



The Council
of State
Governments

Future of Work

NATIONAL TASK FORCE

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Forward

As co-chairs of The Council of State Governments' Future of Work National Task Force, we are pleased to release this framework. It can be seen as the culmination of two years of intense discussion and research by leaders from the states and territories related to state level policies and practices that help propel technological innovation while advancing the needs of the workforce.

CSG is uniquely poised to highlight the leadership being exemplified in the states as it relates to the various focus areas of the Future of Work National Task Force: Workforce of Tomorrow; Smart Government; What's Next? Embracing the Future; and Equity & Inclusion.

The task force members were divided into four subcommittees that also included knowledgeable stakeholders from the private sector and/or academia who shared their expertise. We wish to commend the members and leadership of the National Task Force for their dedication to the work and for all that they have accomplished. Through this endeavor, you have identified policy options and practices to help advance the work not only in your state, but in others across the nation.

In this work, we highlight a number of suggested strategies as well as state examples that can guide government officials on each of the policy areas the task force explored. It is our goal to improve the ways the public sector serves and engages with its communities. We encourage you to read and consider the full report as you seek bipartisan solutions in your state.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature of Sen. Carolyn McGinn.

SEN. CAROLYN MCGINN
Kansas



A handwritten signature of Sen. Nancy Todd.

SEN. NANCY TODD
Colorado

A Note from CSG

The Council of State Governments (CSG) created the CSG Future of Work National Task Force in January 2019, with the purpose of bringing state leaders from across the country together to examine state best practices related to the workforce. The task force focused on four categories: Workforce of Tomorrow; Smart Government; What's Next: Embracing the Future; and Equity and Inclusion. Back then, no one could have predicted the sudden, dramatic impact on the workforce brought about by the pandemic and the timeliness of this bipartisan initiative and the identified topics.

While the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 health crisis has created numerous unexpected new challenges, state leaders have been resilient, innovative and have renewed their commitment to learn from one another. As state leaders continue to work to identify and implement policies and practices that will improve workforce outcomes across their communities, despite the impacts being felt due to the pandemic, the work of the task force has also continued.

The task force is made up of fifty members representing 35 states and both the legislative and executive branches of government, as well as beneficial partners from the private sector. Each member has brought their unique expertise and experience in addition to the demonstrated commitment to the work through the investment of their time. Led by Sen. Carolyn McGinn from Kansas and Sen. Nancy Todd from Colorado, the CSG Future of Work National Task Force met in-person, over video and via email to discuss a variety of topics including access to essential technologies, lifelong learning and career readiness, financial security for workers, strategies for increasing equity, and innovative solutions for states as employers and service providers.

In the following report, you will find a framework of recommendations that came as result of those discussions. The framework, given much consideration and analysis by both task force members and CSG staff, serves as a guide for all state leaders in understanding strategies with proven success and promising results that can be customized and to serve communities across the nation. We also encourage continued contributions to this document. Comments, questions, stories, recommendations and feedback can be sent directly to futureofwork@csg.org.

The mission of CSG is to champion excellence in state government. Efforts like those of this task force, where a diverse groups of state officials from across the country gather to discuss and build consensus around bipartisan solutions to the most pressing issues of our time, both make me proud to serve our states and give me great hope for the future of our democracy and the ability of our states to overcome current and future challenges.

As always, CSG stands ready to serve the states.



DAVID ADKINS | Executive Director/CEO



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Introduction

The Council of State Governments Future of Work National Task Force set out in June 2019 to analyze workforce issues and determine how to grow state economies. Important topics like education, state governance and the delivery of state services, emerging technology, the evolving economy and equal opportunity and diversity were outlined, and four subcommittees were established:

The Workforce of Tomorrow

Smart Government

What's Next? Embracing the Future

Equity and Inclusion

Each of these identified subcommittee areas had a bipartisan and diverse composition of state leaders within both the legislative and executive branches who provided both personal and professional insights.

However, when a global health crisis swept across the world in 2020, the focus and priorities of this national task force were quickly realigned to meet the needs of quickly changing landscapes in state education, workforce and technology. While the long-term impacts of this pandemic and its resulting changes are still unknown, state leaders — including those on this national

task force — are working to anticipate what the coming years might hold for the future of the country's workforce.

As the 50 state leaders comprising the CSG Future of Work Task Force continued to work through the pandemic, the following themes were established as important areas of discussion:

The future of work will rely on education. States are currently dealing with the impacts of closed schools and the challenges presented by moving to online learning in the wake of rising cases of COVID-19, but policy conversations will return to how education serves the future of work. Supporting the workforce as lifelong learners means reshaping education to be more of a continuum connected to the world of work. The students need opportunities to be inspired and motivated from an early age while learning skills important to the future workforce, such as teamwork and problem solving. Workers will need opportunities to reskill or enhance their skills throughout their careers with tools that translate their education experiences to those jobs of the future.

The future of work will be connected. State leaders are recognizing the value of putting



people first in an economy that will become more tech-centered and internet-based. Virtual court sessions and livestreamed government meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic have shown how smart governments are able to maintain continuity and enhance government services.

The future of work will be highly automated. It is almost a certainty that the future workforce will include high levels of automation, but there are still opportunities for stakeholders to shape how automation gets introduced to the workplace.

The future of work will be inclusive. States currently face barriers to equal employment opportunity, income inequalities and unmet social needs. Whether by offering inclusivity training or acting as model employers themselves, state governments will be at the forefront of creating an inclusive economy.

The members of the CSG Future of Work National Task Force hope the following recommendations will help to provide a road map to states as each searches for opportunities in a future that is currently uncertain and full of potential difficulties, challenges, opportunities and innovations.

CSG Future of Work National Task Force

Executive Summary

The Council of State Governments (CSG) Future of Work National Task Force was convened to analyze workforce issues and figure out how to grow economies and succeed globally. Important topics like education, state governance and the delivery of state services, emerging technology, the evolving economy and equal opportunity and diversity were outlined, and four subcommittees were established to take a deep dive into these pivotal subjects.

The Workforce of Tomorrow Subcommittee examined how states can re-evaluate the links between education and careers to meet the demands of the future workforce. The Smart Government Subcommittee explored new perspectives on state governance and the delivery of state services that enhance the performance of state systems. The What's Next? Embracing the Future Subcommittee looked at how governments, the private sector, communities and individuals can prepare for a future where everyone can live, work and grow in one's community, benefit from emerging technology and be successful in an evolving economy. The Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee explored how states can promote and encourage equal opportunity and diversity in the new economy.

While the COVID-19 pandemic shifted the world's lens toward health care and many unanticipated impacts of a global health crisis, these subcommittees also considered many issues that could impact the future of the country's workforce as it recovers from COVID-19 and looks to the future of rebuilding and growing. In this effort, the subcommittees added an additional focus to their deep dive into workforce issues and analyzed the impacts on education in the COVID-19 era.

The CSG Future of Work National Task Force and its four subcommittees convened for the first time in June 2019 in Lexington, Kentucky. The task force met for a second time in December 2019 at the CSG National Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. As a result of COVID-19 and out of an abundance of caution, the task force did not convene in person in 2020 but held multiple virtual conversations. The subcommittees met via Zoom in June 2020 and again in October to approve a slate of 37 recommendations for states as they navigate recovery to their economies and workforces in the wake of COVID-19 and look to the future of a successful and robust workforce.

In addition to the recommendations of the four subcommittees, this report also includes the special section on education in the era of COVID-19, recommendations and suggested strategies.

Special Section: Education in the COVID-19 Era

The CSG Future of Work National Task Force recommends the following strategies to states:

- States may reflect and consider how ready they were to quickly ramp up online learning and remote learning activities when schools were forced to close as a result of the coronavirus pandemic as well as the challenges that the state faced in moving to virtual classrooms.
- States may consider the impact of moving away from the traditional approach to education and toward more individualized learning, as well as granting increased decision-making authority to local districts for tailoring curricula and parental engagement in education as demonstrated during the pandemic.
- States may study how the pandemic impacted all levels of education and employment, identify lessons learned and develop policies to strengthen pathways to lifelong learning during economic recovery.

Workforce of Tomorrow Subcommittee

The subcommittee recommended that states consider:

- Fostering lifelong learning opportunities by supporting non-traditional partnerships.
- Seeking to redefine measurements of success for lifelong career readiness.
- Supporting efforts to reshape K-12 education to better serve students, lifelong learning and the future of work.
- Supporting the continuation and expansion of internship and apprenticeship programs that connect students to employers and valuable career experience.
- Encouraging the transition of higher education institutions to lifelong learning institutions.
- Supporting programs that provide continuing education and credentialing to non-traditional students.
- Seeking changes to standardized testing programs and accountability systems to better serve all students and measure readiness in the context of environment, barriers and challenges overcome and growth made over time.
- Seeking to define new benchmarks of success for their assessment and accountability systems and seeking to identify and mitigate inequities and gaps that may marginalize students.

Smart Government Subcommittee

The subcommittee recommended that states consider:

- Prioritizing the transparency and accessibility of government services and activities.
- Being proactive in finding solutions to accessibility and workforce issues during periods of crisis.
- Enhancing their online presence to improve accessibility to information and services.
- Using creative techniques to persuade workers to choose careers in the public information technology (IT) sector.
- Making essential services and connections, such as broadband, available to all.
- Identifying best practices from successful smart city solutions and expanding them into state projects.
- Improving cybersecurity by looking not only at the people handling sensitive information, but also the devices storing that information.
- Promoting cultures of digital transformation to encourage the practice of data-driven decision making.
- Creating data hubs that can share data across multiple entities/platforms to stop the issue of data silos.

What's Next? Embracing the Future Subcommittee

The subcommittee recommended that states consider:

- Ensuring access to broadband in unserved and under-resourced areas using creative approaches to funding and partnerships.
- Prioritizing access to wireless cellular connectivity for all residents.
- Encouraging or mandating multi-stakeholder approaches to examining automation decisions, adoption rates and workforce impacts.
- Setting legislative parameters about how they identify and manage privacy in order to enable innovation while minimizing consumer risk.
- Creating permanent or temporary organizations and/or staff dedicated to workforce policy issues and best practices for the future.
- Streamlining and updating unemployment insurance application systems and processes in order to serve residents in an expedient manner while minimizing cybersecurity risk.
- Examining unemployment insurance for gig economy and other nontraditional workers and evaluating worker classification issues.
- Examining portable benefits structures and the feasibility and necessity for their workers.
- Encouraging, educating and aiding their residents in the importance of saving for retirement.
- Improving the collection, measurement and sharing of information on career data.

Equity & Inclusion Subcommittee

The subcommittee recommended that states consider

- Offering training for employers to learn how to build a stronger, more inclusive workforce.
- Leading by example by becoming model employers for underrepresented populations.
- Addressing barriers to equal employment opportunity by allocating resources to underserved populations.
- Addressing income inequalities and unmet social needs for the workforce.
- Partnering with private and nonprofit sector companies to train incarcerated populations for career placement upon release.
- Evaluating their purchasing regulations to ensure that underserved populations have equitable opportunity.
- Identifying ways to provide sick/family leave to workers who are not covered.
- Addressing license eligibility requirements that are barriers to licensing and credentialing for previously incarcerated populations.
- Supporting colleges and universities that serve traditionally underserved communities through prudent appropriations.
- Providing funding opportunities through grants and loans to underserved populations to help small business owners and entrepreneurs grow their business.

SPECIAL SECTION

Education in the COVID-19 Era

Education, whether traditional or a life-long learning journey, has an undeniable impact on the workforce and the future of how Americans prepare for and succeed in their fields. Education will drive the future of work, particularly in an economy where many Americans will be asked to become flexible, resilient, self-motivated learners and innovators as a result of an increasingly dynamic and complex world of work. While the nature of and approach to learning is always evolving, the global novel coronavirus pandemic forced rapid change that impacted young people, parents and educators and impacted the future of education.

As COVID-19 forced schools to close their doors and prompted online learning, hurried pivots into web-based classrooms prompted untested experiments with technology and staffing and exposed many structural and systematic issues. Many parents took on new roles as teachers in their children's lives, and educators and students had to adapt and change as they mastered a new way of learning.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

As states grapple with increased online learning and fewer students of all ages in classrooms, they may examine the following strategies to assist with transition and undefined timelines:

- Consider how ready their state was to quickly ramp up online and remote learning activities when schools were forced to close during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the challenges they faced.
- Consider the impact of moving away from the traditional approach to education and toward more individualized learning, the impact of increased decision-

making authority for local districts in tailoring curricula and the impact of parental engagement in education as demonstrated during the pandemic

- Study how the pandemic impacted all levels of education and employment, identifying lessons learned and developing policies to strengthen pathways to lifelong learning during economic recovery.

Education systems were greatly impacted by the global health pandemic and the rapid transition to virtual learning. Below are some of the issues facing the education system in the wake of COVID-19.

K-12 EDUCATION

Instruction: The vast majority of educators say schools covered fewer instructional materials or no new instructional territory during the initial wave of online learning in Spring 2020, according to a national survey of 788 teachers and administrators.¹

Attendance: Nearly a quarter of New York City students who were required to attend online summer-school classes failed to sign on for their classes, which could be a bad sign for future semesters when all public school students in the city were expected to do at least some schoolwork remotely.²

Learning Loss: A McKinsey & Company report from June 2020 estimated that if schools do not return to in-person instruction until January 2021, students could lose anywhere from three to 11 months of learning, depending on the quality and availability of remote learning opportunities. This loss of learning is expected to be greatest among low-income, Black and Hispanic students, the report stated. Additionally, an increase in predicted dropout rates is also concerning since the pandemic has disrupted many of the

SPECIAL SECTION: EDUCATION IN THE COVID-19 ERA

supports that can help vulnerable kids stay in school. Exacerbating the situation could be the social and emotional disruption caused by increasing social isolation and anxiety. This McKinsey & Company report also suggests that with lower levels of learning and more dropouts, the generation of students impacted by COVID-19 could be less skilled and therefore less productive than other generations that did not experience a similar gap in learning.³ A September 2020 report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which cites previous research on the economic benefits of education, found that students in grades 1-12 affected by school closures might expect some 3% lower income over their lifetimes. The report indicated that those economic losses could grow if schools are unable to restart quickly. Lower-income students, who face additional challenges in accessing remote learning, are likely to face disproportionate losses, the OECD researchers found. Moreover, for many countries, simply restarting in-person education won't be enough to eliminate gaps. Specific programs will be needed to help children make up for lost time.⁴

Academic Preparedness for College: ACT, the college admissions test organization, conducted surveys with thousands of American high school students in March and June 2020 concerning learning during the school closures resulting from COVID-19. On a webinar hosted by The Council of State Governments in Summer 2020, ACT's Michelle Croft said this June survey showed that 84% of respondents were at least somewhat concerned the closures would negatively impact their academic preparedness for college.⁵

Preventing the COVID-19 Slide: "The COVID-19 slide" refers to learning loss suffered by students due to remote learning. The Tennessee Tutoring Corps was created during the pandemic to help try to stave off an expected COVID-19 slide among young people. As part of the program, qualified college students provided summer learning opportunities in math and reading for Tennessee children preparing to enter kindergarten through 6th grade. Partnering

organizations on the initiative include the Bill and Crissy Haslam Foundation, the Boys & Girls Clubs and other youth-serving organizations in the state.⁶

Education Funding: As the pandemic continues to decimate state revenues,⁷ K-12 education is at risk of facing some of the largest budget constraints in recent history. At mid-year, many states had already announced an average cut of 15% to their overall budgets with a second round of deeper cuts expected in the fall. Education is the top expenditure in most states.⁸

Economic Impact: Barron's, the Dow Jones & Company magazine, estimated in August 2020 that keeping schools closed in Fall 2020 could cost the U.S. economy at least \$700 billion in lost revenue and productivity, a result of no school cafeterias, no garbage pickups at schools and other ancillary impacts.⁹

New Costs for Schools: Schools faced additional expenses and burdens as classes resumed in the fall, whether in-person, online or both. Schools that opened for in-person learning had to spend more on personal protective equipment, transparent dividers and other equipment to allow social distancing in the classroom and elsewhere. They also had to prepare for a possible return to online learning by investing in items such as Wi-Fi hotspots, laptops, online tools and platforms and other resources. At the same time, educators were being asked to provide more educational and social services and to find ways to catch students up after the extended summer break.¹⁰

Alternatives to School: Driven by remote learning frustrations and safety concerns, groups of parents banded together to create learning pods for their kids when schools resumed in Fall 2020. School officials and teacher unions expressed concerns that this trend could worsen the achievement gap, threaten public school funding and fail to offer guarantees for civil rights protections and accountability.

Parental Engagement: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, parents of the average school-age child spent 13 hours per week teaching their children in Spring 2020. While some families were able to accommodate that level of commitment, others were not. Meanwhile, educators and school officials had to figure out how to meet the challenges presented by two different groups of students — those whose parents could play the role of at-home teachers and those whose parents could not.¹¹

Children with Special Needs: Students requiring additional accommodations faced a variety of challenges as schools shut down in the spring and classes moved online. While some schools made an effort to continue the services and therapies that help students with disabilities access their education, others did little or nothing to continue them. A survey in May found that just one in five families of children in special education said they were receiving all the support services their kids were entitled to, and four in 10 said their kids were getting no support at all. Receiving therapy remotely presented additional challenges, including significant commitments of time and effort from parents.¹² Some school districts in Arizona,¹³ Oregon¹⁴ and Alaska¹⁵ prioritized in-person instruction for special education students in the fall even as many schools planned for online-only classes.

Did You Know?

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SPECIAL SECTION: EDUCATION IN THE COVID-19 ERA

Learning Outside: Faced with the challenge of social distancing in crowded school buildings, some are pondering the particulars of teaching class outside. The National COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative is a coalition of educators, architects, school administrators, landscape designers, curriculum experts and other stakeholders who are developing guidelines and resources for outdoor learning.

