
ADVOCATING FOR FOOD SAFETY WITH POLICY MAKERS

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS 2018 AND 2019



NCSL OUTREACH TO STATE LEGISLATURES

- 6,211 Attendees to NCSL Boston Legislative Summit
 - 1,203 State Legislators
 - 1,111 Legislative Staff
- 13,003,731 Visits to NCSL Website
- 67 Webinars
- 49 Trainings or Testimony before Legislative Committees
- 10 issues of State Legislatures Magazine
- 335,000 visits to Social Media

WYOMING FOOD FREEDOM LAWS

“This act (Chapters 56 & 111) is a home-run. Wyoming's local food options have exploded and we still have had 0 foodborne illness outbreaks due to this Act passing into law.”

Wyoming Rep. Tyler Lindholm



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

STATE LEGISLATURES 2019

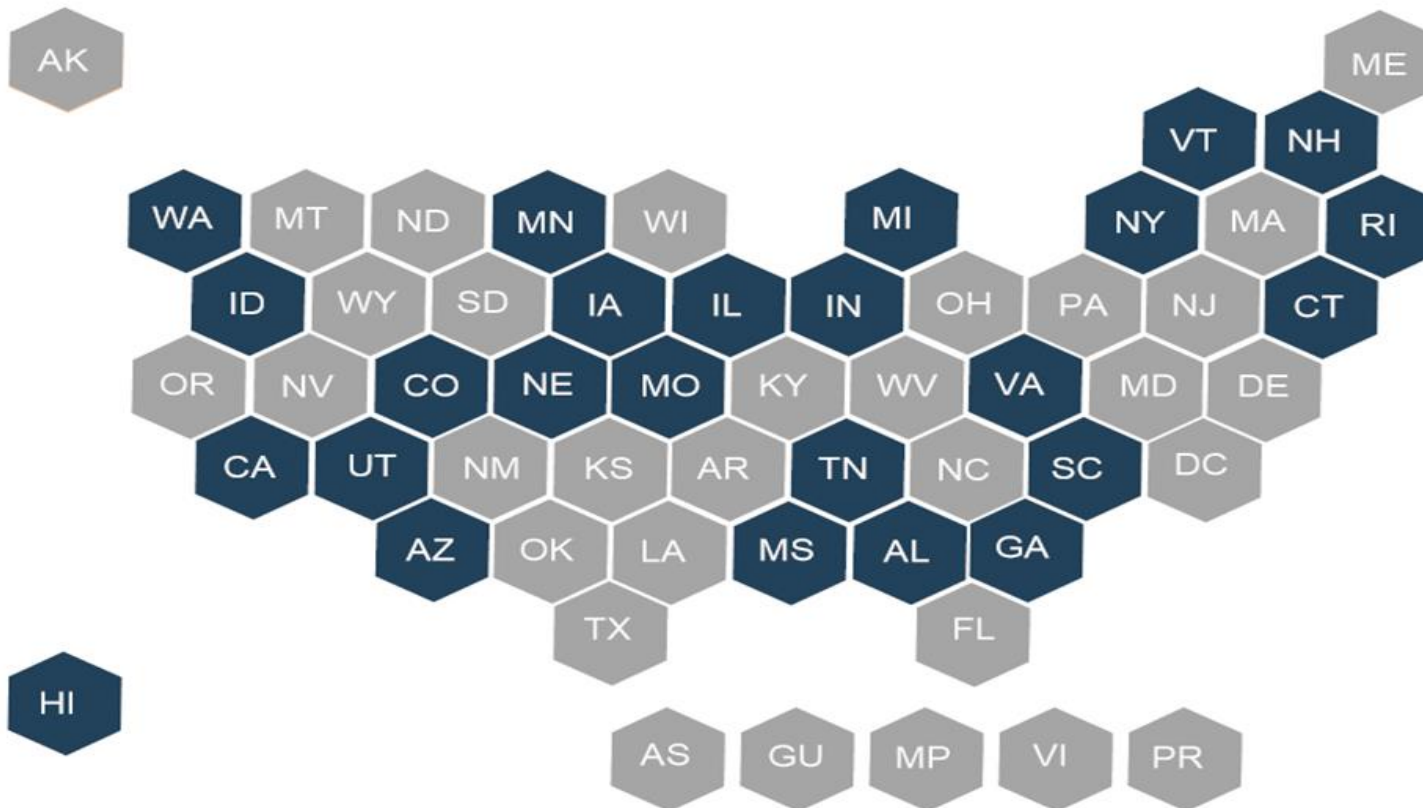
Current Composition

	Republicans	Democrats	Other
Legislators (7,383 total)	3,830 / 52%	3,446 / 47%	107 (Independent, Other or Undecided)
Chambers (98 total)	61 / 62%	37 / 38%	Nebraska Unicameral
Legislatures (49 total)	30 / 61%	18 / 37%	1 divided legislature
State Control (49 total)	22 / 45%	14 / 29%	13 divided states



FOOD SAFETY LEGISLATION IN 2018

U.S. States with Enacted Food Safety Legislation 2018



- 756 bills relating to Food Safety; 170 enacted
- Foremost Issues
 - Food Donation – 72 bills
 - Food Service in Schools – 57 bills
 - Restaurants – 57 bills
 - Milk or Raw Milk – 45 bills
 - Cottage Foods – 48 bills
 - GMO – 18 bills

STATE LEGISLATURES' PROFESSIONALIZATION EFFECTS

- Greater capacity
- Ability to make decisions independent of executive, lobbyists
- Stable membership
- Allows for more voices, more interests represented
- Decentralization and fragmentation
- Avoids Policy gridlock



STATE LEGISLATURES' "DEPROFESSIONALIZING" FORCES

- Term limits
- Limits on taxing and spending authority
- Staff reductions
- Ethics/campaign finance laws that prevent openness
- Anti-government attitudes
- Decline of trust of government

NON-PARTISAN FORCES OF EFFICACY

- State constitutions and rules such as single subject requirements for bills, limited sessions with effective deadlines, requirements for balanced budgets, and the fair and consistent application of rules.
- Governors and legislative leaders who are able to see the big picture, communicate and work together effectively, and make efforts to treat the minority party fairly and value their input.
- Empowered committees that deliberate effectively and make efforts to incorporate minority party ideas.
- Personal relations, cultures and traditions among legislators that promote interparty communication and engender trust and respect.
