

# NCOIL NEWSLETTER



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Sen. Paul Utke, MN  
President

**From the President's Desk**  
*Senator Paul Utke (MN) – NCOIL President*

Welcome to my first quarterly newsletter column as NCOIL President.

I hope the New Year is off to a strong start for everyone and that you're energized for another productive and successful year ahead at NCOIL. I first want to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation to my predecessor, New York Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter, for her outstanding leadership last year. Under her guidance, NCOIL made meaningful progress in many ways, and her steady hand helped position the organization well for the work that lies ahead.

2025 was truly a great year for NCOIL both in terms of substantive advances on policy and in growing the organization's national prominence. There were six new Model Laws adopted on timely issues including prior authorization reform, healthcare facility fees, health savings accounts, the rental home marketplace, combating fraud in auto repairs, and the workers' compensation experience rating process. Each National Meeting had over 400 attendees with the Annual Meeting becoming the highest attended NCOIL Meeting ever. Additionally, in an NCOIL first, the organization heard from a sitting U.S. Cabinet Member with Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. addressing attendees at the Spring Meeting in Charleston, SC.

As we move into my year as NCOIL President, I'd like to share more about my background and how I got involved in public service and in NCOIL, as well as some of the things we have planned for 2026.

I've lived in small towns most of my life and have been very involved with many organizations in my community of Park Rapids. I like to say that when you show up to meetings in a small town, you often times go home with a job. Well, one thing led to another, and I spent seven years on the City Council prior to my election to the Minnesota State Senate in 2016. Currently, I serve as the Ranking Minority Member on the Health & Human Services Committee.

Outside of my public service, I've worn many different professional hats. I am a licensed insurance agent, but I also grew up working on farms, have owned a hardware and equipment rental store, worked for Mack Truck Dealerships, and do legal videography. Those experiences have allowed me to bring many different perspectives to St. Paul as we work on the important issues impacting the people of our state.



Will Melofchik  
NCOIL CEO



Rep. Edmond Jordan, LA  
Vice President

## From the President's Desk (cont'd)



Rep. Jim Dunnigan, UT  
Treasurer

I first got involved with NCOIL after I received an invitation to the 2018 Summer Meeting in Salt Lake City, and it seemed like a great organization to be a part of from that very first meeting. I found the bipartisan nature of the organization and the laser focus on policy to be a great asset to legislators and I have remained involved ever since. In 2022 I was asked to serve as Chair of NCOIL's Joint State-Federal Relations & International Insurance Issues Committee and then was later elected NCOIL Secretary. Since then, I have served in all of the NCOIL Officer positions assuming the Presidency at the conclusion of our 2025 Annual Meeting in Atlanta.

It's a true honor to be serving with a very distinguished team of fellow Officers this year: Vice President Edmond Jordan (Rep. LA), Treasurer Jim Dunnigan (Rep. UT), Secretary Brenda Carter (Rep. MI) and Asw. Hunter as Immediate Past President. Each of these Officers have made great contributions to NCOIL and I look forward to working together as we continue to advance the organization in the year ahead and beyond.

In recent years, NCOIL has taken on a wide range of timely and important issues and 2026 is shaping up to be no exception. We will continue our focus on staying ahead of the curve on emerging insurance public policy matters, with several timely topics already scheduled for discussion at our Spring Meeting, including:

- Insurers' use of Artificial Intelligence;
- Legislation dealing with the optometry and vision plan markets;
- Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangements;
- The 340B Drug Pricing Program;
- The Rural Health Transformation Program;
- Hospital Charity Care and Medical Debt Reform;
- Life Insurers' Use of Genetic Information; and more.

As we continue our work in strengthening the organization and confronting the important insurance public policy challenges ahead, real progress depends on an active and engaged legislative membership. And due to things such as term limits and retirements, it's critical that the organization continue to grow and attract new legislators to attend so that the value of NCOIL is consistently being displayed. Having new and diverse viewpoints from legislators representing different states, professional backgrounds, and areas of expertise is critical in growing the organization and developing policy that truly reflects the needs of all of our constituents. I have never seen a more important time for state legislators to be engaged and informed on the many nuanced insurance issues we are facing, and I strongly encourage any legislator serving on committees with jurisdiction over insurance, health care, or financial services to get involved with NCOIL. With all of the changes and challenges facing the insurance marketplace today, being involved in an organization like NCOIL where you can expand your insurance knowledge and develop important networks is well worth the time as it ultimately makes you a better prepared policymaker in your legislature. Getting involved in NCOIL is one of the best decisions I've made as a legislator.

Like the NCOIL Presidents before me, I am committed to ensuring that this organization continues to be an important educational forum for public policymakers and interested parties and that it produces sound public policy in the form of Model Laws for states to use as a framework to meet the needs of their state.