ONLINE LEARNING

Effectiveness of Remote Instruction: In a July Education Week survey of school district leaders, principals and teachers, just 8% of educators said remote instruction provided by their district or school was "very effective." Another 46% said it was "somewhat effective." Twenty-six percent said it was "somewhat ineffective" and one fifth said it was "very ineffective."¹⁶

Professional Development of Teachers: In the same survey, educators said they had received at least some professional development in areas critical to making remote instruction work, including posting digital materials and organizing group learning with video conference tools. But only 17% said they had received help with pacing lessons in a digital learning environment and less than half said they had received instruction on how to maintain social-emotional learning and connect with students virtually.¹⁷

Savings from Remote Learning: There was an assumption among policymakers in some areas that all-remote learning might save millions of dollars this fall. The degree to which that was the case depended on a number of factors, notably district leadership, financial stability, readiness for remote learning and expected state budget cuts, Education Week reported. While some districts saved money by laying off bus drivers and other personnel, many also dealt with new costs for professional development, hiring online learning consultants and paying overtime to in-house experts on how to discipline students online, write effective lesson plans and use new technology. Other costs included those for gadgets and software, printing and paper for

lesson plans and homework assignments for students without access to Wi-Fi or devices and postage to make sure everybody had what they needed.¹⁸

Hybrid Models: On a CSG webinar in July 2020, Marni Baker Stein, provost and chief academic officer for the online university Western Governors University, expressed her concern about online/in-person hybrid education models. WGU consulted with other higher education institutions and with a number of large K-12 school districts during the pandemic. Stein said there has been a rush to get instruction up and running without an understanding of the resources needed to make hybrid models work.¹⁹

Digital Divide: Distance learning, or remote learning via the internet, became the fallback option after schools were forced to close. But the experience was frustrating for many. One of the reasons is America's unequal internet access. Fourteen million African Americans and 17 million Hispanics don't have access to computers in their homes. Thirty-five percent of Black households and 29% of Hispanic households don't have broadband.²⁰ It's estimated that 15 million students and 400,000 teachers lack a reliable home internet connection.²¹ Students in California, many from low income families, need more than a million computers and hot spots, state officials told the Los Angeles Times.²²

Urban-Rural Divide: More than 26% of rural residents lack access to fixed broadband, according to a 2017 FCC report. The number of Americans without access to broadband service at the FCC's benchmark level of at least 25 megabits per second for downloads is estimated to be 19 million, the vast majority of whom live in rural areas. For urban and suburban dwellers, while broadband is available, it can be unaffordable for many, with monthly fees that can range from \$50 to \$100.²³ According to a report from the Center for Reinventing Public Education, students in rural communities were far more likely to have access to fully in-person instruction in the fall of 2020 than suburban

The Digital Divide

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14 million
AFRICAN AMERICANS
and
17 million
HISPANICS

do not have access
to computers in
their homes.

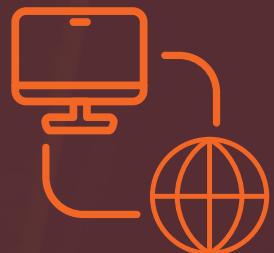
35%
OF BLACK
HOUSEHOLDS
and
29%
OF HISPANIC
HOUSEHOLDS

do not have broadband



15,000,000
STUDENTS
& **400,000**
TEACHERS

lack a reliable home internet connection



SPECIAL SECTION: EDUCATION IN THE COVID-19 ERA

and urban students. Sixty-five percent of rural districts planned to start school fully in-person compared to 24% of suburban districts and 9% of urban districts. Nearly four in five urban districts planned to start fully remote.²⁴

Technology Supply Chain: Pittsburgh Public Schools blamed nationwide technology supply-chain shortages for a decision to postpone the start of their school year to Sept. 8, 2020. The shortages have prevented the school district from providing laptops to all of its in-need students to allow them to participate in online learning. The school board mandated in late July that students would spend at least the first nine weeks of the school year taking classes virtually. The district was expecting 7,000 laptops to arrive in early September, although some were not expected to be delivered until late October. District officials said school staff would use the extra time to refine lesson plans, review individualized plans for special needs students, contact families and participate in professional development.²⁵ The Associated Press reported that the world's three biggest computer companies, Lenovo, HP and Dell, told school districts they had a shortage of nearly 5 million laptops. In some cases, the shortages were said to be exacerbated by Trump administration sanctions on Chinese suppliers.²⁶

Federal Aid: The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress in March included \$30.75 billion for an education stabilization fund to help schools meet their technological needs.²⁷

State Digital Divide Initiatives: State governments have launched various initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to try to address the digital divide:

- Alabama committed \$100 million in CARES Act funding to purchase internet service for low-income households with eligible K-12 students.
- Connecticut launched a \$43.5 million investment in remote learning solutions.
- New Jersey Gov. Phillip Murphy committed

\$115 million in federal grant and CARES Act money on K-12 digital inclusion efforts focused on devices and broadband service.

- West Virginia announced a \$6 million investment in broadband expansion, setting up approximately 1,000 hotspot locations in 55 counties at 688 K-12 schools, 255 libraries, 32 higher education institutions and 31 state parks.
- Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon and state legislators developed a broadband expansion initiative that allocated \$86 million in CARES Act funding.²⁸

Local Initiatives: Local governments also stepped in to assist students and teachers.

- The city of Chicago pledged to pay up to four years of internet service at home for as many as 100,000 K-12 students, using a combination of public and philanthropic funds.²⁹
- The city of Seattle created the Digital Bridge pilot program to connect low-income residents with low-cost refurbished laptops. King County approved \$86.2 million in emergency funding, which included funding to support digital equity. School buses in Seattle have also been repurposed as moveable Wi-Fi hotspots.
- Chattanooga, Tennessee , and surrounding Hamilton County made a 10-year commitment to offer free high-speed internet to the 28,500 children who receive free or reduced-price school lunches — about 60% of the county school system's students. A partnership among public and private organizations, including the municipally owned internet provider EPB, made the initiative possible.
- Philadelphia similarly partnered with Comcast to connect 35,000 families to no-cost internet for the next two years.
- San Antonio, Texas, announced plans to invest more than \$27 million to

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Wyoming
Gov. Mark Gordon and state legislators developed a broadband expansion initiative that allocated \$86 million in CARES Act funding.

close a digital divide for its 38% of residents that lack home internet.³⁰

Private Sector Initiatives

- Microsoft and Land O'Lakes announced a partnership to increase broadband access in rural areas.³¹

Other Tech Challenges: Even when computers and broadband were available in the home, technology sometimes got in the way of a seamless transition to remote learning. An

outage on the Zoom online meeting platform in August disrupted schools and businesses across the country for hours.³² Problems with a web content filtering tool that prevented high school students in Texas from connecting to the internet on their school-provided devices prompted a one-week delay in the start of the school year. Some parents in Indianapolis discovered that while they had an internet connection at home, it wasn't strong enough to support two or three children and the parents all working at once during the pandemic.³³



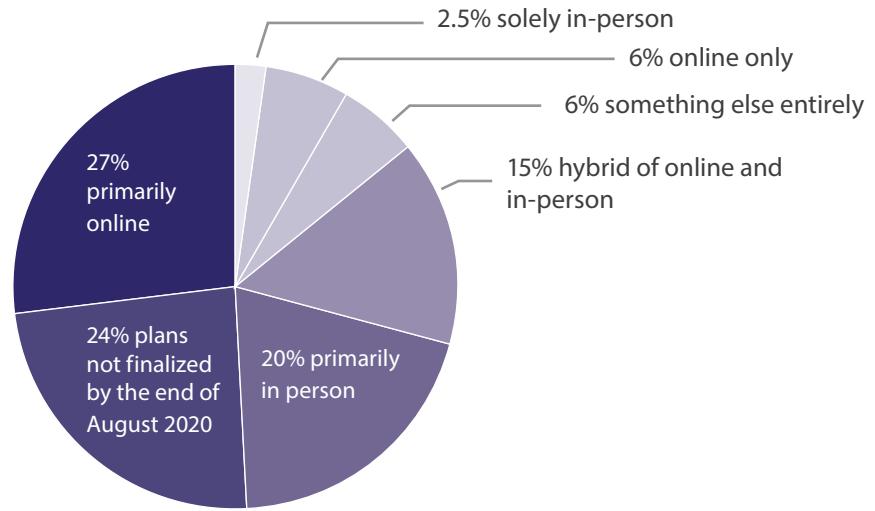
Examples in Action

In September 2020, **Michigan** Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced that 625,000 essential workers in the state who reported for work during the height of the pandemic and who don't have a degree are eligible for free college under a program called Futures for Frontliners. The program, inspired by the post-World War II G.I. Bill, is made possible with \$24 million in federal CARES Act funds that went to the Governor's Education Relief Fund. The program is open to not only those in medical fields but also those who worked in manufacturing, nursing homes, grocery stores, sanitation, delivery, retail and other sectors. Applicants are required to be Michigan residents, have worked in an essential industry and worked outside the home for 11 of the 13 weeks between April 1 and June 30, 2020, have not previously earned an associate or bachelor's degree and who are not in default on a federal student loan.⁴⁰

HIGHER EDUCATION

Online or In-Person: Davidson College and The Chronicle of Higher Education tracked the reopening plans of nearly 3,000 institutions for the fall semester and found that 6% planned to be online only, 27% primarily online, 15% a hybrid of online and in-person, 20% primarily in person, 2.5% solely in-person, 6% planned to do something else entirely and 24% still had not finalized their plans in late August.³⁴ The California State University system and the state's community college system both announced they would shut down campuses and go completely online for the fall. Others like Boston University and nearby Northeastern University planned to allow students to choose all-online or some classes in person. Stanford University said they would allow half of its students on campus each quarter. The University of Michigan planned to send students home and go online after Thanksgiving.³⁵

Davidson College and The Chronicle of Higher Education tracked the reopening plans of nearly 3,000 higher education institutions for the Fall 2020 semester.



Business Model: The core business model of college education began to shift as classes had to quickly move online. For most universities, online classes are being credited and billed in the same way as face-to-face delivery. In a March op-ed for The New York Times, college education innovation experts Richard Arum and Mitchell L. Stevens found that quickly moving classes to the internet prevented investment in "the pedagogical expertise that might have rendered online learning options complementary in practice and commensurate in quality to face-to-face instruction."³⁶

Distance Education Fees: Some students at the University of North Texas in Denton found their fees increasing this fall as they were asked to pay “distance education fees” to support the management, delivery and technology for distance education courses. While not a new fee, the distance education fee is being applied more widely as the pandemic has necessitated more students going remote, university officials said.³⁷

College Admissions: Admissions officials were left scrambling this year trying to figure out what student metrics they might consider since the pandemic left many applicants without standardized test scores or complete GPAs. Extracurricular activities couldn’t be counted on to differentiate candidates either. Some institutions allowed students to submit Advanced Placement (AP) test scores and writing samples to demonstrate what best represented them in the academic space. Other schools began to talk about how to identify characteristics that might have value in the academic setting, such as citizenship, social justice and tenacity.³⁸

The Future: An August Global Learner Survey by the education publishing and assessment company Pearson found that 81% of surveyed learners in the U.S. believe that primary and secondary education will fundamentally change because of the pandemic. Eighty-three percent believe that higher education will fundamentally change, 74% said they expect more online learning in K-12 over the next 10 years and 82% said the same for higher education.³⁹



SECTION I

The Workforce of Tomorrow

As the millennial generation was coming of age, many economic researchers attempted to predict how many jobs and careers members of this generation and the succeeding generations might have over the course of their lifetimes. The thinking was that rapidly changing technology, including advances in automation, artificial intelligence and communications, in addition to factors like globalization, shifting demographics and evolving knowledge and sharing economies would mean that the workers of the future would likely need to upgrade their skills many times during their careers as their existing skills became outmoded.

While many of those factors are still likely to influence and shape the future world of work, the COVID-19 global pandemic of 2020, which has devastated the American economy, eliminated millions of jobs that may never return, created numerous challenges for workplace life and left uncertainty about the future in its wake, will also have a significant impact on the future of the workforce.

Still, economic volatility and insecurity could be America's destiny for the next decade, and those predictions about job-hopping millennials could still come true. That likely will mean that the workforce of tomorrow will continue to need skill upgrades throughout their careers and they will need to be prepared to become self-motivated, lifelong learners.

The Workforce of Tomorrow Subcommittee recommended that states consider undertaking policy activities that can pave the way to lifelong learning and career readiness.

01 RECOMMENDATION: States consider fostering lifelong learning opportunities by supporting non-traditional partnerships.

02 RECOMMENDATION: States consider seeking to redefine measurements of success for lifelong career readiness.

Fostering lifelong learning opportunities begins at an early age with establishing that desire

and motivation to learn through innovative classroom models. It extends from pre-K to K-12, through higher education and beyond. It includes career and technical education (CTE) and hybrid academic/CTE models. Lifelong learning considers the integration of instruction and evaluation of soft skills and social-emotional learning tools that will be in demand from the workforce of tomorrow. Apprenticeships, internships and other work-study arrangements are an essential part of the continuum as well. At the collegiate level, it will be necessary to transition higher education institutions into lifelong learning institutions in order to serve non-traditional students who may need to return to the classroom many years after the traditional college years in order to upgrade their skills. Community colleges have an essential role to play as well. These institutions are positioned to serve as a vital link between high school, four-year colleges/universities and the world of work. Lifelong learning continues into the employment years with education programs offered by employers, such as tuition assistance and reimbursement, reskilling and upskilling. Additionally, education programs for incarcerated populations may help them as they seek to re-enter society once they have served their time.

There are a variety of non-traditional partnerships that states can get involved with in order to help foster lifelong learning opportunities. Those include:

An effort to push for an interoperable learning record, a kind of digital wallet that follows a lifelong learner throughout their career, keeping track of new competencies gained along the way.

An initiative called Credential Engine, which is working to simplify and provide guidance on credential-issuing entities and making sure there is a common language to describe all those credentials.

Another initiative called Skillful, which is trying to create a more skills-based labor market where experience and competencies short of a degree can translate into actual jobs.

SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

Non-traditional partnerships states can get involved with to foster lifelong learning opportunities:

Interoperable learning record:
A kind of digital wallet that follows a lifelong learner throughout their career, keeping track of new competencies gained along the way.

Credential Engine:
An initiative working to simplify and provide guidance on credential-issuing entities and making sure there is a common language to describe each credential.

Skillful:
An initiative that is trying to create a more skills-based labor market, where experience and competencies short of a degree can translate into actual jobs.

Mastery Transcript Consortium:
An effort to create a new kind of high school transcript that measures the skills and abilities of students based on criteria beyond GPAs and test scores.

Digital transcripts such as those developed by the Mastery Transcript Consortium, an effort to create a new kind of high school transcript that measures the skills and abilities of students based on criteria beyond GPAs and test scores.

Redefining measurements of success for lifelong career readiness speaks to capturing a fuller picture of who we are as individuals — our aptitudes, skills, competencies, interests and abilities. That redefinition is needed because, while assessment and accountability systems and standardized testing have given us valuable data over the years, that data has not always been used to shape education policy in the way some say it should be or to tell us how prepared our kids actually are for the workforce of tomorrow and a lifetime of learning.

| Fostering Lifelong Learning Opportunities

03 RECOMMENDATION: States consider supporting efforts to reshape K-12 education to better serve students, lifelong learning and the future of work.

We live in an era of innovation, when technological advances are celebrated and quickly assimilated into the fabric of our society. To feed that culture of innovation, many believe it's important that schools produce self-motivated young innovators from an early age by offering the kinds of programs designed to get them there. Unfortunately, some education experts say the U.S. education system is not designed for that culture of innovation. In fact, many believe the current education system does precisely the opposite.

Tony Wagner, best-selling author and senior research fellow at the Learning Policy Institute, told the Workforce of Tomorrow Subcommittee in June 2019 that there are five critical contradictions between traditional schooling and the capacity for creative problem solving that can lead to innovation:

- Where school celebrates individual achievement, innovation is a team sport.
- While traditional schooling is about siloing content knowledge and developing individual content expertise, innovation demands a multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary approach.
- While the classroom culture at the secondary and university levels is a culture of passivity and compliance, the innovation era demands taking initiative and questioning received wisdom.
- Where failure in school is punished and discouraged, innovation is a culture of iteration through trial and error.
- While traditional education relies heavily on extrinsic incentives — carrots and sticks, rewards and punishments, good grades and bad grades — successful innovators are more often intrinsically motivated.

Schools aren't teaching the skills that matter most, Wagner contends, because they aren't what standardized tests, the results of which many

school districts are beholden to in terms of funding and curriculum design, are designed to test for.

Advocates for standardized testing counter that it is not testing itself that is hindering education innovation. It is that assessment and accountability have not been used properly to shape policy. Mary LeFebvre, who now serves as program director for state government relations at ACT, the organization perhaps best known for one of the tests used for college admissions in the United States, told the subcommittee in December 2019 that ACT has been trying to provide a more nuanced message to state and local policymakers in recent years about how to use standardized assessment to make better policy decisions. She said as policymakers have sought to understand complex measures over the years, targets have been oversimplified and reduced to a single number, a single benchmark.⁴¹



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

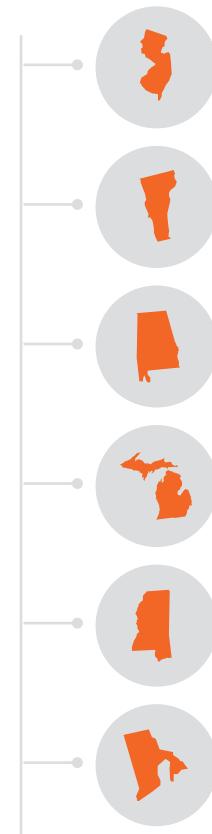
When implementing or considering these recommendations, states may:

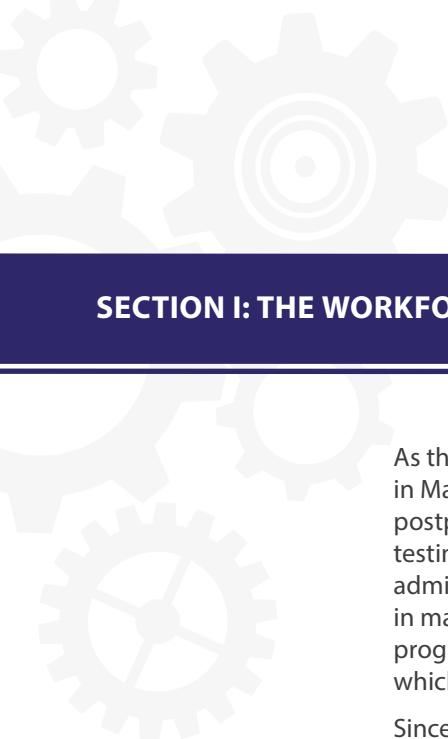
- Provide support for quality early childhood education programs, which can be instrumental in getting children engaged early and establishing a course of lifelong learning.
- Examine the ways in which education funding structures, credit allocation, enrollment requirements and standardized testing support or impede innovation in K-12 schools.
- Work to identify and recognize innovative schools, school networks, pedagogies, domains of learning and practices that show success in preparing students for the future of work.

