. In private life he was Professor of Political Science at Johnson State College, and regularly brought government leaders to his classroom, influencing over sixty of his students to run for public office, creating a legacy of public service for generations.



Senator James Seward

NEW YORK

Senator Seward served 35 years in the New York State Senate representing first the 50th district and then the 51st. During his time in the Senate, Senator Seward was appointed Majority Whip in 2007; in 1986 chaired the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee; and in 1999 chaired the Senate Standing Committee on Insurance. Senator Seward also taught New York State Policy and Politics at Hartwick College in Oneonta where many of his students became interns in his state senate office. In 2018, Senator Seward served as the CSG East co-chair.

Guest Activities



Monday, August 18

AQUIDNECK ISLAND, NEWPORT

Adult Activity

Enjoy an exciting day in the unique seaside city of Newport. Located on Aquidneck Island, and famous for the hosting the America's Cup races, do not miss incredible Newport. The day starts with an overall tour of the town by motor coach. View the yacht-filled harbor, visit an iconic Gilded Age Mansion, enjoy lunch, and have time to stroll the town on your own before returning to Providence. **Please be ready to leave by 8:45 a.m. for a 9:00 a.m. departure.**

PROVIDENCE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM AND SCAVENGER HUNT

Junior/Teen Activity

The morning Junior/Teen delegates will spend the morning at the Providence Children's Museum (PCM). The museum believes that play is foundational and is the key to unlocking true potential. Through hands-on creative exhibits, as well as interesting creative artifacts from Rhode Island artists, designers, and art organizations PCM gives children an up-close look at the step-by-step creative process, inspiring their own creativity. Lunch at a near-by restaurant, with dessert at Tizzy's Cereal Ice Cream, and followed by the Providence scavenger hunt! Explore Downtown's historic landmarks, solve riddles, complete fun challenges, and discover hidden gems on this interactive walking tour.



BOWLING AND PIZZA PARTY

Junior/Teen Activity

Junior/Teen delegates are invited to a bowling party at CW Lanes and Games on Monday evening. After bowling, each guest will have credits on a game card to play to their hearts content in the games arcade!

Guest Activities (continued)

Tuesday, August 19

A TASTE OF PROVIDENCE

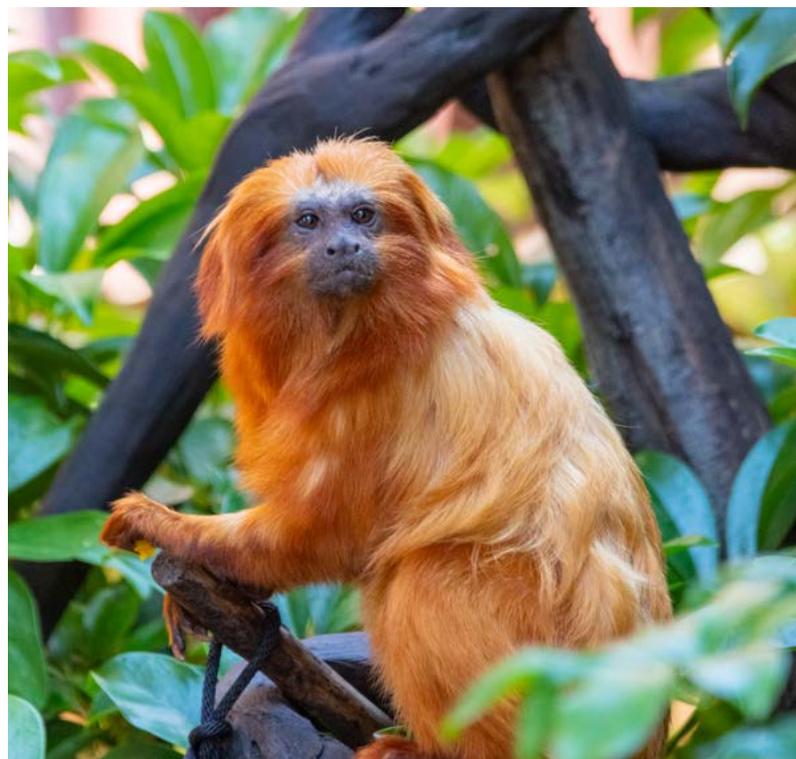
Adult Activity

Enjoy “a taste of Providence.” Sample some of the world’s most delicious food right here in Providence! Tour specialty food markets and learn the secrets to Providence’s unique flavors, and savor lunch on Providence’s famous Federal Hill. Afterward, take a relaxing tour of Providence by gondola on the Providence and Woonasquatucket rivers.

ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO

Junior/Teen Activity

Join us at Roger Williams Park Zoo for a day full of adventures! Between exclusive tours of animal facilities and encounters with some of our iconic animals, you will be able to experience the zoo in a way that you have not before. Our “Big Backyard” and water play area is a great place for little ones to cool off and run around. Between all the fun, you will be able to regroup in a private venue to relax or grab a bite of food.