I look forward to your participation and to seeing you at our Spring Meeting in Louisville. Please do not hesitate to share your ideas or thoughts with me at any time.



Rep. Brenda Carter, MI  
Secretary



Asw. Pamela Hunter, NY  
Immediate Past President

*Paul*

## Future NCOIL Meetings:

Spring 2026  
April 16-19  
Louisville, KY  
The Hyatt Regency

Summer 2026  
July 15-18  
Boston, MA  
Westin Copley Place

Annual 2026  
November 19-21  
Sanibel, Florida  
Marriott Sanibel Harbor

Spring 2027  
April 15-18  
Newport Beach, CA  
VEA Newport Beach

## NCOIL Announces 2026 Committee Leadership

Belmar, NJ – NCOIL President Paul Utke, State Senator from Minnesota, announced the lineup of NCOIL Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs for 2026.

“It’s an honor to announce this outstanding and bipartisan group of legislative leaders from across the country who will help guide NCOIL in the year ahead as we continue to advance the organization and lead on timely and important insurance public policy issues,” said Sen. Utke. “These chairs and vice-chairs have each demonstrated a strong dedication to the organization over the years, and I’m grateful for their willingness to step forward and serve in these leadership positions.”

The NCOIL Chairs and Vice Chairs are:

### Articles of Incorporation/Bylaws:

Chair: Rep. Ellyn Hefner, OK  
Vice Chair: Rep. Bill Sutton, KS

### Joint State-Federal Relations & International Insurance Issues:

Chair: Asm. Erik Dilan, NY  
Vice Chair: Rep. Michael Meredith, KY

### Audit Committee:

Chair: Rep. Edmond Jordan, LA  
Vice Chair: Rep. Matt Lehman, IN

### Life Insurance & Financial Planning:

Chair: Rep. David LeBoeuf, MA  
Vice Chair: Sen. Justin Boyd, AR

### Budget Committee:

Chair: Rep. Jim Dunnigan, UT  
Vice Chair: Rep. Barbara Dittrich, WI

### NCOIL-NAIC Dialogue:

Co-Chairs: Rep. Edmond Jordan, LA  
Sen. Walter Michel, MS

### Financial Services & Multi-Lines Issues:

Chair: Asm. Jarett Gandolfo, NY  
Vice Chair: Asm. Tim Grayson, CA

### Property & Casualty Insurance:

Chair: Sen. Lana Theis, MI  
Vice Chair: Del. Walter Hall, WV

### Health Insurance & Long-Term Care Issues:

Chair: Rep. Michael Sarge Pollock, KY  
Vice Chair: Sen. Mary Felzkowski, WI

### Workers' Compensation Insurance:

Chair: Rep. Brian Lampton, OH  
Vice Chair: Rep. Mark Tedford, OK

### Nominating Committee:

Chair: Asw. Pamela Hunter, NY

### Chairman at Large:

Rep. Carl Anderson, SC

NCOIL CEO Will Melofchik said, “The bipartisan committee leadership appointed by Senator Utke reflects the strength and direction of NCOIL in 2026. NCOIL benefits greatly from the depth of experienced and committed legislators who have helped drive the organization’s progress in recent years, and I’m confident this leadership team, working alongside our full membership, will continue advancing model legislation that protects consumers and reinforces the proven state-based system of insurance regulation.”

## Save-the-date: NCOIL Life Insurance & Financial Planning Committee Interim Meeting

Massachusetts Representative David LeBoeuf has called an interim meeting of the NCOIL Life Insurance & Financial Planning Committee on Monday, February 23rd at 12:00 p.m. ET/11:00 a.m. CT/10 a.m. MT/9:00 a.m. PT.

The purpose of the meeting is for the Committee to continue discussion on the [NCOIL Model Act Regarding Life Insurer’s Use of Genetic Information](#) sponsored by Rep. Brenda Carter (MI), NCOIL Secretary. An opportunity for discussion and comments on the NCOIL Model Laws scheduled for re adoption at the upcoming NCOIL Spring Meeting in April will also be provided. Those Models are:

- [Beneficiaries’ Bill of Rights](#);
- [Life Insurance Consumer Disclosure Model Act](#); and
- [the Long Term Care Tax Credit Model Act](#)

Registration Information will be distributed next week.

## REGISTRATION FOR NCOIL SPRING MEETING IS OPEN

Registration for the 2026 NCOIL Spring Meeting at the Hyatt Regency in Louisville, KY from April 16th-19th is open.