- Create programs to seed and promote education innovation broadly.
- Support efforts of schools and school districts to move toward personalized learning models that incorporate outside-the-classroom learning opportunities and demonstration of achievement in competencies aligned to student interests.
- Monitor the progress of holistic approaches to education transformation such as the one proposed by the Maryland Commission on Innovation & Excellence in Education. They can also look to international successes in education transformation.
- Consider whether this year's forced shift away from brick and mortar schools presents an opportunity to reconsider some of the traditional features of schools (grades, schoolrooms, designated hours of instruction).

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The National Institute for Early Education Research produces an annual survey of state preschool policies around the country. The District of Columbia led the 2019 rankings across categories like access for 3 and 4-year-olds and state spending. Other state leaders in multiple categories include **New Jersey** and **Vermont**. States meeting all 10 quality standards benchmarks in the report include **Alabama, Michigan, Mississippi** and **Rhode Island**. Six states do not have state-funded pre-K programs (Idaho, Indiana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).⁴²





SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

As the coronavirus pandemic shut down schools in March, it also prompted the cancellation or postponement of a season of standardized testing, including the ACT and SAT college admission exams, as well as unique assessments in many states that drive accountability programs, guide education policy and determine which school districts receive additional funding.

Since standardized tests are required by federal law, states were required to seek federal permission to suspend or cancel tests. On March 12, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education said due to the extraordinary circumstance presented by the coronavirus, they would consider targeted waivers from federal testing requirements. Most states, the District of Columbia, the Bureau of Indian Education and Puerto Rico sought and were granted initial approval of testing waivers.⁴³ Then on March 20, the department announced a broad waiver process allowing states to bypass all testing requirements for the 2019-20 academic year.

But in recent years the department has also been willing to make exceptions to federal law to allow states that want to seek a different path on assessment and accountability in order to make way for education and testing reforms.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the state of New Hampshire began a process of transitioning to an education system based on more personalized, competency-based learning with student-centered learning environments and high school credits awarded based on demonstrations of mastery rather than seat time.⁴⁴ In 2014, the state was the first to be granted an innovative assessment waiver from the U.S. Department of Education and in 2018 became the second state to participate in the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority pilot program under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Freed from federal testing requirements, the state created the Performance Assessment for Competency Education, an innovative assessment system that determines student proficiency based on a combination of locally administered performance tasks, common performance tasks, statewide assessments and the SAT.⁴⁵

While the program has allowed New Hampshire and other states⁴⁶ to experiment with innovative forms of assessment, education analysts are quick to point out that one-size-fits-all solutions are hard to come by and state and local priorities and student populations need to be taken into account in devising new assessment regimes.⁴⁷

Even as states have been experimenting with new kinds of assessment, some colleges and universities have been deemphasizing two of the oldest national college admissions testing standbys — the SAT and ACT — as requirements for application and admission. Cancellation of SAT and ACT testing dates during the pandemic seemed to accelerate those moves. In March 2020, for example, regents at the University of California were debating whether to drop SAT and ACT test scores as an admission requirement, after receiving conflicting analysis in a couple of research papers.⁴⁸ And then the pandemic hit. Two months later, following a unanimous vote of 51-0 by the Academic Senate supporting the continued use of ACT/SAT, the university's board of regents voted unanimously to approve university President Janet Napolitano's plan to phase out use of the SAT and ACT over five years and replace them with a new test to be developed by university faculty.⁴⁹



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When implementing or considering these recommendations, states may:

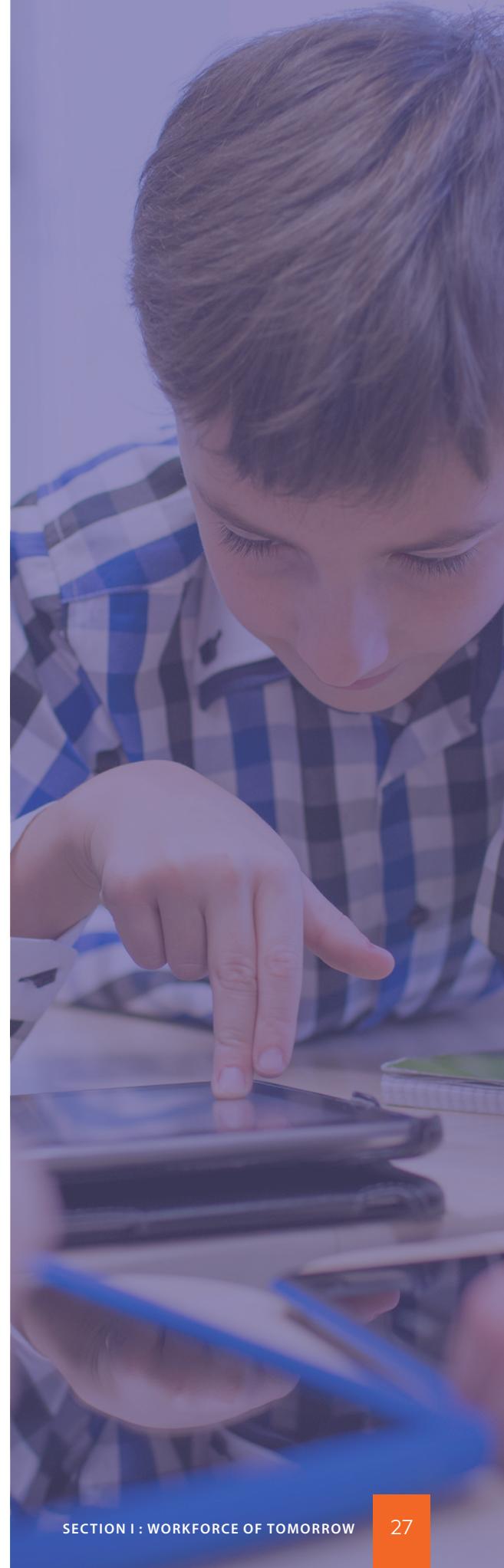
- Study the impact of canceled standardized testing during the coronavirus pandemic on students, accountability systems and college admissions.
- Consider the value of standardized testing to measure student learning, identify inequities and drive the right supports for students in the wake of the pandemic.

- Seek a waiver from provisions under the Every Student Succeeds Act, including the accountability provisions, for any assessments given to students to provide actionable data.
- Create new assessments that are administered in innovative ways including computer-based and online components.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

On May 5, 2020, **New York** Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that the state would work with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to “reimagine” the state’s school system as part of a series of post-pandemic reform efforts that would also include transportation and health care. While there were few details offered on what the reimagination of education might entail in New York, Cuomo indicated it could entail a greater emphasis on technology and a move away from the brick-and-mortar school building.⁵⁰

The Blueprint for **Maryland**’s Future was the product of a process led by a state commission formed in 2016. It would expand pre-kindergarten programs and career education for high schoolers, increase pay and career opportunities for teachers and increase state funding for schools in areas with high concentrations of poverty. It would increase state and local annual education spending by almost \$3.4 billion in 10 years. Approved by the legislature in March, the blueprint’s authorization and funding were vetoed by Gov. Larry Hogan in May as Hogan saw the economic fallout from the pandemic. It was reported that lawmakers could decide to override the governor’s vetoes once they were able to reconvene.⁵¹



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04 RECOMMENDATION: States consider supporting the continuation and expansion of internship and apprenticeship programs that connect students to employers and valuable career experience.

The Career Connect Washington Initiative is a program that grew out of the recommendations of a task force formed by Gov. Jay Inslee in 2017. Recognizing a gap between those in the state with the skills, education and experience to have successful careers and those often left behind, the task force recommended the state expand registered pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and youth apprenticeships in order to create a more navigable system for employers, young people and educators and to create tighter alignment with graduation requirements and pathways to degrees.⁵²

The Workforce Education Investment Act, signed by Inslee in 2019, expanded on the Career Connect Washington Initiative to allow students to obtain real life work experience and high school or college credit at the same time.⁵³

Career Connect Washington is a public-private partnership with a five-year goal of connecting 100,000 young people to career-exploring opportunities.

Education and workforce advocates have long recognized the importance of apprenticeships to creating career connections for students.

Industry has also recognized the value of apprenticeships. The Consumer Technology Association (CTA), the trade association representing the U.S. consumer technology industry which has supported the work of this CSG national task force, joined forces with IBM in 2017 to create the CTA Apprenticeship Coalition. The idea behind the effort is to create and expand apprenticeship opportunities to prepare American workers for jobs in increasingly in-demand fields such as software engineering, data analytics, project management and hardware design. The more than 25 members of the coalition include heavy hitters such as Amazon, Ford Motor Company, Microsoft, Sony Electronics, Toyota and Walmart.⁵⁴

As of last year, the program had grown twice as fast as expected and was on track to add 450 apprenticeships annually over the next five years.⁵⁵ But the statistics in the tech sector are daunting. According to code.org, a nonprofit focused on expanding access to computer science in schools, there are more than 400,000 computing jobs open nationwide but last year only 71,226 computer science students graduated into the workforce.⁵⁶

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — EXPANDING APPRENTICESHIP

Colorado is one state putting an emphasis on apprenticeships in information technology. In 2016, then-Governor John Hickenlooper and a state delegation of government, business, education and nonprofit leaders traveled to Zurich, Switzerland to study the Swiss Vocational Education and Training system. In the Swiss model, apprenticeships are woven into the national education system and tied closely into the existing labor market to reflect current needs. With that system as inspiration, a nonprofit called CareerWise launched the first cohort of modern youth apprentices in June 2017 in Colorado with a goal to reach 20,000 apprentices by 2027. CareerWise apprentices can choose among six career pathways (advanced manufacturing, information technology, financial services, business operations, health care and education) and 15 occupations. Occupations in the IT field include quality assurance technician, junior coder, support technician and database administrator.

Other states have also put an emphasis on expanding apprenticeships in recent years. Officials in **Missouri**, which ranks second nationally for completed apprenticeships, began an effort five years ago to identify ways to improve programs and increase opportunities, especially in careers like health care and finance. In November 2019, Gov. Mike Parson signed an executive order establishing the Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning in the recently combined Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. More than 3,600 employers in the state are taking part in apprenticeship programs.





SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When implementing or considering these recommendations, states may:

- Partner with employers to create career-connected learning opportunities such as internships and apprenticeships, particularly in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields, and administer grant funding for such opportunities.
- Create programs that seek to act as liaisons between high schools, colleges and businesses to catalyze apprenticeship opportunities.
- Enact and expand career awareness and readiness programs in K-12 schools.
- Consider providing greater flexibility and limiting regulations in the creation of such programs.
- Seek to place career and technical education on par with four-year colleges particularly as it is emphasized in K-12 education.
- Study the impact of canceled internships and apprenticeships and the transition to online internships during 2020 on the pipeline for tech jobs and careers in the STEM fields.
- Support programs that seek to reduce geographic and transportation-related barriers to participation in internships, apprenticeships, upskilling and reskilling programs.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Pennsylvania is among the states to emphasize career and technical education in a significant way. As of March 2018, the commonwealth offered more than 1,700 career and technical education (CTE) programs in over 200 schools. Pennsylvania's CTE system reported that for the 2016-17 school year, 99% of CTE students who successfully completed at least half of their program, graduated from high school. The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Career and Technical Education is the entity responsible for the state's ongoing statewide initiative to increase the quality and impact of CTE programs and align those programs with economic and workforce development priorities. Pennsylvania has identified 12 targeted industry clusters for workforce strategies. They include advanced manufacturing, agriculture and food production, biomedical, building and construction, business services, education, hospitality, leisure and entertainment, energy, health care, real estate, finance and insurance, wood products and publishing, and logistics and transportation.⁵⁷



EXAMPLES IN ACTION – COLLEGE AND CAREER ADVISEMENT

The **Tennessee** Pathways program provides college and career advisement for K-12 students in the state and early postsecondary, work-based learning opportunities in high school. Partnerships among school districts, higher education institutions, employers and community organizations have created a seamless alignment that makes the program work.⁵⁸



SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

EXPLAINER:

New forms of credentialing

Micro-credentials: Mini-qualifications that demonstrate skills, knowledge and/or experience in a given subject area or capability. Also known as nanodegrees, micro-credentials are usually narrower in range than traditional qualifications like diplomas or degrees.

Stackable credentials: Education credits that accumulate incremental value as the learner develops new competencies and obtains new credentials, improving their ability to access not only new job opportunities, but to unlock further upskilling and reskilling opportunities as their career continues.

05 RECOMMENDATION: States consider encouraging the transition of higher education institutions to lifelong learning institutions.

06 RECOMMENDATION: States consider supporting programs that provide continuing education and credentialing to non-traditional students.

If lifelong learning is to become more of a reality for the American worker, many say it will require higher education institutions to become far more than just the place 18-year-olds go for a few years after high school. Those institutions will increasingly need to serve more non-traditional students — those who are long-removed from their high school experience — and offer greater flexibilities in terms of course and credit offerings and programs. Micro-credentials and mini degrees in specific competency areas and more classes offered through online learning are some of the strategies those institutions could use to reposition themselves.

One institution that is already working from that playbook is Western Governors University (WGU), the nonprofit, online university founded by 19 western state governors in 1997. WGU is a partner and adviser to the CSG Future of Work National Task Force.⁵⁹ The university allows students to seek degrees in a chosen field and to obtain micro-credentials tailored to workforce needs for positions that may not require a two- or four-year degree. WGU also emphasizes the concept of stackable credentials, which allow a learner's education to accumulate incremental value as they develop new competencies and obtain new credentials, improving their ability to access not only new job opportunities but to unlock further upskilling and reskilling opportunities as their career continues.⁶⁰

While many expect competency-based education at the postsecondary level to grow in the years ahead, colleges have faced challenges in creating such programs. Inside Higher Ed reported last year. A survey found that factors like federal student aid regulations, nonstandard academic calendars, institutional business processes, start-up costs and a lack of on-campus expertise created barriers for some institutions.⁶¹

Other higher ed institutions of all stripes are also making an effort to shift their models to meet changing times and changing student populations. The two-year Community College of Rhode Island, for example, has sought to better align its program offerings with the state's economic priorities. The college has reorganized its continuing-education division to build ongoing partnerships with companies to keep current on industry trends and operate training programs responsive to the labor market.⁶²

The World Economic Forum reported last year that structural transformation of higher education is made more urgent by a need to reflect the demand for lifelong learning to deal with the technological and social changes brought on by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the need for skills and not degrees to become the currency of the future and the disruption caused by startups and new business models.⁶³

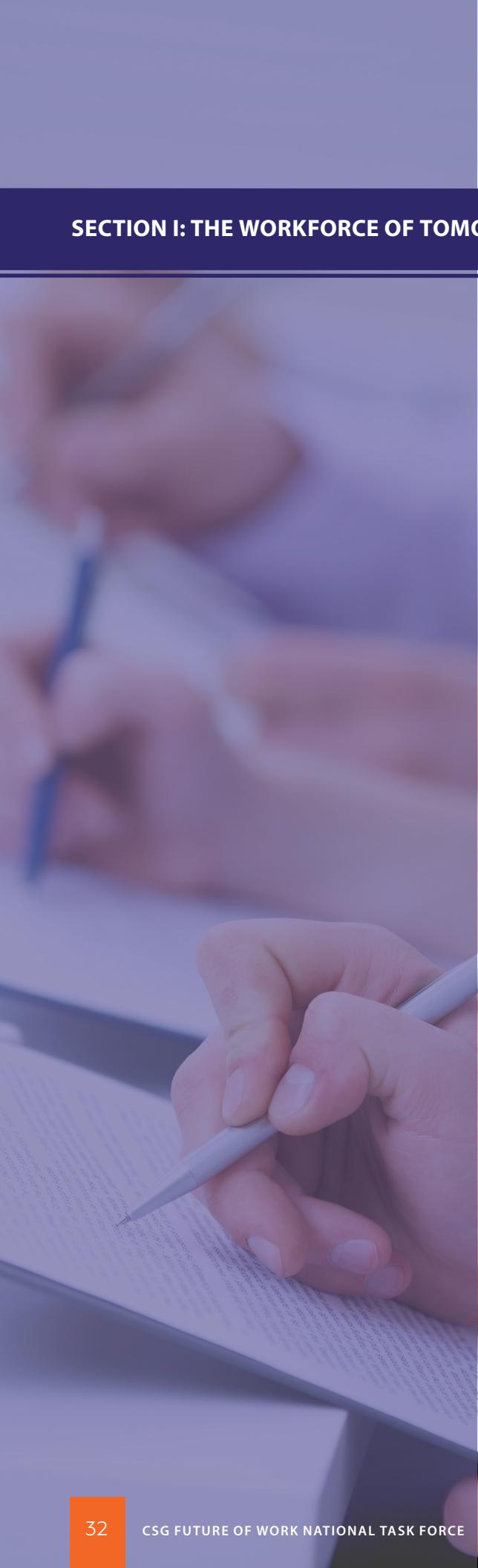
EXAMPLES IN ACTION — COLLEGE OFFERINGS

Some colleges around the country have begun to put more weight on training experiences, to tie into specific industry job needs and to speed up the acquisition of marketable skills:

The University System of **Georgia** is offering a new two-year “nexus” degree that requires students to take internships and upper-division courses, something not typically demanded of those seeking associate degrees. Nexus degree programs at Columbus State University focus on cybersecurity in financial technology and film production.