Sponsors

CSG East Thanks the Generous Sponsors of the CSG East 64th Annual Meeting

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We apologize for any omission of sponsorships due to the production deadline.

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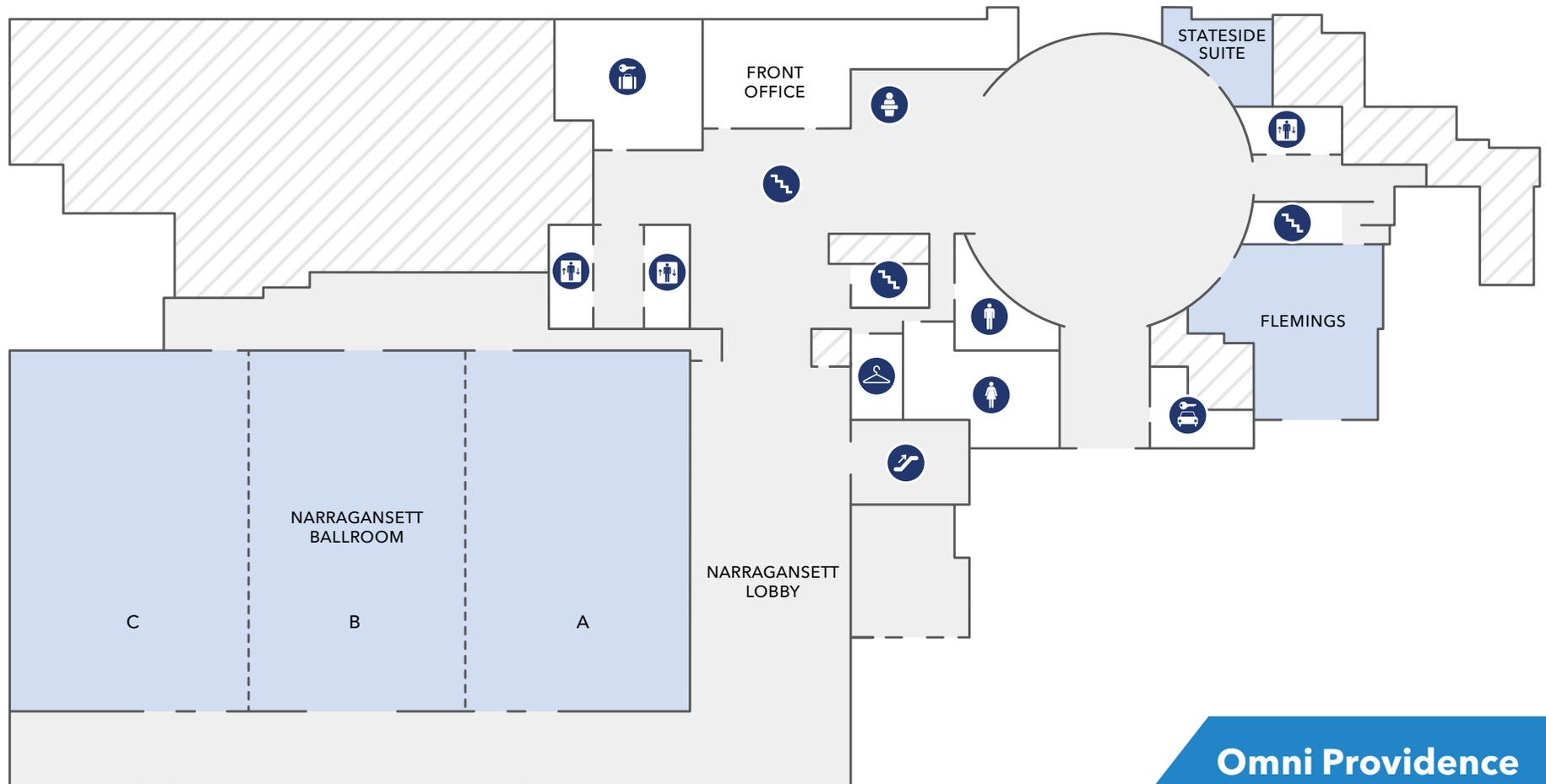
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1-800 Contacts	Cummins	Association
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Bold denotes new member or increased engagement in 2024.

Italicized recognizes membership and CSG National programmatic engagement in 2024.