- Nonpartisan staff.
- A determination/requirements to get things done, unlike Congress.



CONSTRAINTS ON INTERACTIONS WITH STATE LEGISLATURES

- Not allowed to initiate contact with **legislators**
- Communication via **legislative liaison** – no direct interaction
- Legislators who reach out directly **do not** receive calls back
- Direct communication **is monitored** or must be documented
- Have to **constrain information** to that which is within the context of the food safety agencies' mission.
- Cannot **lobby or advocate** for food safety
 - Cannot contact legislators to promote idea or policy



APPROACHES TO INTERACTION WITH LEGISLATORS

- Field trips / tours of **facilities**
- Providing information and information products that address legislators **areas of interest or districts**
- Provide **unbiased, scientific** information
- Face to face meetings, ad-hoc meetings, visiting offices of legislators
- Cultivation of **personal relationships**
- Establishing trust by **delivering more than is asked for on time and within budget**
- Stakeholders advocating for **state agencies'** products and services
- **Talk with legislators** about how you can help them achieve their goals

DO NOT:

- Communicate with state legislators **via the media**
- Do not advocate or take sides in **politically-charged issues**
- Don't issue **political statements**
- Don't talk to legislators as if they are **experts in your field**
- Don't invite them to **technical meetings**; that will simply bore them
- **No freebies** (calendars, notepads, etc.), no mass distribution of maps, publications, etc.
- Don't assume legislators care to be **educated about your agency's mission**

COMMUNICATING WITH LEGISLATORS

- **Involve legislators** early in the planning process
- **Educate legislators** before the legislative sessions
- Know the political circumstances; **parties matter less** than personalities
- Have either money, votes or **credible information**
- Present information on **costs of effort** or program
- **Translate data** into meaningful information
- **Be succinct**
- **Never surprise** a legislator
- Speak with **one voice**
- **Relationships** are all-important



WHY WE NEED LEGISLATURES

*POVO SEM PARLAMENTO É
POVO ESCRAVO*

**People without parliament
are people in chains.** *Motto of
Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) Legislative
Assembly*

Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

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