BYU-Pathway Worldwide, part of a network that includes Brigham Young University in Utah, is requiring students to earn short-term job skill certificates on their way to an associate or bachelor’s degree. That allows those who don’t end up completing a degree to still be able to have a certificate to show to employers. “Once you have a job skill and are employable, we layer on the other parts of your education,” the institution’s president Clark Gilbert told Education Dive in February.⁶⁴





SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When implementing or considering these recommendations, states may:

- Encourage colleges and universities to incorporate mastery- or competency-based programs into a holistic admissions review process to allow students who progress under such programs to qualify for admission.
- Encourage more higher education programs to serve non-traditional students including online learning, flexible schedules, vertical and stackable credentials, competency credentials, portable transcripts, credit for prior learning, transferrable credits and transcripts and student-owned transcripts.
- Enact and support policies that seek to break down silos between K-12 education, community colleges, university systems and private sector employers and to better integrate academic and career work.
- Enact lifelong learning savings accounts.
- Support efforts to create interoperable learning records that capture new competencies and credentials attained by workers over the course of a career.
- Support efforts to create greater transparency in credentialing and the credential marketplace.
- Support the integration of skills-based practices into workforce development efforts to ensure that credentials and competencies short of degrees can translate into jobs for American workers.
- Enact policies that ease credit transfer between higher education institutions.
- Support programs that provide college credits to veterans for their experience in providing service to the nation.
- Support and work with others to support programs in state prisons that provide opportunities for the incarcerated to seek new skills and prepare for new careers prior to re-entry.
- Provide new incentives for companies to train or retrain workers.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — INTEROPERABLE LEARNING RECORDS

With so many opportunities to gain new degrees, credentials, certifications and competencies over the course of a career, some have begun to turn their attention to helping the American worker keep track of it all. The interoperable learning record is an idea being touted by the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board put together by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and Special Assistant to the President Ivanka Trump that brings together employers, labor unions, higher ed institutions, associations, technology companies and others. It's a kind of digital wallet which can keep track of all those credentials for the individual and help increase the understanding about the skills an individual possesses and what an employer needs. The push for ILRs is hindered by the sheer number of credentialing organizations, the need for a common taxonomy for competencies, and the need for states to adopt open skills protocols that can generate data for use by state departments of labor, workforce agencies and employers. A number of states are leading the charge on interoperable learning records. Both **Indiana** Governor Eric Holcomb and **Iowa** Governor Kim Reynolds serve on the advisory board.⁶⁵

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — LIFELONG LEARNING SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

In 2009, **Washington** was one of the first states to pilot something called a Lifelong Learning Account (LiLA), an employee-owned educational savings account that helps pay for education and training expenses. Maine had a pilot of their own in 2005. Under both programs, employees could use the accounts not just to pay tuition but also for education-related expenses such as child care, books and admission test fees. The success of Washington's pilot led to the creation of a state statute in 2012. But budget shortfalls in the years since have hindered the state's ability to develop the resources to implement the program statewide.⁶⁶

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — CREDENTIALING TRANSPARENCY

Credential Engine is an organization working to create transparency in the world of credentialing, to reveal the universe of credential issuers and to increase credential literacy and comparability. The organization has worked with states to identify at least 738,000 credential issuers around the country that include higher education institutions, companies, licensing bodies and other entities. Credential Engine works formally with about 15 states and is in active conversations with others to join the work. Among the states farthest along in their efforts, according to Credential Engine Executive Director Scott Cheney, are **Indiana, Alabama, New Jersey** and **Kansas**.⁶⁷



SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — DEGREE RECLAMATION

States like **Texas** and **West Virginia** have programs focusing on identifying and contacting adults who have college credit but no degree to inform them about how they might pursue completion of a degree. Programs like **Tennessee** Reconnect and Maine's Adult Promise provide financial assistance to adults seeking to return to college as well as pre-enrollment and career counseling⁶⁸.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — SKILLS-BASED TRAINING

Skillful is a non-profit initiative of the **Washington, D.C.**-based Markle Foundation that in partnership with Microsoft, Walmart and others is working with state governments, local employers, educators and workforce development organizations to develop skills-based training programs, workforce development efforts and employment practices. Skillful currently has operations in two states, Colorado and Indiana, and is bringing investment, training tools and innovative methods to local workforce development efforts in both places. The initiative also facilitates the Skillful State Network, a collaboration with 27 of the nation's governors that seeks to accelerate the development of effective skills-based practices to transform their labor markets.⁶⁹

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — WORKFORCE READY GRANTS

Indiana's Next Level Jobs program is an example of an innovative partnership between businesses and community colleges. The program administers Workforce Ready Grants, which provide free community college to adult workers who receive certificates in a high-demand job in sectors like advanced manufacturing, building and construction, health and life sciences, IT and business services, and transportation and logistics. The program also offers Employer Training Grants, which reimburse employers up to \$50,000 for costs related to training workers in those sectors as well as agriculture.⁷⁰



Measuring Lifelong Career Readiness

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY AND BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

07 RECOMMENDATION: States consider seeking changes to standardized testing programs and accountability systems to better serve all students and measure their readiness in the context of their environment, the barriers and challenges they've overcome and the growth they make over time.

08 RECOMMENDATION: States consider seeking to define new benchmarks of success for their assessment and accountability systems and seeking to identify and mitigate inequities and gaps that may marginalize students.

Measures of college readiness and career readiness vary around the country but perhaps not as much as they were expected to when a provision was included in the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act requiring each state to adopt some gauge of school performance that didn't involve state test scores and graduation rates, Education Week reported in 2018.⁷¹

As of last year, about 36 states were using high school coursework, including Advanced Placement (AP) or dual-enrollment classes, as a measure of college readiness while college entrance exams remained a popular measure for many states as well, according to Education Week's analysis of an Education Strategy Group report. As for career readiness, states often turn to industry-recognized certifications or work-based learning experiences (apprenticeships and internships) as indicators. Some also use the ACT's WorkKeys system of assessments to measure workplace skills and career readiness. Thirty states offer a menu of options to demonstrate college and career readiness, the publication noted.⁷²

Some worry however about a lack of comparability between measures from state to state and the fact that most states overlook measures that project beyond high school to enrollment in postsecondary institutions and success when they get there. While a handful of indicators have proven popular among some states, they have chosen to define different terms in different ways. Some also suggest that an abundance of the innovative, holistic measures of accountability some had hoped for hasn't materialized. States like Illinois, Maryland and Montana included measuring school climate as one portion of the indicator in their ESSA plans, while other states approached accountability by highlighting access to arts or science programs at their schools.⁷³

Only eight states decided to look at measures beyond high school such as postsecondary enrollment as a readiness indicator. Connecticut, for example, looks at whether students start college. Georgia is the only state looking at whether students are immediately ready for college-bearing coursework without remediation.⁷⁴

More concerning though is recent research matching student outcomes with college and career readiness measures showing that while nearly all students are graduating from high school in some states, fewer than half are actually ready for college or careers. That research comes from a digital database, released by the non-profit organization Achieve in 2019. Not only do major gaps exist in the readiness of high school graduates, they conclude, so too do gaps exist in the transparency of public reporting by states that could make readiness data more meaningful.⁷⁵

Still, many remain hopeful that states will continue to evolve college and career readiness measures in the years ahead. Anthony Mackay, the CEO of the National Center on Education and the Economy, told the subcommittee in December 2019 one thing he'd like to see is a new metric of success that would involve the data point of how many students are actively engaged in the world of work upon graduation.

SECTION I: THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When implementing or considering these recommendations, states may:

- Design accountability systems to include assessments of both college readiness and career readiness that provide relevant data to students, parents, educators and policymakers.
- Seek to become more nuanced about using standardized assessment and the complex data it generates to make decisions about both the students it assesses and education policy.
- Encourage schools and school districts to identify creative ways of measuring student competency, assessing work-relevant skills and tracking student growth.
- Identify new benchmarks by which to judge and base rewards for success of education programs, such as post-secondary degree attainment or how many students are fully engaged in work when they graduate.
- Track college and career ready data such as dual enrollment for college credit, apprenticeship participation, industry-recognized credentials earned, Advanced Placement courses offered and credits earned, and community service hours served.
- Encourage school districts to align themselves around clear goals and key performance indicators for college and career readiness and track progress towards readiness goals on a weekly or monthly basis.

- Support digital transcripts that seek to capture a fuller picture of student aptitudes, skills, competencies, interests and abilities.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION — PUTTING DATA TO WORK

The **Maryland** Longitudinal Data System Center is an independent state agency developing and maintaining a data system containing student workforce data from all levels of public education and the state's workforce. The center generates information about student performance that can be used to guide decision makers on improving the state's education system.⁷⁶



EXAMPLES IN ACTION — REINVENTING THE HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT

The Mastery Transcript Consortium (MTC) is a growing group of high schools building and co-designing a new digital high school transcript that will allow each student's unique strengths, abilities, interests and histories to be captured, without the traditional emphasis on grades and a GPA of most high school transcripts. As of February 2020, 200 high schools had signed on to participate. Four pilot high schools were expected to deliver transcripts to over 80 colleges in 2020 with plans to scale up for the 2020-21 school year. While the higher education community has been accepting of the new transcript, according to MTC CEO Stacy Caldwell, broader acceptance may require some reconfiguration of school course schedules in districts around the country to account for mastery and competency learning and cross-disciplinary course concepts. Among the states leading the way on the transcript, Caldwell said, are Utah — with about 23 high schools on board — **Vermont** and **New Hampshire**.⁷⁷





SECTION II

Smart Government

The public sector workforce is facing multiple challenges related to attracting, retaining and building talent to keep government moving forward. For example, brain drain threatens the amount of college-educated young people in rural America⁷⁸ available to bring their new age skills to the public sector workforce as they tend to move away to more urban areas. Additionally, four other generations⁷⁹ with differing methodologies, values, and skills currently coexist with these young workers in the workplace, and as a result states question how to build and retain talent in not just the current workforce, but in the workforce to come. To address these issues, the Smart Government Subcommittee identified best practices for state governments that encourage data-informed decision-making that serves to create an engaged and educated citizenry and persuade qualified candidates to choose careers in the public sector. Some questions the subcommittee sought to answer were:

- How can states ensure government services remain accessible to citizens and operable for workers?
- How can states sell the mission of government to attract public sector workers?
- How can states implement smart technologies to inform policy decisions without displacing public sector employees?
- What steps can states take to invest in the talent development of the public sector workforce?

To answer these questions, the subcommittee focused their recommendations on two themes:

- Effective and Efficient Engagement to Enhance Government Services
- Investing in the Workforce of the Future

The subcommittee also considered the new developments and challenges that the public sector workforce faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, as many public sector workers shifted to remote work, there were increased concerns about available

connectivity to maximize efficiency.⁸⁰ In many cases, the limits of access to broadband in rural areas imposed limitations on engagement of the public sector workforce.

Effective and Efficient Engagement to Enhance Government Services

The following recommendations focus on making public engagement more effective and efficient by creating better external-facing outcomes such as increased accessibility to government services, improved transparency and user-friendly platforms and eliminating barriers to those services.

09 RECOMMENDATION: States consider making government services and activities transparent and accessible.

10 RECOMMENDATION: States consider being proactive in finding solutions to accessibility and workforce issues during periods of crisis.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all 50 states used American Sign Language interpreters in their COVID-19 press briefings. This improved access to government services for the 48 million deaf and hard of hearing people in the U.S.⁸¹, ensuring that they received information about the coronavirus. Karen Tamely, president and CEO of Access Living and former commissioner for the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities in Chicago, spoke to the subcommittee via webinar in 2020 about always including the populations that their policies will affect in the conversation, reflecting her organization's motto, "nothing about us without us."⁸²

States may also consider broadcasting or live-streaming government meetings as was the case for Milwaukee's Common Council, which participated in a remote session live-streamed



SECTION II: SMART GOVERNMENT

on the city's website⁸³ for people who could not travel to attend the events in person due to a disability or as a result of social-distancing requirements. Virtual court meetings such as those in California⁸⁴ allow criminal justice systems to continue running smoothly, despite the pandemic and subsequent shut down of in-person services.

As COVID-19 caused almost half of employed adults to shift to a work-from-home model, some states, such as North Carolina,⁸⁵ proactively permitted state agencies to reevaluate their telework policies. The shutdown caused by the global pandemic also revived conversations about paid sick leave as workers were forced to make decisions about whether to stay home and miss a paycheck or go to work and risk contracting or spreading the virus.⁸⁶ This highlights the importance of legislation like that in Nevada, which requires private-sector employers to provide employees with up to 40 hours of paid leave per benefit year.⁸⁷ New York⁸⁸ passed legislation protecting both public and private sector workers by providing sick leave benefits, paid family leave and disability benefits to employees ordered to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Offering multimedia communication.
- Broadcasting or live-streaming government meetings.
- Conducting court meetings virtually.
- Identifying and eliminating barriers to voting.
- Consulting with the effected populations when making policy decisions.
- Uniquely, during times of crisis, states may consider these additional strategies:
 - Creating telework policies for the public sector.
 - Protecting the job security of public and private sector workers.
 - Temporarily suspending the practice of disconnecting electrical, natural gas, water, telecommunications and internet services.

11 RECOMMENDATION: States consider enhancing their online presence to improve accessibility to information and services.

The private sector often has more manpower and resources to devote to innovation as a result of market influences, so it often appears that these businesses can move faster and adapt more efficiently to change. With more limited resources and more levels of required approvals, it is a common public opinion of state governments that it is often slow and averse to change. Through cleaning up some of its processes, states could try to seek to address these concerns of citizens with the same speed and efficiency as the private sector in order to keep services user-friendly and people oriented. States that seek more innovative state government operations can also attract workers to careers in the public sector and have opportunities to be a part of a forward-thinking workplace culture.

Louisiana⁸⁹ modernized Medicaid enrollment by creating the first Medicaid enrollment smartphone app in the country through a partnership with Maximus Inc. It gives citizens an easier option to enrollment compared to call centers and the state's Department of Health website.

Dayton, Ohio, is an example of a local government using social media data collection to make informed decisions about how to best communicate with its citizens.⁹⁰ Through a partnership with ZenCity Technologies LTD, Dayton is able to measure citizen sentiment in online forums and tailor the appropriate responses to help stop the spread of misinformation about issues such as water outages and tornadoes. The partnership allows the city to be able to communicate faster and more accurately based on what citizens need to hear first and most.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Creating basic agency website standards.
- Creating one-stop shops for government services or information.
- Partnering with independent vendors to modernize services.
- Utilizing social media as a form of mass communication.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

In 2019, **Utah** passed legislation⁹¹ that authorized the state Department of Technology Services to coordinate with the executive branch agencies to provide basic agency website standards that address issues of design and navigation. By doing so, the state hoped to make cost-effective decisions to reduce redundancies, improve data accessibility between agencies and ensure persons of all abilities could access information.



SECTION II: SMART GOVERNMENT

Investing in the Workforce of the Future

The remaining recommendations of the Smart Government Subcommittee focus on best practices for talent development, smart enablement of technology and streamlining processes.

12 RECOMMENDATION: States consider using creative techniques to persuade workers to choose careers in the public IT sector.

13 RECOMMENDATION: States consider reaching their goals of making essential services and connections, such as broadband, available to all

States should consider how to attract, build and retain talent in the public IT sector. One way to do this is to identify best practices from private sector IT companies or departments and implement them in a way that translates for the public sector. Although telework has huge potential to benefit productivity and connectivity to job options,⁹² it is more common in the private sector than in the public sector.⁹³ Expanding telework options, which are generally viewed as a positive benefit to workers,⁹⁴ may help states attract workers to the public sector. Tennessee's Alternative Workplace Solutions⁹⁵ is a formal work-from-home process that state employees can utilize. States should also work to ensure that public workers will be protected from disruptive technologies. In Texas⁹⁶ automation has served to highlight the importance of customer service and human interaction — both qualities states can hold as being central to the mission of government work and not impacted by automation.

States can also look to college students as an untapped pool of future talent for public sector IT jobs. By building connections with students through internships and on-campus events, states may be able to attract younger, tech-savvy workers to these careers to support technology.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Arkansas, which integrated a former research assistant professor at the University of Arkansas into its public IT workforce to build relationships within the university.⁹⁷

Nebraska, which utilizes college students as interns in the public IT sector.⁹⁸

New Mexico, which created a competition where teams of college students could compete to defend themselves against simulated cyberattacks.⁹⁹

Missouri, which established an Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development.¹⁰⁰

Additionally, states can also engage K-12 students to get them interested in public sector IT work.



EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Missouri,¹⁰¹ which expanded STEM and computer science opportunities for K-12 students via legislation.

North Dakota,¹⁰² which brought together public, private and military organizations to promote IT skills and career opportunities for K-12 students.

Texas,¹⁰³ which allocated financial resources to students experiencing poverty to improve digital connection and educational prospects.

Recruiting younger talent will widen the age range of the public sector workforce, which consequently could create challenges for managing employees across the five¹⁰⁴ different generations currently employed in the American workforce – Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z. To help with the differences in skills among



the generations, West Virginia¹⁰⁵ developed a guide for supervisors to help train all ages of employees according to their values and common life experience to ensure the potential of all workers are harnessed to drive innovation forward.

As technology shifts and changes at rates faster than ever before, states must learn how to engage and educate across the generational spectrum so that no one is left behind. This need is further reflected in the country's declining total fertility rate (the representation of the number of children the average woman will have in her lifetime) which threatens to destabilize the workforce due to the inability to replace workers that are retiring. This gap further affects the workforce as fewer people pay into programs like Social Security, however the threat can be much larger as it may also mean fewer people enter into fields such as health care and home assistance to treat the aging population.¹⁰⁶ While this "gray tsunami"¹⁰⁷ will have its own impact, so too will demographic shifts state to state across the country as aforementioned issues such as brain drain influence where people plant their roots. States should anticipate these coming shifts and be prepared with talent development strategies that both recruit young people and retain and retrain more experienced workers to ensure the work of government continues no matter the demographic trend that comes its way.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Offering alternative work solutions to workers in the public sector.
- Protecting workers from disruptive technology.
- Partnering with universities and college students.
- Offering apprenticeships in public sector work.
- Expanding STEM and computer science opportunities to K-12 students.
- Allocating additional resources to students experiencing poverty.
- Partnering with additional stakeholders to ensure students stay connected.
- Expanding broadband access.



SECTION II: SMART GOVERNMENT

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Nebraska focuses on college students by utilizing them as interns and works with universities to ensure students acquire real-world knowledge of IT work. Additionally, through LB 1160, the state adopted the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and Education Reporting System to promote economic development in the state through data-driven decisions on lifelong learning and workforce development issues.¹⁰⁸ The law came out of a 2019 Economic Development Task Force report that identified four recommendations to address the gap between the availability of IT and STEM-related jobs and the skills acquired by workers needed to fill those jobs. Those recommendations are:

- Supporting a longitudinal data system to identify gaps in our education and training system, responding to those needs and building on strengths.
- Investing in apprenticeship programs aligned with high demand skills and industries.
- Developing a career-education scholarship program for students pursuing careers in high demand, high skill, high wage jobs.
- Retaining young Nebraskans with needed skill sets through student loan repayment initiatives.