Hotel Floor Plan



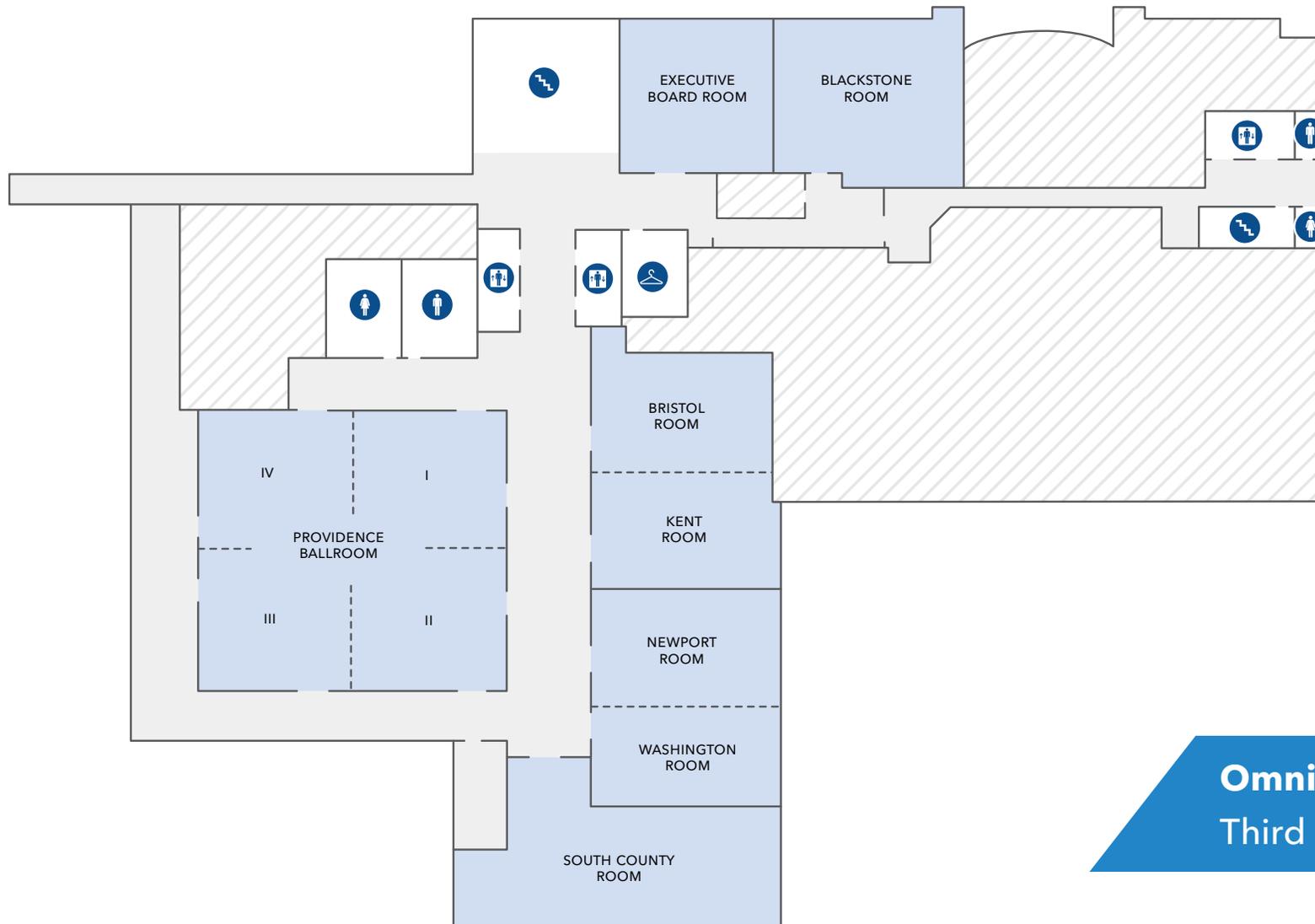
Omni Providence
First Floor

Hotel Floor Plan



Omni Providence
Second Floor

Hotel Floor Plan



Omni Providence
Third Floor



Robert J. Thompson Eastern Leadership Academy

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Eastern Leadership Academy

August 23-27, 2026 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CSG East and the University of Pennsylvania Fels Institute of Government invite you to apply to join the 2026 Robert J. Thompson Eastern Leadership Academy (ELA) class. This unique program will hone your leadership skills with other talented and high-achieving state and provincial officials from the CSG Eastern Regional Conference.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

ELA is specifically designed for legislators, legislative staff, and executive and judicial branch officials, primarily in the early-to-mid stages of their government careers. The ELA Application Review Committee looks for applicants who demonstrate: Leadership potential, including problem-solving and consensus-building skills; Dedication to public service; Commitment to improving government institutions and respect for state and provincial government.

HOW TO APPLY

In addition to the application form, each applicant must submit a résumé, a cover letter describing interest in ELA, and a letter of recommendation from a legislative leader or CSG East Executive Committee member.

WHAT YOU WILL GAIN

Through a series of hands-on and group workshops ranging from consensus-building to media relations, ELA provides training to sharpen and develop the skills you need to become an effective leader. Expert facilitators—including former state leaders—guide each year's group of about 30 participants through best practices, new ideas, and effective tools for navigating the many challenges of public service today. Evenings offer participants an opportunity to network with each other, building bonds that stretch from Prince Edward Island to Puerto Rico, Maine to Maryland, and beyond.

ELA'S PARTNER

The Fels Institute of Government is the University of Pennsylvania's graduate program in public policy and public management. Its personal and practical approach to public management education and its relatively small size make it one of the nation's leading boutique programs in public affairs. ELA alumni qualify for application fee waivers and scholarships towards UPenn's MPA programs.

For more information, visit <https://csg-erc.org/leadership-training/#eastern-leadership-academy>.

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