Missouri developed a three-day training program for senior leaders, managers, supervisors and emerging leaders called The Missouri Way.¹⁰⁹ The goal of the program is to accelerate professional growth while also ensuring these leaders have the skills and shared understanding to improve the productivity and morale of their departments. The program creates a network of leaders from all departments that together improve government performance for citizens.

California and **West Virginia** are two states with comprehensive broadband implementation plans that states may consult

as they build their own. Through legislation, California created an environment for state agencies to collaboratively identify ways to improve broadband access to increase the chances of updated infrastructure. West Virginia allowed the formation of cooperatives to provide broadband service, created a loan guarantee program to reduce the fiscal risk to commercial lenders for their participation and allowed Internet Service Providers to use microtrenching to install infrastructure, an action that reduces barriers to wider broadband deployment.

14 RECOMMENDATION: States consider identifying best practices from successful smart city solutions and expanding them into state projects.

15 RECOMMENDATION: States consider improving cybersecurity by not only looking at the people handling the sensitive information, but at the devices storing that information as well.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to be used by state policymakers to quickly analyze and learn from both new and old data¹¹⁰ in order to make informed decisions. For example, in San Diego, California, smart streetlights assist law enforcement with public safety. Not only are the lights equipped with sensors that can detect unusual sounds — such as car crashes — and alert police, the streetlights also allow public safety officials to monitor intersections and take note of traffic changes and backups.¹¹¹ All three features could be used to make better transportation policy decisions regarding safety and traffic flow. This is an example of smart enablement of technology that empowers public officials to make informed decisions on policies that will affect entire communities.

AI and cloud computing can have direct impact on how states govern. For example, several states¹¹² including Rhode Island and North Carolina relied on cloud technology during the coronavirus pandemic to help process

unprecedented unemployment claims as it allowed them to modify their systems and scale their website needs. Maryland¹¹³ hopes to streamline its workers' compensation claims in a way that frees its workforce from processing paperwork so that their skills could be better utilized elsewhere. These examples showcase how a smart government can carefully implement new technologies to increase efficiency.

Cybersecurity is also a big concern for states as they seek to protect their data and equip their workforces with the necessary tools to identify and mitigate potential security threats at a time when cyber-attacks on municipalities are rising, wreaking havoc on service delivery and generating high price tags.¹¹⁴ In Massachusetts, the state's Cybersecurity Awareness Program grants provide training for 1,075 municipal and public school employees. North Carolina's appropriation of \$2 million during the COVID-19 pandemic strengthened security around unemployment insurance, and in North Dakota, the state boasts a central, shared service approach to cybersecurity strategy across all aspects of state government.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Using AI to find areas of improvement in service delivery.
- Using AI and cloud technology to reduce the need for manual labor.
- Providing workers with free cybersecurity trainings.
- Authorizing a central, shared service approach to state cybersecurity.

- Designating appropriate funding to strengthen cybersecurity.
- Requiring manufacturers of technological devices to equip them with reasonable security features.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

In 2019, **Oregon** required manufacturers to equip connected devices with "reasonable security features" such as preprogrammed passwords and requirements to generate a new means of authentication before accessing the device. The features are meant to protect that device and the information it stores from access, destruction, modification, use or disclosure that user does not authorize.¹¹⁵

16 RECOMMENDATION 16: States consider promoting cultures of digital transformation to encourage the practice of data-driven decision making.

17 RECOMMENDATION 17: States consider creating data hubs that can share data across multiple entities/platforms to stop the issue of data silos.

By equipping an engaged and valued public workforce with smart technologies, state governments can attain streamlined processes to improve service delivery and decision-making. States must also work to create a culture of digital transformation that allows these ideals to grow. Small-scale examples of such a culture include **Georgia** and **Maryland** which, through the implementation of E-procurement, demonstrate how their governments value streamlining, workflow management, functionality and fiscal savings.¹¹⁶



SECTION II: SMART GOVERNMENT

EXPLAINER

E-procurement

E-procurement typically describes business-to-business purchases that are done online or over some digital network or platform. This is a rather broad description of many transactions that happen based on modern technologies and business and vendor partnerships.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Considering state partnerships as a means to share resources and achieve common goals.
- Using innovative procurement processes to find custom-built solutions to state issues.
- Implementing E-procurement.
- Using data hubs to improve service delivery.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Philadelphia, **Pennsylvania**, is doing its part to create a culture of digital transformation. Last year, the city challenged traditional city government procurement processes by making private vendors propose custom solutions to the city's needs rather than seeking out technologies that were already created with a one-size-fits-all mentality.¹¹⁷ According to its website, the new procurement process — called Pitch & Pilot — offers funding to test promising solutions in partnership with the private sector to improve government services. The winner of the Pitch will be awarded up to \$34,000 to pilot its solution. Not only does the program help the city find technological innovation that may not have been previously available to them, it also encourages the private sector to share their pro-digital perspective with the public sector to foster collaboration around the innovations citizens want.



Streamlining Through Partnerships and Data-Sharing

States can learn from city and county partnerships that allow a shared allocation of resources to achieve common goals across borders. Smart governments will look beyond their own borders to seek collaboration with neighboring states to improve not only connectivity, but any issue where resources are imbalanced. In Maine, for example, the towns of Baileyville and Calais partnered to bring affordable fiber optic broadband internet to their rural residents.¹¹⁸

A smart government does not only share resources, it also shares data. Data is often siloed, meaning it is accessible to one agency but not another. Data isolation can cause a multitude of problems such as lack of transparency, slower decision-making and inaccuracies.¹¹⁹ A smart government will work to remove those barriers so that their policies will always be informed.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

The **Indiana** Management Performance Hub, which holds the 2018 National Association of State Chief Information Officers Award for Data Management, Analytics and Visualization, leverages data to facilitate data-driven decision making and policy discussion.¹²⁰ A facet of the hub, known as the Indiana Data Partnership, partners with Indiana University to support collaborative frameworks designed to increase accessibility to existing data among all of the partnership's other stakeholders in order to promote better decision-making across multiple sectors. For the public, the hub's website hosts visual information on the opioid epidemic, education and workforce issues and Medicaid information that are all easily accessible. The hub continues to work with government organizations to find these intersections of data and policy to better inform future policy.



In **Pennsylvania**, all 67 counties previously had their own separate reporting systems for tracking child welfare, hindering the state from effectively tracking and intervening in cases of child abuse since the systems did not "talk" to each other and track children if they moved or had an incident in another county. After the state moved to a centralized approach — the Child Welfare Information Solution — the task became much more manageable. Now these officials have an all-encompassing view of a child and their family over time,¹²¹ which allows them to better observe and intervene in a situation.

A smart government recognizes that the mission of government is to protect and serve citizens by equipping itself with technologies that help inform important policy discussions and to cultivate a public sector workforce that is educated and engaged. A proactive government that builds these skills within its people and protects them from the inevitable challenges associated with the 21st century and beyond, will see returns on their investment in efficiencies, productivity, safety and overall public sector morale.



SECTION III

What's Next? Embracing the Future

Ensuring Access to Essential Technologies

States have been working to improve and increase broadband access for years, with all 50 states having had some form of a broadband task force. The COVID-19 pandemic put into stark relief the shortcomings of broadband coverage, and states took notice. Public policy and funding decisions can improve access, something that is paramount as more Americans work, learn and seek medical care through their connected devices. Despite years of federal funding and programs supporting broadband initiatives in unserved and underserved areas, in addition to a patchwork of state programs, funding and initiatives, the ability to reliably connect remains a barrier for many. The pandemic has renewed conversations about broadband as an essential utility and state and federal officials from around the country turned their focus to addressing the various broadband-related gaps. A community's access to broadband can determine its progress on economic development, education, health care and quality of life.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) asked internet service providers and others to sign on to a Keep Americans Connected Pledge,¹²² which continued internet service to clients who were unable to pay their bills due to unemployment or economic hardship. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai

also made a plea for Congress to act to ensure nationwide access for all.¹²³

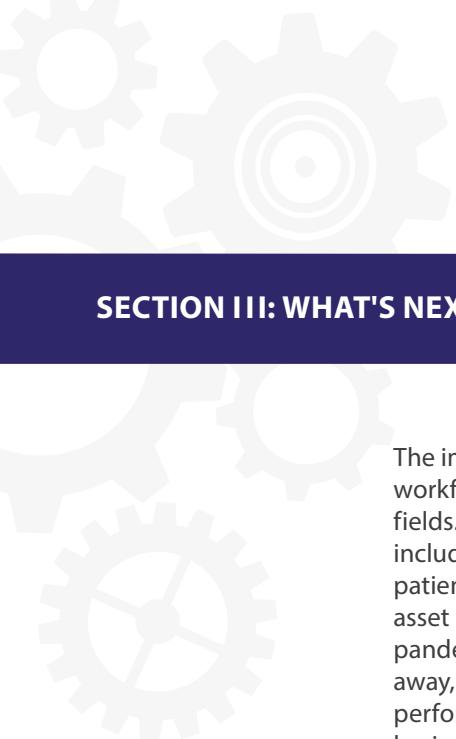
Further supporting broadband's important role in spurring innovation and supporting state and local economies, more than 40 bills relating to broadband access were introduced in state legislatures between April and June 2020.¹²⁴ Many believe that ensuring access and affordability to broadband could help the workforce stay current on technologies and e-learning opportunities that are being rolled out and are shaping the future as the pandemic continues to impact communities. It is clear that state governments cannot underestimate their essential roles in evaluating gaps, developing partnerships and making plans to expand broadband access. Specifically, states can work with internet service providers on solutions for how to address the reliability and speed inequities in broadband coverage.

However, to remain competitive globally, states cannot afford to be exclusively focused on expanding broadband in its traditional sense. 5G, the latest iteration of mobile broadband, promises faster speeds, greater capacity for data sharing between devices and better overall dependability. It is already being implemented in various city centers, dubbed "smart cities," and 5G cellular technology will continue to be rolled out around the country in the months and years to come. This technology has the ability to drastically impact rural populations.

EXPLAINER:

What is Broadband?

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines broadband as reliable high-speed internet having download speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps. It can be delivered via multiple technologies including fiber, fixed wireless, digital subscriber line or cable. Some states have defined broadband in statute using different download and upload speeds or other parameters.¹²⁵



SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE

The implications on the future of the country's workforce are numerous across a variety of fields. In medicine, 5G brings innovations that include allowing health care workers to stream patient data for real-time remote monitoring, an asset in limiting exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic. Things that once seemed very far away, such as confidently and successfully performing remote surgeries, are just on the horizon. In August 2020, the White House and the U.S. Department of Defense announced a plan to make a portion of the wireless spectrum available to the wireless cellular industry, which was expected to help carriers offer 5G more broadly across the country with fewer cell towers.¹²⁶

States are expected to determine how they will thrive in spite of these technologies by evaluating data, communicating with stakeholders and predicting how these technologies will impact state workforces and economies. Determining pathways and strategies in advance for overcoming any obstacles that have potential to impact the financial security for workers, the need for workers to upskill, reskill or change careers and other challenges will help them maintain a competitive edge, attract top talent and continue to innovate and lead.

18 RECOMMENDATION:

States consider ensuring access to broadband in underserved and under-resourced areas using creative approaches to funding and partnerships.

States are organizing new and reconvening previous broadband task forces and commissions in an effort to bring a variety of key stakeholders to the table to explore affordable and cost-effective broadband access strategies for rural and urban spaces. States are utilizing a variety of different technologies including TV white spaces, fixed wireless and satellite coverage in an effort to reduce initial capital and the ongoing operating costs of broadband networks.

States are also realizing the importance of adopting digital literacy initiatives alongside investments in deploying broadband. This is

important because while a number of American households still lack access to broadband, there is an even larger population who have access but choose not to subscribe for reasons such as inaffordability, lack of a connectable device and a lack of understanding about how to utilize these technologies.

The impacts of COVID-19 have illuminated the need for prioritizing broadband access. The Pew Charitable Trusts has tracked and analyzed state broadband initiatives around the country that demonstrate the wide variety of strategies being employed to overcome the broadband gap.¹²⁷



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Stakeholder outreach and engagement.
- Clear policy objectives.
- Setting planning goals and rubrics for measuring progress.
- Capacity building within communities.
- Funding and operations accountability systems.
- Periodic program evaluation and reimagination.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Microsoft is partnering with internet service providers in the states to roll out Airband, a service using TV white space technology, to help tackle the challenge of getting rural America connected.¹²⁸ The program, which launched in 2018, is now live in 25 states and Puerto Rico, and is on track to meet its target

of expanding high-speed internet to 3 million Americans living in unserved areas by 2022.¹²⁹

Minnesota is demonstrating success offering broadband grants to its communities in order to help close the broadband deployment gap, particularly in areas that didn't receive federal funding to pursue these objectives. Minnesota is also working on broad stakeholder outreach to increase support for broadband services within communities.

Maine, Indiana, Iowa and Idaho are funding broadband projects through a combination of grants, loans, tax incentives, bonds and support from other state agencies.

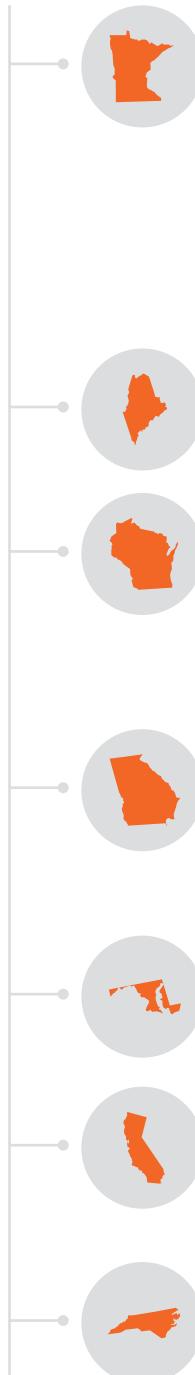
Tennessee and Wisconsin are exploring a variety of creative and innovative funding mechanisms and operations and are looking back at earlier attempts at increasing broadband access, reflecting and better evaluating those programs and their evolutions.

Georgia and Vermont have also chosen to define terms like underserved and unserved in terms of connectivity speeds and a population's technology access in order to more accurately target those who lack sufficient service.

Maryland has institutionalized an office dedicated to rural broadband, something that could be done for other populations that lack access due to affordability or other issues.

California, Minnesota and West Virginia are improving policy frameworks that examine barriers to access.

Colorado, Maine, North Carolina and West Virginia are engaging in robust planning and capacity building initiatives for current and future broadband programs in order to maximize outcomes.



EXPLAINER:

TV White Space

A block of spectrum that is ripe for innovation and experimental use, holding rich potential for expanding broadband capacity and improving access for many users and for developing technologies that can expand this type of spectrum access to other frequencies and services in order to greatly increase our ability to utilize spectrum. The FCC is moving forward with plans and is actively working to unlock this spectrum in order to maximize white spaces' value for consumers and businesses.

Source: Federal Communications Commission

SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE

EXPLAINER:

What is a Small Cell?

The small cells that enable 5G cellular networks are pieces of radio equipment and antennas that can be placed on other structures such as streetlights, building or utility poles. About the size of a pizza box or a backpack, they must be installed every few blocks because in addition to transmitting on the low-band spectrum as traditional cell towers do, they can transmit data using mid- and high-band spectrum and those airwaves cannot travel as far. The added frequencies allow 5G networks to send larger quantities of data at higher speeds.¹³²

19 RECOMMENDATION: States consider prioritizing access to wireless cellular connectivity for all residents.

A number of cellular broadband providers are working tirelessly to expand 5G, with plans for coverage to extend to over 99% of America within the next 5.5 years. There is a possibility that 5G will become the next broadband connection for a number of Americans,¹³⁰ and states are already making efforts to advance 5G, complementing previous broadband efforts. More than half have passed some version of small cell legislation that helps companies roll out the technology by accessing points of interest where they can locate small cells. This in turn helps the state be ripe for investment via this emerging technology.

States that want to find ways to be even more lucrative for this technological investment could examine legislative ways to streamline regulations and applications processes that make their markets attractive for investment by the private sector companies that are building out these technologies. One way to do so is by encouraging vertical assets inventories. States can compile lists of vertical assets within communities that a wireless provider could use and put equipment on, as well as work toward protecting small outdoor antennas on private property from fees or restrictions. Other important steps include educating populations about the importance of cellular and the capabilities it brings — along with myths and disinformation associated with it — while advocating for access and building broad support within communities. Digital literacy initiatives are also important.

States may also urge the FCC to transform the Universal Service Fund (USF) into broadband vouchers for rural households.¹³¹ At the same time, states should consider inquiring with telecommunications companies regarding the value in installing 5G and how they project that it can spur new developments, increase property values or benefit organizations such as local schools. States will have to think strategically about where those benefits can be long-term and pass enabling legislation that limits the ability of localities to slow the process of deployment as they work to build community support for these initiatives.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Michigan prioritized wireless capacity and services through small cell legislation that streamlines regulations, applications processes and processing timelines to facilitate the deployment of the infrastructure that supports 5G.¹³³



20 RECOMMENDATION: States consider encouraging or mandating multi-stakeholder approaches to examining automation decisions, adoption rates and workforce impacts.

As technologies evolve, states will be responsible for determining how adoption rates will impact their employers, workforce and ultimately state economies. Multi-stakeholder approaches, such as the creation of an Artificial Intelligence Task Force, will allow a diverse set of stakeholders to consider every angle of planning for the state to thrive in the new economy. These decisions will equip states to support local economic development and improve regional competitiveness through such things as sector-based development strategies and investment in digital infrastructure. Communities that are severely impacted by automation may require targeted and comprehensive strategies to recover and transition.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Create an Artificial Intelligence Task Force to bring a diverse set of stakeholders together to examine workforce issues and state-specific impacts of artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- Support local economic development and improve regional competitiveness through sector-based development strategies and investment in digital infrastructure, since communities that are severely impacted by automation require targeted and comprehensive strategies to recover and transition.
- Promote employer engagement and investment through a worker training tax credit, expansion of apprenticeships and new sector and regional workforce partnerships.
- Encourage employers to adopt multi-stakeholder approaches to automation decisions by promoting new strategies to identify and address worker and community impacts in advance.
- Provide key stakeholders with more specific information on the impact of automation by collecting data on technological advancements, adoption rates, and workforce impacts in order to better understand how automation is changing the state economy.



Examples in Action:

Alabama and **New York** have artificial intelligence task forces in place to look at the role of state governments in regulating and overseeing the development and implementation of AI across a variety of sectors. **Vermont**'s AI Task Force released its final report in January 2020 with a number of findings including an action request by the state that will help to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks discussed therein. Specifically, they recommend that the state invest in the ethical development and use of AI through a number of possible funding sources. Additionally, they recommend making the AI Task Force permanent, as a way for government to stay up to speed on these rapidly developing technologies while maintaining some degree of oversight through the public nature of government meetings and engagement with stakeholders.¹³⁴

SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE

21 RECOMMENDATION: States consider setting parameters legislatively about how they identify and manage privacy in order to enable innovation while minimizing consumer risk.

The future of work relies heavily on technology and innovation. In the U.S., states must act individually in order to ensure greater privacy protections for residents. At least 30 states introduced privacy-related legislation in 2020, and a number of other states have instituted privacy-related task forces or advisory councils.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, states partnered with technology companies or utilized technologies to monitor possible disease outbreaks among workers.¹³⁵ States also turned to tech to help with contact tracing via apps and the monitoring of metadata, collected by third-party data collection services.¹³⁶ Privacy concerns prompted the American Civil Liberties Union to issue a set of principles for technology-assisted contact tracing, just one of many red flags being raised by a number of privacy protection advocates.¹³⁷

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

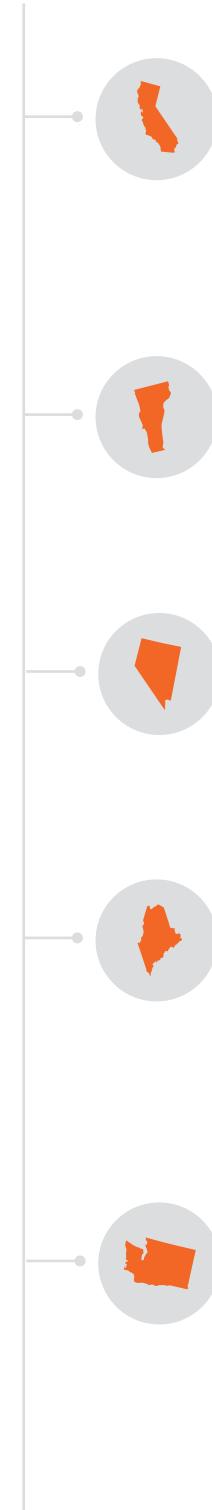
The **California** Consumer Privacy Act of 2018 (CCPA)¹³⁸ established a consumer's right to know what personal information was being collected about them and how companies planned to use and share that data. Once in effect, the law enabled consumers to delete some of the information collected, to prohibit the sale of their personal information, and provided them non-discrimination rights if they chose to act on any of the rights granted by the act.¹³⁹ California voters passed Proposition 24 in November 2020, which will take effect in 2023. It strengthens the CCPA to limit how businesses can use specific information, such as race and location, and creates a new state data privacy enforcement agency.¹⁴⁰

Vermont enacted a law in 2018 requiring data brokers to disclose to individuals what information is being collected about them and permit them to opt out of collection.

Nevada's 2019 bill prohibits an operator of a website or online service which collects certain information from consumers from making any sale of information about a consumer.

Maine now prohibits internet service providers from using, disclosing, selling or permitting access to customer personal information unless the customer expressly consents to such, provides other exceptions under which a provider may use, disclose, sell or permit access to customer personal information, prohibits a provider from refusing to serve a customer, charging a customer a penalty or offering a customer a discount.¹⁴¹

In 2020, **Washington** passed the nation's first facial recognition law, which was a partnership with the private sector tech companies. It allows government agencies to use facial recognition with restrictions designed to ensure that it isn't deployed for broad surveillance or used for tracking innocent people.¹⁴²



22 RECOMMENDATION: States consider creating permanent or temporary organizations and/or staff dedicated to workforce policy issues and best practices for the future.

Virginia created a specific position dedicated to how to prepare for what the future of the workforce will look like. Positions like this one may work best within the state's executive branch as an advisor to the governor or as a part of a state's department of labor. These staff members as well as established future of work task forces can help identify and consider the major challenges posed by things such as technological disruptions for workers and can assess existing state policies and practices or policies that need to be adopted in order to respond to both technological challenges and their impacts on work, workers and workplaces. Short-term commissions or task forces have the potential to bring together a range of stakeholders — workers, advocates, employers and other policymakers — in order to answer a set of core questions about the future of work.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Hire permanent staff dedicated to examining the future of work.
- Convene a future of work task force or commission.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

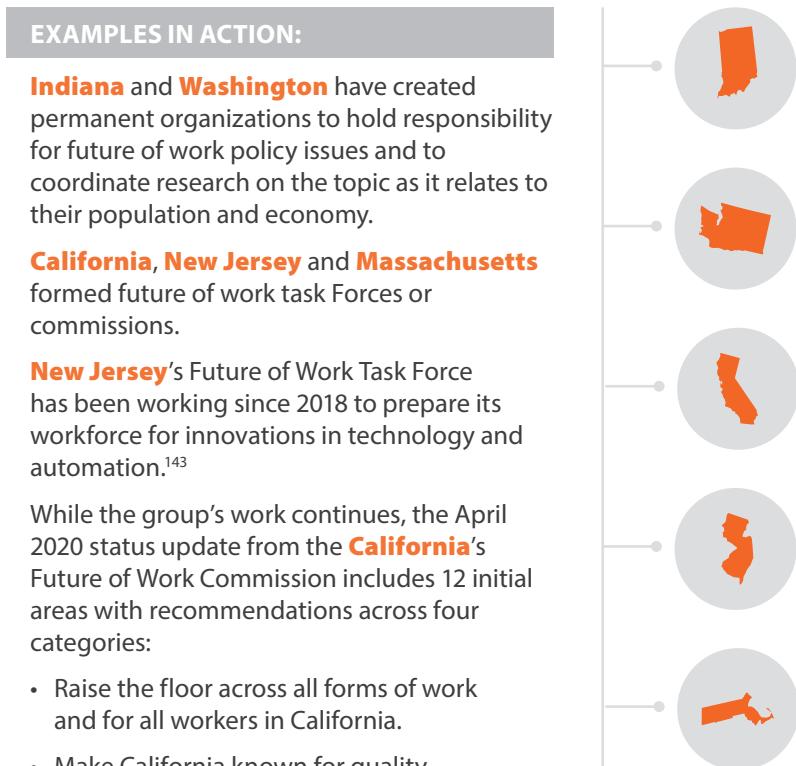
Indiana and **Washington** have created permanent organizations to hold responsibility for future of work policy issues and to coordinate research on the topic as it relates to their population and economy.

California, New Jersey and **Massachusetts** formed future of work task Forces or commissions.

New Jersey's Future of Work Task Force has been working since 2018 to prepare its workforce for innovations in technology and automation.¹⁴³

While the group's work continues, the April 2020 status update from the **California's** Future of Work Commission includes 12 initial areas with recommendations across four categories:

- Raise the floor across all forms of work and for all workers in California.
- Make California known for quality jobs and high-road employers, while building on the state's history as a great place to start and run a company.
- Future-proof California to meet future demands and challenges, continue to lead in innovation and grow jobs and the economy.
- Address work-adjacent barriers to employment to work and livelihoods.¹⁴⁴





SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Strengthening Financial Security for Workers

It is important for states to be ready for future disruptions in the traditional workplace by finding solutions that address workers' financial security while state economies continue to change and evolve. Several states are considering portable benefits systems in order to improve economic security for both traditional and nontraditional workers. This option expands access and investment to reskilling, upskilling and other training programs and educational opportunities, and helps encourage companies to invest in their workforce to reap the long-term benefits of dedicated employees.

Automation that is being ushered in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic will likely improve overall job quality for workers, but it is also predicted to lead to more low-wage jobs and greater economic insecurity. States that haven't already done so can act now to increase wage subsidies and the minimum wage, while creating more economic opportunities through improving labor market flexibility and promoting entrepreneurship.

23 RECOMMENDATION: States consider streamlining and updating unemployment insurance application systems and processes in order to serve residents in an expedient manner while minimizing cybersecurity risk.

In 2020, office closures and job losses caused by the COVID-19 health crisis created record numbers of unemployment insurance applications in the states. Unemployment insurance checks were held up in many states in the height of this crisis because the computer systems used to issue benefits were operating on an outdated coding language — common business-oriented language (COBOL) — that few coders working today know. This was just one indicator of the absence of funding for modernization in states for many years. For the last 25 years, Congress has steadily made cuts to state funding for modernization projects,¹⁴⁵

despite the Government Accountability Office (GAO) advocating that the older systems expose more cybersecurity risks and are less effective overall.¹⁴⁶ At least 12 states — including Alaska, Connecticut, California, Iowa, Kansas and Rhode Island — still use the aging coding language in their unemployment systems, at least in part. Without sufficient investment in modernization and hardware, state unemployment systems will continue to strain in times of crisis.

During the pandemic, a fraud campaign out of Nigeria called "Scattered Canary," was able to smuggle hundreds of millions of dollars from state unemployment agencies, demonstrating cybersecurity vulnerabilities at least 7 state systems, including some whose resources were already stretched thin.¹⁴⁷ The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)¹⁴⁸ included \$1 billion in new unemployment insurance administrative funding to all states for staffing, technology and other administrative costs. This needed funding may open up opportunities for states to improve outdated technologies and address other needs.

In terms of updating processes, states can support companies that would otherwise have to lay off workers due to the economic downturn resulting from the pandemic by encouraging work sharing in order to cut costs. Through reducing the number of weekly hours of multiple workers, thus minimizing full employment, states are able to support workers through offering partial unemployment while workers remain employed at the company working fewer hours. Using this model, once the economy is back up to speed, employees would be able to return to work and ramp up their hours quickly, as opposed to companies having to complete costly re-hire and new-hire processes. Twenty-seven states are currently able to provide partial unemployment benefits.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Invest in modernization, hardware and cybersecurity initiatives to support state unemployment systems and other critical service systems.
- Consider partial unemployment benefits legislation.

24 RECOMMENDATION:

States consider examining unemployment insurance for gig economy and other nontraditional workers and evaluate worker classification issues.

The federal government set a precedent with its Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program,¹⁴⁹ enabling gig economy and other nontraditional workers to qualify for federal unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. States could use this as a model for considering expanding unemployment insurance as the nature of work and worker classification laws evolve.

At least 15 states addressed employee misclassification leading up to California's Assembly Bill 5 (AB 5) becoming law in 2019.¹⁵⁰ Some of the activity had been from state executive branches through executive orders or the creation of state task forces. State legislatures are also taking up this issue, as the nature of gig and independent work continues to evolve, heavily impacted by emerging technologies.

States are also implementing self-employment assistance (SEA) programs which allow unemployed workers to continue receiving unemployment insurance benefits while starting

a business rather than seeking full-time W-2 employment. The premise of this argument is that states view these entrepreneurial individuals as job generators who will build a successful business and eventually be able to hire others. SEA programs are fully functioning in seven states, with three other states having passed laws supporting these initiatives. They require recipients to both have a viable business idea and be willing to work full-time to develop it. These programs are supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration,¹⁵¹ which supports the entrepreneurs and their endeavors through training, mentors and other resources.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- States may examine unemployment insurance restrictions for temporary, subcontracted, independent contractors or freelance, part-time, short-term or on-call workers and work to streamline the online application systems.
- States can help shape the discussion and educate on business models that prevent worker exploitation.
- States may help displaced workers with business ideas transition into entrepreneurial opportunities.

SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

In **California** last year, AB 5 brought worker misclassification to the forefront, arguing that employers purposefully misclassify, labeling workers “independent contractors” when they should be considered employees. The authors of the bill pointed to companies using this misclassification tactic to avoid paying unemployment and other taxes on workers to the state and to keep from having to cover them on workers compensation, unemployment insurance and other programs.

The jury is still out on worker misclassification — at least 34 bills have been introduced in the states in 2020 that relate to it.. Most of them would expand the list of occupations that are not required to be considered an employee of a business.¹⁵²

The App-Based Drivers as Contractors and Labor Policies Ballot Initiative, known as Proposition 22 passed in November 2020. App-based drivers will remain independent contractors, instead of being employees or agents and therefore will not be subject to AB 5. Proposition 22 brings some benefits to app-based drivers, such as minimum earnings, healthcare subsidies, and automobile insurance. AB 5 will continue to apply to other types of gig work.¹⁵³ Those voting yes to Proposition 22 believe that app-based drivers should be independent contractors and not employees or agents. The ballot measure would not affect how AB 5 is applied to other types of workers.

Oregon's SEA program is a collaboration of the State Employment Department and the Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC). The program is funded out of the annual Unemployment and Wagner-Peyser grants. Entrepreneurial training is provided by community colleges and other educational institutions or through individual counseling sessions at the local SBDC.¹⁵⁴

25 RECOMMENDATION: States consider examining portable benefits structures and the feasibility and necessity for their workers.

At least 4 states — Georgia, New York, New Jersey and Washington — have taken legislative action aimed at implementing portable benefits systems. Portable benefits systems have the ability to provide benefits to the millions of workers who lack them, improving their lives, the financial security of their families and strengthening state economies. The current system of workplace benefits is outdated and insufficient, according to Dr. Shelly Steward of The Aspen Institute’s Future of Work Initiative and coauthor of “Designing Portable Benefits: A Resource Guide for Policymakers.”¹⁵⁵ This in-depth guide sheds light on the promise of portable benefits to bring essential benefits to more workers and provides examples of existing models and ideas for using policy to shape a stronger financial future for all workers. Portable benefits systems are often designed in ways that require user fees or companies that employ independent contractors or freelancers to pay fees to a nonprofit provider to supply the worker with benefits that remain with them as they transition through various jobs.

Six states — California (2002), New Jersey (2008), Rhode Island (2013), New York (2016), Washington (2017) and Massachusetts (2018) — have passed paid family and medical leave programs. Programs differ in the benefits provided, duration covered and the amount of contributions from employers and workers. As policymakers seek to expand paid family and medical leave, they should also consider how to ensure that this benefit is universal, including coverage for non-traditional workers. No currently implemented program requires self-employed workers to buy coverage, although some allow for the self-employed to opt-in.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Evaluate how work structures and arrangements of today and of the future need to be updated to map the ways people are participating in society and earning income today.
- Start and leverage new innovation funds as they experiment with different portable benefits models, whether considering expanding paid sick leave or family leave health insurance, retirement savings, workers' compensation, disability insurance, life insurance, childcare assistance and/or training opportunities.
- Work to implement effective portable benefits models that are prorated and universal in order to improve individual and household financial security and create more equity between traditional and non-traditional workers.
- Expand eligibility for existing or emerging benefits to more workers, including non-traditional workers by considering which benefits to include, eligibility, funding and administration.



EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

The Black Car Fund, established in **New York** State to provide workers' compensation insurance to drivers who are independent contractors, covers approximately 300 car-for-hire companies throughout the state. More than 130,000 affiliated drivers are covered, including those who work for Lyft and Uber. The fund receives a 2.5% surcharge on every ride, paid by the passenger, collected by member bases that dispatch drivers and remitted to the fund.¹⁵⁶

California is expected to significantly expand its family and medical leave laws by expanding the obligation to provide job-protected leave to small businesses with as few as five employees, allowing leave to be taken for additional reasons and eliminating certain exceptions to employer obligations to provide leave.¹⁵⁷

Washington¹⁵⁸ and **New Jersey**¹⁵⁹ have pending portable benefits legislation and related legislation was also introduced in **Georgia**.¹⁶⁰ "New technology has yielded a modern economy that allows greater flexibility for independent contractors but because many of their jobs do not come with health insurance, retirement plans or paid leave, these workers are more vulnerable than many of their counterparts in the traditional workforce," New Jersey Assemblyman Troy Singleton told the Courier Post.¹⁶¹

26 RECOMMENDATION: States consider encouraging, educating and aiding their residents in the importance of saving for retirement.

State policymakers are introducing legislation to help support retirement security, as most Americans aren't saving enough for retirement. The need is dire for many low-income workers, small business employees and people of color. Alternatively, many workers go to work each day in part so that they can save money for retirement and know that one of the best ways

Saving for Retirement

At least 1/3 of the workforce, or more than 30 million of the nation's private-sector workers lack access to a retirement savings plan through their jobs.

Temp or short-term workers are much less likely than traditional workers to have a retirement plan.

Just 23.4% of these contingent workers are eligible for employer-sponsored pension or retirement plans.

It is estimated that only 28% of those without access to an employer-provided plan have any retirement savings at all.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

to prepare financially is through retirement-specific accounts, such as IRAs or 401(k)s. These types of funds offer special tax benefits and often come with employer matches. At least a third of the workforce, or more than 30 million of the nation's private-sector workers, lack access to a retirement savings plan through their jobs.¹⁶² Temp or short-term workers are much less likely than traditional workers to have a retirement plan. Only 23.4% of these contingent workers were eligible for employer-sponsored pension or retirement plans in 2017 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.¹⁶³

It is estimated that only 28% of those without access to an employer-provided plan have any retirement savings at all.¹⁶⁴ Those without any savings will have to rely exclusively on Social Security, which often provides just enough to cover one's most basic needs.¹⁶⁵ States can help by enacting policies that seek to fill the void on retirement savings and residents' understanding of eligibility criteria and other financial literacy-related matters. Research shows that financial costs and organizational resources needed to launch retirement savings plans for employees are the biggest hurdles for businesses in offering these plans. If states could minimize administrative and financial burdens on employers, more businesses would likely move to participate or encourage their employees to participate. Pew's study revealed that workers' self-reported lack of knowledge about retirement plans is also a barrier to saving and many workers are unsure how much they will need to be able to retire comfortably.

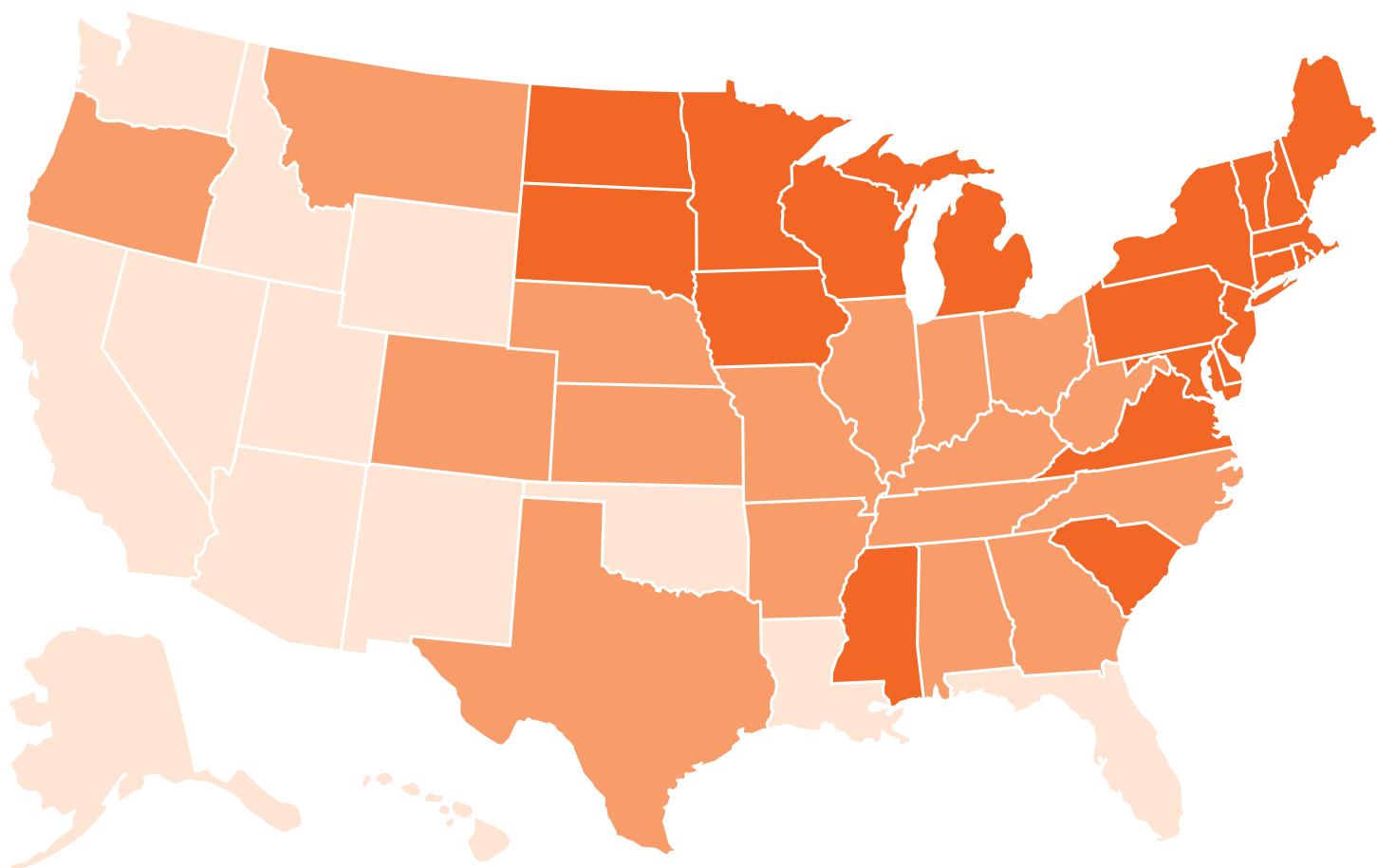
A number of states have set up "auto-IRAs" for private-sector workers who do not have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. States are using various strategies, such as automatic enrollment of new workers, to increase participation.¹⁶⁶

As these state auto-IRA programs grow, policymakers may decide to allow the self-employed, and other contingent and alternative workers, to participate.

Financial and consumer education beginning in high school helps students go on to make better financial decisions. Forty-five states now include personal finance education in their curriculum standards for grades kindergarten through 12, however only 37 states require that local school districts implement those standards. Only 21 states now require high school students to take a personal finance course to be eligible for graduation. At least five states have no personal finance coursework required in high school, which means that young adults may not learn how to pay for college, deal with student loans and repayment, and avoid such things as payday lenders and credit card debt.¹⁶⁷ A 2018 report examined state effectiveness at producing financially literate graduates and graded only five states with an A — Alabama, Missouri, Tennessee, Utah and Virginia.¹⁶⁸

Class of 2019 Student Loan Debt by State

Source: The Institute for College Access and Success



- Average Debt under \$26,000
- Average Debt \$26,001 - \$29,999
- Average Debt above \$30,000

SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Support efforts to provide consumer financial education, particularly in schools among students who are just launching their financial futures.
- Adopt auto-IRA models that allow employers to use a state-facilitated IRA and receive automatic deposits from workers' paychecks.
- Expand and modernize Earned Income Tax Credit programs by including unpaid caregiving and students as workers, making payments monthly instead of annually (CA, NJ, OH).
- Create a wage insurance program for displaced workers over 50 years old, which would provide short-term subsidies to offset a portion of the difference in earnings, up to \$10,000 over two years.
- Offer relocation grants for displaced workers to assist with housing, transportation, and relocation costs.
- Create or support non-employer retirement benefits that serve lower and moderate-income employees; employees of smaller and medium sized organizations, the self-employed and contingent workers (NY, WA).

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Since state-mandated class requirements can impact students' financial futures, **New Jersey** made financial education a requirement in both middle and high schools last year.¹⁶⁹

California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland and Oregon have adopted auto IRA models. Oregon was the first state to launch a state-sponsored auto-IRA program for the private sector, completing its first wave of enrollments in late 2017. The OregonSaves¹⁷⁰ initiative has goals of providing retirement-plan access to nearly 800,000 workers at more than 64,000 businesses.¹⁷¹

Vermont and **Massachusetts** have adopted Multiple Employer Plans. In Massachusetts, participation is limited to nonprofit employers with less than 20 employees.

New Jersey and **Washington** have implemented voluntary online marketplace opportunities, whereby employees and small businesses can shop for and compare retirement plans from a variety of different financial services providers.

Washington began by conducting a retirement readiness study and released a facts and resources sheet with key data that makes the case for why states should step in and assist their populations with saving for retirement.¹⁷²



Did You Know?

Three states — California, North Dakota and Oklahoma — have totally banned non-compete laws since the 1800s, in some cases establishing the ban before they were even a state. A non-compete prohibits an employee from engaging in a business that competes with his/her current employer's business. Many states have regulations for non-competes for certain income levels or industries.

Source: www.faircompetitionlaw.com

27 RECOMMENDATION: States consider improving the collection, measurement and sharing of information on career data.

The types of available jobs, salaries and wages offered and other factors vary state to state and change over time as industries evolve and needs shift. States can best prepare their workforces for the future of work by adding new data elements into their state unemployment insurance wage records, such as occupational title, hours worked, credential completion and work site. These elements would increase transparency and access to standardized and verifiable information about hourly earnings, career progression and occupational projections.

States may also consider starting, expanding and modernizing Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) programs. Additionally, they may include unpaid caregiving and students as workers and further support workers by making payments monthly instead of annually. Of the 29 states with EITCs, credits are refundable in 25 states.¹⁷³ Each year the refundable federal EITC is said to lift millions of families out of poverty.

According to a report from the U.S. Treasury Department, the wages of all workers are lower in states where corporations have maximum power to enforce non-compete agreements.¹⁷⁴ All but three states have employee non-compete laws, although legislation to modify these laws has been introduced in at least 29 states in recent years. Oregon banned non-competes specifically for low-wage workers in 2008, and seven states have recently joined them. Some believe non-compete and no-poach agreements are exploitative to workers and are advocating for states to protect them from restrictive unemployment contracts that keep them married to jobs they don't want but cannot leave. Nearly one in five U.S. workers is currently subject to a non-compete agreement,¹⁷⁵ and more than half of corporate franchises require employees to sign no-poach agreements, preventing them from moving between locations and therefore indirectly restricting worker mobility.¹⁷⁶



SECTION III: WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- States ban enforcement of non-competes and no-poach agreements.
- States consider EITC programs.
- States improve employment data collection and sharing methods.

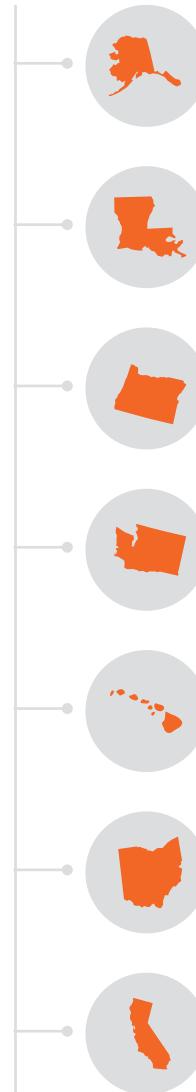
EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

Alaska, Louisiana, Oregon and Washington have been leading employment data collection and sharing initiatives as industries and jobs change over time.

Hawaii banned the use of non-competes for workers in the technology field in 2015. **Illinois¹⁷⁷** and **Massachusetts¹⁷⁸** have enacted laws to protect low-wage workers from non-compete agreements and **Washington's** Attorney General¹⁷⁹ has led a nationwide initiative to end the use of no-poach clauses, with corporate chains entering into legally enforceable agreements to remove the clauses from their franchise contracts.

In 2019, **Ohio** raised its Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) from 10% to 30% of the federal credit and removed the income cap. The expansion is expected to save low-income taxpayers \$38 million a year, but Policy Matters Ohio has also recommended making the credit refundable to benefit taxpayers with the lowest income.¹⁸⁰

The **California** Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) introduced in 2015 and Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC) introduced in 2019 provide a refund or reduction in tax owed for California's poorest working families. In 2019, more than 2 million Californians claimed the CalEITC, totaling close to \$395 million. In 2020, an estimated 400,000 California families are expected to benefit from the YCTC.¹⁸¹







SECTION IV

Equity and Inclusion

The United States is currently facing a time of civil unrest amidst an ongoing public health crises and many economic concerns. With protests continuing in cities across the country following the deaths of people of color, many Americans recognize the importance of addressing historical bias against many minorities.

As demographics in the U.S. continue to shift, Americans are more ethnically and racially diverse than ever before. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the number of Hispanic workers will continue to grow.¹⁸² This growing diversity is an asset that contributes to enhanced collaboration, motivation and innovation in the workforce.

The nation's growing diversity is an asset that can contribute to immense economic growth. According to Policy Link, in 2012, using a conservative estimate, America's annual GDP would have been \$2.1 trillion higher with racial equity.¹⁸³ Similarly, the country's 150 largest regions could collectively grow their GDP by 24% by addressing racial inequities.

Equity sparks innovation, which in turn leads to higher profits. Research conducted by Deloitte and the Billie King Initiative showed that companies with high levels of equity had higher levels of innovation, achieved the fastest growth of profits and outperformed incremental changes by generating 10 times more shareholder value.¹⁸⁴ However, actually achieving

equity and inclusion in the workforce has proven difficult.

In order to have conversations about equity and inclusion, we must first start from a common language.

Diversity, equality and equity tend to be used interchangeably, but they each hold different meanings. Diversity simply means differences within a given setting including race, gender, age, religion, ability and more. Equality is treating everyone the same, regardless of age, ability, gender, race or any other social imbalance.

Equality assumes that everyone starts from the same place with the same tools. Equity, on the other hand, is the process of working to correct and address historical imbalances. The process to correct these imbalances begins by recognizing an unequal starting place for individuals. Equity is subjective because it varies from person to person.

Equity issues are found as early as the hiring process. For example, a study, "Whitened Résumés: Race and Self-Presentation in the Labor Market" found that "whitening resumes," or leaving out potentially ethnic details, led to a better success rate of call backs for job applicants.¹⁸⁵ This study reinforced the fact that minorities are subject to inequity in the job force as early as the application process.

These issues continue throughout employment. According to the Perception Institute, black

EXPLAINER

Diversity vs. Equality vs. Equity

Diversity: Differences within a given setting including race, gender, age, religion and ability.

Equality: Treating everyone the same, regardless of age, ability gender, race or any other social imbalance and providing everyone with the same resources.

Equity: The process of working to correct and address historical imbalances, recognizing an unequal starting place for individuals and distributing resources based on the needs of the recipient.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a denim shirt, smiling while working at a desk. She is looking towards the right of the frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a office environment.

SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION

women are twice as likely to feel pressure to straighten their hair in the workplace than white women.¹⁸⁶ Further, white women rated black women's hair as "less professional." Interestingly, the study found that most participants, regardless of race, show implicit bias against black women's textured hair.

To address this, states like New York and California have drafted legislation to prohibit discrimination against employees for wearing natural hairstyles.

Charged with identifying and exploring how states can promote and encourage equity and inclusion in the new economy, this Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee identified guiding principles to assist in its work:

- Identify commonalities for best practices for all communities to thrive.
- Define equity and inclusion for the future of work.
- Obtain relevant data and utilize an evidence-based approach.
- Examine workforce data up to ten years out.
- Understand that language and words are important.

I Strengthening Access to Resources

28 RECOMMENDATION:

States consider offering training for employers to learn how to build a stronger, more inclusive workforce.

As discussed previously, the demographics of the U.S. are changing and will continue to do so. Both state and federal governments have enacted legislation reflecting the unique characteristics that each of us bring to the workplace.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin and religion. States have enacted legislation that reflects varying definitions on protected classes.

The onus should be on states to set the examples for inclusivity and diversity training. Most states require diversity training for state employees, but most private sector training is provided by private sector members. This is an opportunity for states to step into the role and set the expectations for equity and inclusion in the new economy. State government should be a model of its expectations for the private sector.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Develop best practices for recruiting and retaining employees.
- Analyze data and identify gaps through reporting requirements.
- Encourage colleges and universities to offer diversity training as a course.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

In January 2015, then-**Minnesota** Gov. Mark Dayton established the Diversity and Inclusion Council by executive order.¹⁸⁷ The purpose of the council is to study, educate and develop recommendations and best practices in the area of diversity and inclusion in recruiting, retaining and promoting state employees in state contracting and civic engagement for administrative agencies that comprise the Governor's cabinet. The order requires that the council engage members from private businesses, governmental entities and nonprofits to develop best practices in the area of diversity and inclusion in recruiting and retaining employees and in contracting. The January 2016 report outlines the efforts and accomplishments of the council.¹⁸⁸

In order to ensure student success, Morehead State University developed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force in 2016.¹⁸⁹ The task force was tasked with developing a diversity plan. While the plan mainly focuses on recruitment and specific university issues, some of the strategies and definitions may be modified to meet private sector needs. The

Norman, Oklahoma, Human Rights Commission created an Inclusive Community Subcommittee to examine how they can turn the city into a more inclusive environment for underrepresented community members. One of the initiative's recommendations is to provide inclusion education to businesses. Other recommendations include renouncing and apologizing for Norman's "sunset" policy which ended in 1967. Under the policy, African Americans were prohibited from being in town after sunset.



SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION

29 RECOMMENDATION: States consider becoming model employers for underrepresented populations.

The phrase “talk the talk, walk the walk” comes to mind when discussing the state as a model employer. Public policymakers that are interested in improving equity and inclusion in the workforce should begin by examining the demographics in the current talent pool and comparing them with the statistics of the constituents they serve. This allows for a jumping off point to then begin analyzing their state’s performance on the inclusion markers discussed in more detail below.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Adopt policies that address historically untapped communities.
- Adopt accountability systems that can inform decision making.
- Examine and develop strategies around implicit bias.
- Establish working groups to further explore equity issues.
- Commit a funded position to equity and inclusion.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Rashaad Abdur-Rahman, executive adviser, **Kentucky** Department for Behavioral Health shared a helpful resource, Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization, that his department is using to develop their racial equity strategy.¹⁹⁰ Abdur-Rahman further shared that his department hopes that their approach will have ripple effects throughout the commonwealth. Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization uses specific markers to indicate progress from “racial and cultural differences seen as deficits” to “racial and cultural differences seen as assets.” Some of the fully inclusive markers include:

- Institution’s life reflects full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies and practices.
- Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression.
- A sense of restored community and mutual caring.
- Members across all identity groups are full participants in decisions that shape the institution, and inclusion of diverse cultures, lifestyles and interest.

The markers in this tool can help states analyze and evaluate their place on the chart and determine a plan of action for moving forward.

On Jan. 9, 2019, **Minnesota** Gov. Tim Walz signed an executive order establishing the One Minnesota Council on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity.¹⁹¹ This order builds on the Diversity and Inclusion Council established by former Gov. Mark Dayton, expanding its scope to address geographic diversity as well as equity in Minnesota.



Recognizing that implicit bias affects workforce interaction, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction developed a tool to explore implicit bias. The tool allows users to “experiment with implicit association tests to consider what your implicit biases may be, realize how they impact your actions, and plan to push against these biases.”¹⁹²

The “Work Matters: A Framework for States on Workforce Development for People with Disabilities”¹⁹³ report developed by The Council of State Governments, outlines policy options and recommendations for states and their leaders on improving the lives and work prospects for people with disabilities including:

- Leading by example
- Adopting robust reporting efforts
- Increasing coordination, blending and braiding of services and funding across agencies and levels of government
- Adopting best practices and lessons learned from similar state initiatives targeting other underserved populations

30 RECOMMENDATION: States consider addressing barriers to equal employment opportunity by allocating resources to underserved populations.

Underrepresented populations can face significant barriers to engaging in the workforce. Creating livable, sustainable communities can alleviate some of the barriers to the workforce for underrepresented populations. Access to reliable, affordable transportation is just one resource that is critical to addressing equity and inclusion in the workforce. Only 30% of urban jobs are accessible by public transportation according to the Brookings Institution.¹⁹⁴

Accessible transportation is even harder to come by for those in low or middle skill jobs in urban areas. While one third of high skill jobs are accessible, only one-quarter of low to middle skill jobs are accessible via a 90-minute transit ride in urban areas.

It's also important to invite stakeholders to the table when addressing barriers. Policymakers should value community members as the experts in their own lives. Invite stakeholders to the conversation by hosting town halls in communities, essentially bringing the conversation to the community instead of expecting community members to travel. In the time of the COVID-19 health care crisis, innovation in collaboration has become a necessity and has made people more comfortable with engaging via technology. Engage members through conference calls and Zoom meetings, keeping in mind to make the meetings accessible for people with disabilities.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Adopt a data driven approach to identify and examine barriers.
- Invite key stakeholders to the table for discussions.
- Enhance the availability of resources by sharing on a platform that is widely utilized by underrepresented communities.
- Address livable community issues, like transportation and housing costs, to help underrepresented people prosper.

SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

The **Washington, D.C.**, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) publishes annual Equity Reports.¹⁹⁵ These reports increase transparency around how schools address traditionally underrepresented populations.

Oregon, using stakeholder involvement, has established the African American/Black Student Success Plan.¹⁹⁶ This plan aligns with Oregon's strategic plan setting out clear metrics for improving educational outcomes for African American students, and funding to school districts to improve academic outcomes for English Learner (EL) students.

The state of **Minnesota** issued a report entitled "Advancing Transportation Equity: Research and Practice," that examines and addresses social inequities in transportation.¹⁹⁷ Utilizing feedback from community events, research and practice reviews, the report provides several overarching themes for developing recommendations on addressing social inequity:

Designing engagement processes that facilitate community leadership and the inclusive participation of traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities, where community members drive conversations around their transportation needs and strategies for implementing solutions.

Supporting programs and policies that increase access to social and economic opportunities, such as jobs, affordable housing, healthy food, education, health care and recreation, particularly for underserved and underrepresented communities.

Creating policies and programs that support active transportation and provide safe, smart and affordable transportation alternatives that minimize automobile dependency to create healthier, more sustainable communities.

Integrating equity promotion as a standardized practice at the agency and program level,

particularly in prioritizing spending across the system and distributing infrastructure projects.

Collaborating and coordinating across transportation and non-transportation agencies, institutions and organizations, including academic institutions, to improve considerations of equity while leveraging existing programs and policies that advance transportation equity.

Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative metrics for evaluating transportation programs and projects as well as their impacts on underserved and underrepresented populations.

The report continues on to share several recommendations and strategies under each theme.

31 RECOMMENDATION:

States consider addressing income inequalities and unmet social needs for the workforce.

The Fair Labor Standards Act sets the federal minimum wage.¹⁹⁸ The federal minimum wage does not take into account the varied cost of living across states. State-enacted living wage policies can be an effective way to promote economic security, facilitating economic growth and upward mobility for underserved populations. According to a recent report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a full time job at the current federal minimum wage isn't enough to rent an average one bedroom home anywhere in the United States.¹⁹⁹

Further, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2017, reported that 1.8 million workers earned wages at or below the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Twenty-four states increased their minimum wage in 2020, with Washington, D.C., ranking the highest at \$15 per hour. Washington state comes in second at \$13.50 per hour.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Analyze local cost of living using a cost of living calculator prior to enacting policy.
- Examine the issue fully to prevent unintended consequences of enacting legislation.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

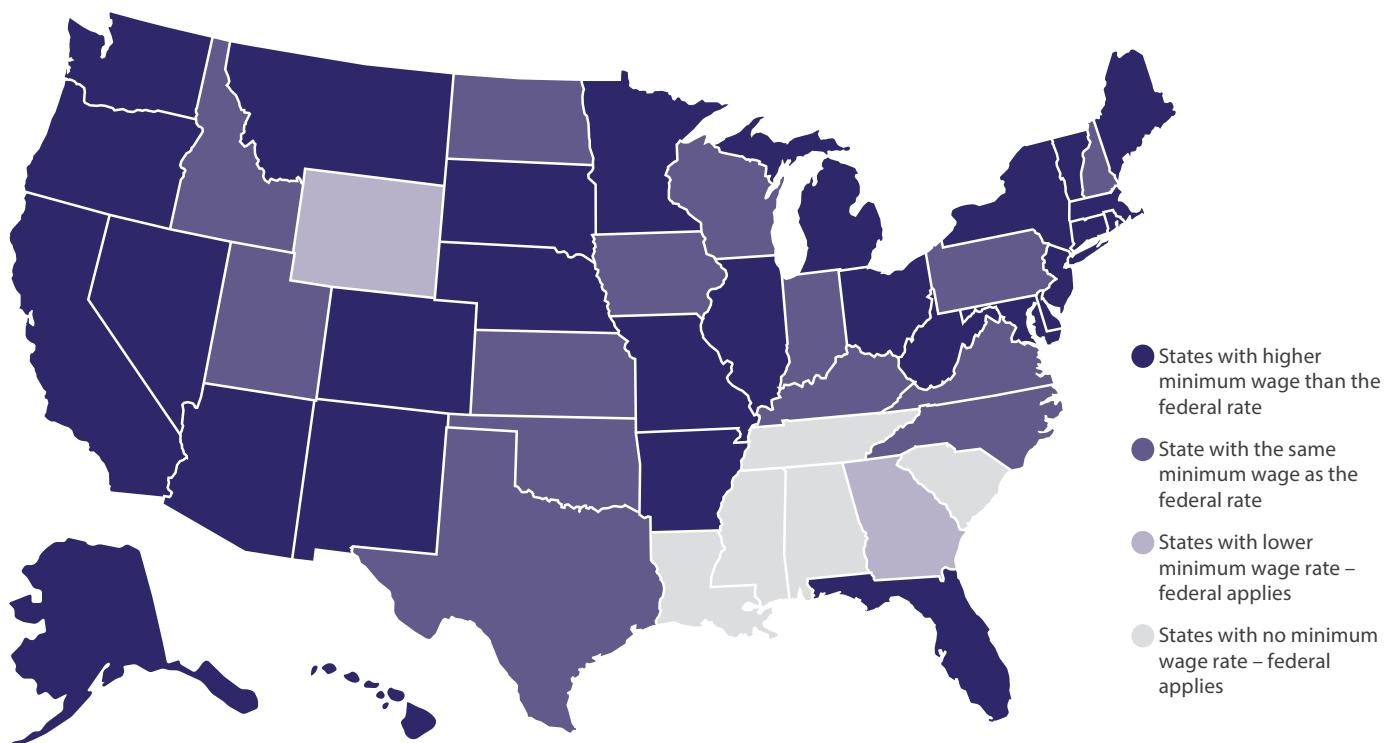
South Dakota, along with several other states, has adjusted their minimum wage requirements to reflect cost of living. South Dakota will continue to adjust their wage requirements on an annual basis based on the Consumer Price Index from the Department of Labor.²⁰⁰ Several other states have enacted legislation that will raise the minimum wage incrementally:

Vermont | Ohio | Florida | Montana | Minnesota | Alaska



State Minimum Wage Rates

Source: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state>



SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION

32 RECOMMENDATION:

States consider partnering with private and nonprofit sector companies to train incarcerated populations for career placement upon release.

People of color are disproportionately impacted by involvement with the criminal justice system. Black people are five times more likely to be arrested than white people.²⁰¹ Criminal histories create lasting impacts on job prospects and can contribute to generational poverty.

Much of the conversation on this topic should center on stakeholder involvement to help people succeed. Inviting incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people to the table gives them the opportunity to share input on what barriers they anticipate on release.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Encourage a focus on goal attainment instead of job placement to prevent recidivism.
- Train incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people for a career, not just a job.
- Invite stakeholders, including incarcerated people, to the conversation on career placement.
- Address housing stability issues that former incarcerated people face when released from confinement.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Often, reentry programs focus on job placement, not goal attainment. Reach Success, a nonprofit based in **Ohio**, treats formerly incarcerated people as individuals, with personal goals. Taking into account a person's goals, the program does not just focus on job placement. Reach Success has adopted a holistic approach with emphasis on education and career readiness.²⁰²

California recently enacted legislation that grants expungement to inmate firefighters upon release. This legislation allows inmates to develop trade skills in firefighting and eliminates the barrier of a criminal history when applying for future positions.



Utilizing Regulation to Ensure Equitable Opportunity

33 RECOMMENDATION: States consider evaluating their purchasing regulations to ensure that underserved populations have equitable opportunity.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Host a supplier diversity event.
- Educate internal employees about the importance of supplier diversity.
- Incorporate supplier diversity into enterprise values.
- Identify and examine private sector members who are incorporating supplier diversity into their values.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Edison Electric Institute (EEI), a CSG Associate and partner on the CSG Future of Work National Task Force, is among the organizations in the energy industry leading the way on business diversity programs. Recognizing that the supplier diversity is of economic value, supplier diversity benefits the energy industry by:

Promoting innovation through the entrance of new products, services and solutions

Providing multiple channels to procure goods and services

Showcasing a company's commitment to the economic growth of all communities

EEI hosts an annual Business Diversity Conference so that members of the energy industry can engage with industry suppliers.²⁰³ The conference creates networking opportunities for minority owned businesses and energy industry companies.

34 RECOMMENDATION: States consider identifying ways to provide sick/family leave to uncovered workers.

COVID-19 has shown the necessity for employer provided sick leave, with Congress passing the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which requires certain employers to provide paid sick leave to employees who are sick.²⁰⁴ Over 6.3 million people have been diagnosed with COVID-19, as of Sept. 10, 2020. Millions have been unemployed due to state restrictions on quarantine. Most state unemployment systems require that employees be available and able to work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits. Quarantine restrictions left that virtually impossible with workers restricted to their homes.

This act was a lifeline for many families but should be enacted permanently to help remedy equity issues. Many states responded to the public health crisis with emergency legislation on paid sick leave. However, this legislation was enacted in response to COVID-19 and is not permanent. Lower wage workers often do not receive sick benefits. Many of these families live paycheck to paycheck meaning that if they are sick, their ability to pay bills becomes compromised.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Although **Connecticut** was the first state to pass required sick leave for private sector employees, several states have since followed suit.²⁰⁵



SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION

State Paid Sick Leave Law

Source: U.S. Department of Labor and Paycor

OREGON

Employers with 10 or more employees (unpaid if fewer than 10) or employers in large cities (500,000+ population) with 6 or more employees anywhere in the state (unpaid if fewer than 6)/all employees

WASHINGTON

All employers/all employees

MICHIGAN

Employers with 50 or more employees/employees who work at least 25 hours per week, who work at least 26 weeks per year for a job scheduled for at least 26 weeks and whose primary work location is in Michigan

NEW YORK

All employers with 5 or more employees, all employers with 4 or fewer employees if business has net income of \$1 million or more (if net income is less than \$1 million, unpaid leave must be offered)/all employees working for an employer in the state

VERMONT

All employers doing business in Vermont/employees who work for an average of no less than 18 hours per week during a year

MAINE

(Effective Jan. 1, 2021) Employers with 10 or more employees/all employees who work for covered employers accrue leave but aren't eligible to take it until 120 consecutive days of employment

MASSACHUSETTS

All employers except local governments and those with less than 11 employees may provide unpaid leave/all employees

RHODE ISLAND

Employers with 18 or more employees/Full-time, part-time, seasonal and temporary employees

CONNECTICUT

Employers with 50 or more employees in the state

NEW JERSEY

All employers with workers in the state/all employees working for an employer in the state

MARYLAND

Employers with 15 or more employees (unpaid if fewer than 15)/Employees who work at least 12 hours per week

WASHINGTON, D.C.

All employers/employees are covered

CALIFORNIA

Employers with one or more employees who work more than 30 days a year in California/employees who work 30 or more days per year in California for the same employer

NEVADA

Employers with 50 or more employees/all employees

ARIZONA

All employers/employees are covered

● State has Paid Sick Leave Law

○ State does not have Paid Sick Leave Law

35 RECOMMENDATION: States consider addressing license eligibility requirements that are barriers to licensing and credentialing for previously incarcerated populations.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Require licensing boards to examine the criminal history as opposed to blanket barring of individuals with a criminal history.
- Offer certification exams in multiple languages.
- Many states have licensing requirements that bar certain criminal histories from obtaining various occupational licensing. This limits the employment opportunities available to formerly incarcerated people. For instance, if a barber is incarcerated on a robbery charge there are some states that bar them from practicing their occupation, even though the crime is unrelated.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

In 2018, **Arizona** passed SB 1436 which gives license seekers the ability to ask for predetermination on their ability to get a license due to their criminal history.²⁰⁶ This enables job seekers to learn whether or not their criminal history will prevent them from practicing a particular occupation prior to investing in the necessary requirements.

Recognizing a fundamental right to practice a selected occupation, **New Hampshire's** NH Rev Stat § 332-G:10 requires that licensing boards look at criminal convictions and make a determination on whether licensing the individual would have a negative impact on public safety.²⁰⁷ This requires the licensing board to examine the crime, as well as the license that is sought.

Delaware Gov. John Carney recently signed legislation that removes some of the barriers that were discussed earlier for those trying to reenter the workforce in the practice of cosmetology, barbering, electrology or nail technology. The legislation prohibits licensing boards from considering convictions that are more than 10 years old, provided there has been no subsequent convictions.

36 RECOMMENDATION: States consider supporting colleges and universities that serve traditionally underserved communities through prudent appropriations.

Rising tuition costs have left many families unable to afford a quality education. State cuts to higher education funding have resulted in significant tuition increases. These increases contribute to greater racial and income inequity. State funding for public colleges in 2018 was more than \$6.6 billion below than in 2008,²⁰⁸ leading to challenges in affordability and access for underrepresented populations. Several states are stepping up to make college a reality for underrepresented populations through appropriations.



SECTION IV: EQUITY AND INCLUSION



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

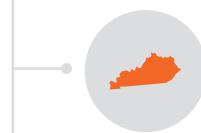
When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Provide priority funding for institutions that are committed to serving underrepresented populations.
- Provide funding for need based scholarships, as opposed to merit based funding.
- Assist higher education institutions with building the capacity to serve underrepresented populations.

EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

New Jersey recently announced the “Garden State Guarantee,” a \$50 million investment in four-year public colleges and universities that will allow eligible New Jersey undergraduate students to go to college for free.²⁰⁹ Thirteen public campuses will receive increased direct operating funds to assist low-income and underrepresented students of color. Those with an adjusted gross income of \$65,000 or less are guaranteed tuition- and fee-free tuition for their first two years of study.

Berea College, a private liberal arts college in Berea, **Kentucky**, provides a tuition free education for academically promising students with limited resources- the mean family income of a Berea College student is approximately \$30,000. Adopting equity and inclusion from its founding by John G. Fee in 1855, Berea College was the first interracial and coeducational college in the South. Berea College receives about 17% of its funding from state and federal appropriations.²¹⁰



36 RECOMMENDATION:

36 States consider providing funding opportunities through grants and loans to underserved populations in order to help small business owners and entrepreneurs grow their business.

In a nationwide trend, Pew Research observed that women hold a 5% to 12% share of top executive positions.²¹¹ Notably, the materials sector (producers of industrial inputs such as chemicals, metals and packaging) had the highest jump in women in top executive positions. Fifty-nine percent of Americans would like to see more women in top executive positions in business according to another Pew Research study.²¹²

Similarly, female entrepreneurs face obstacles that make sustaining women-owned firms difficult. Third Way identified five challenges that female entrepreneurs face: education, experience, social capital, financial capital and confidence.²¹³ The study noted that some of the challenges “come in the form of cultural or attitudinal barriers.” Citing “How to Start an Entrepreneurial Revolution”, the study notes that public leaders and government officials are in the best position to promote change and growth for female entrepreneurs.



SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, states may utilize the following strategies:

- Set aside appropriations to foster minority owned business and startup growth.
- Diversify their supplier pool.
- Provide tax incentives for minority owned businesses.



EXAMPLES IN ACTION:

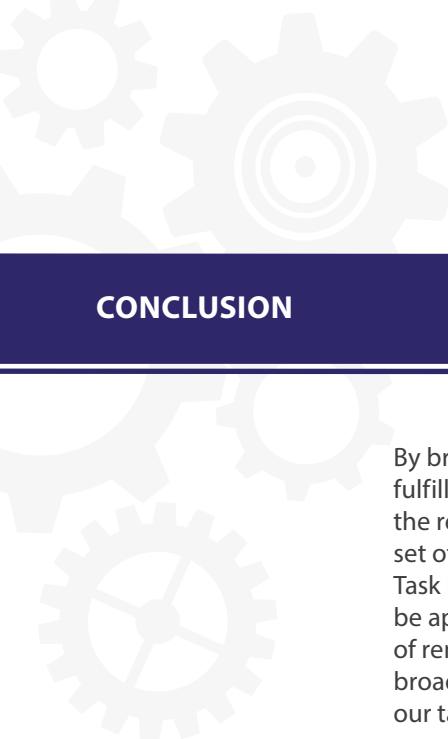
Colorado has been recognized as one the best places for women entrepreneurs. The ranking, compiled by FitSmall Business, cited technology access, competitive tax rates and programs that show a commitment to women entrepreneurs including Women's Foundation of Colorado, Women's Collaborative For Colorado, and Colorado's Minority Business Office.²¹⁴

In order to create a more equitable environment for minority-owned businesses, states can opt to set aside a percentage of funds to contract with minority owned businesses. **Tennessee** is one of the few states with a set-aside program for people with disabilities. HB 1276 adds “businesses owned by persons with disabilities” to the Tennessee Minority-Owned, Woman-Owned and Small Business Procurement and Contracting Act.²¹⁵ HB 1276 directs the Governor’s Office of Business Diversity to recommend a fair proportion of set aside monies to the Procurement Office.

Many minority-owned small businesses were negatively impacted by COVID-19 and a loss of revenue due to government mandates. In response, **Wisconsin** launched the Ethnic Minority Emergency Grant program. \$20 million was allocated to assist ethnic minority-owned businesses impacted by COVID-19. The program provides a one-time \$2,000 grant for business operations.²¹⁶

Improving diversity and equity in the workforce is critical to ensuring that the United States addresses its past and is prepared for the jobs of the future.





CONCLUSION

By bringing together the Future of Work Task Force, CSG continues to fulfill its mission of championing excellence in state government. While the recommendations in this report are not meant as a “one size fits all” set of solutions, it is the sincere hope of the CSG Future of Work National Task Force that other state leaders can glean ideas and principles that can be appropriately translated back to their own states. Whether in the areas of removing barriers to employment, ensuring career readiness, making broadband widely available or streamlining employment systems, CSG and our task force members believe we have much to learn from each other.

The COVID-19 pandemic has truly proven that necessity is the mother of invention. There has never been a more appropriate time to examine ways in which states can use innovations to ensure access to health care while also preparing themselves for future obstacles in service delivery and adhering to fiscal responsibility. CSG stands ready to serve the states as it has since 1933. Please contact us with any further questions.

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