*For registration information please click [here](#)*

*See the meeting schedule on page 6 or view at the NCOIL website [here](#)*

**DON'T FORGET TO BOOK YOUR HOTEL!!!**  
***The hotel block closes on March 24th***

Legislators book here:



General Participants book here:



### Future NCOIL Meetings:

Summer 2027  
July 21-24  
Asheville, NC  
Renaissance  
Downtown

Annual 2027  
November 17-20  
New Orleans, LA  
Westin New Orleans

Spring 2028  
TBD

Summer 2028  
July 9-12  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Grand American Hotel

Annual 2028  
November 15-18  
Harbor Beach, FL  
Marriott Harbor Beach



## ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

**CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO**



## New Installment: Griffith Foundation Insurance Insights

In continuance of NCOIL's partnership with the Institutes Griffith Foundation, we are pleased to highlight the latest installment of "Insurance Insights."

During this conversation, Frank Tomasello, Executive Director of the Griffith Foundation speaks with Roger Schmelzer, President & CEO of the National Conference of Insurance Guaranty Funds to explore the origins, importance, and evolving role of guaranty funds.

This installment can be viewed here: [griffith-foundation.org](http://griffith-foundation.org)

  
The Institutes<sup>®</sup>  
Griffith Foundation

## NCOIL One on One

Haven't had a chance to watch the interviews with all our NCOIL One on One participants? Visit the link [here](#) to see past NCOIL One on One Interviews. Thank you to all who have participated so far:

- IN Rep. Matt Lehman
- NY Asw. Pam Hunter
- OH Sen. Bob Hackett
- AR Rep. Deborah Ferguson
- ND Sen. Jerry Klein
- LA Rep. Edmond Jordan
- CA Asm. Ken Cooley
- TX Rep. Tom Oliverson
- NV Asw. Maggie Carlton
- MN Sen. Paul Utke
- MI Rep. Brenda Carter
- WV Del. Steve Westfall
- SC Rep. Carl Anderson
- NC Sen. Vickie Sawyer
- IN Sen. Travis Holdman
- OK Rep. Forrest Bennett
- CT Rep. Tammy Nuccio
- MS Sen. Walter Michel
- KY Rep. Rachel Roberts
- UT Rep. Jim Dunnigan
- NJ Sen. Nellie Pou
- ND Sen. Shawn Veda
- RI Sen. Roger Picard
- WI Sen. Mary Felzkowski
- NY Sen. Neil Breslin
- LA Ins. Cmsr. Jim Donelon
- KY Rep. Sarge Pollock
- OK Rep. Elynn Hefner
- Charise Richard, PhRMA
- MI Sen. Lana Theis
- OH Rep. Brian Lampton
- CA Asm. Tim Grayson
- Kevin McKechnie, ABA
- MA Rep. David LeBoeuf
- Wes Bissett, Big I
- NY Asm. Jarett Gandolfo
- NY Asm. Erik Dilan
- Pat Gilliespie, Elevance
- WV Del. Walter Hall
- GA Sen. Larry Walker

**Reminder that Contributing States are eligible for two legislator stipends per National Meeting to help underwrite the cost of participating.**

**Click below for more information**

**Please reach out to Pat Gilbert at [pgilbert@ncoil.org](mailto:pgilbert@ncoil.org) with any questions**

**LEGISLATOR STIPENDS NOW AVAILABLE FOR CONTRIBUTING STATES**

**CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Don't Miss the NCOIL YouTube Channel: Subscribe Today**

Weren't able to attend our past meetings? Good news— you can visit our YouTube channel for recordings of past meetings. Prior national meeting sessions and interim committee meetings are posted on our YouTube channel now.

Visit the link [here](#) to subscribe and keep up to date on all things NCOIL!

## 2026 Spring National Meeting Schedule

*\*\*\*Please note this early tentative schedule is subject to change\*\*\**

**Things to See in  
Louisville:**

**21c Museum**

**Big Four Bridge**

**Churchill Downs**

**Louisville Slugger  
Museum &  
Factory**

**Muhammad Ali  
Center**

**Thunder Over  
Louisville**

**The Urban  
Bourbon  
Experience**

**Waterfront Park**

### THURSDAY, APRIL 16th

NCOIL President's Policy Roundtable <i>**Open to NCOIL President's &amp; Speaker's Roundtable CIP Members Only**</i>	2:00 PM	-	5:00 PM
Welcome Reception	6:00 PM	-	7:00 PM

### FRIDAY, APRIL 17th

Welcome Breakfast	8:00 AM	-	9:30 AM
First Time Attendee Legislator & Staff Meeting	9:30 AM	-	9:45 AM
Networking Break	9:30 AM	-	9:45 AM
Workers' Compensation Insurance Committee	9:45 AM	-	11:00 AM
Health Insurance & Long Term Care Issues Committee	11:00 AM	-	12:45 PM
The Institutes Griffith Foundation Legislator Luncheon	12:45 PM	-	1:45 PM
NCOIL-NAIC Dialogue	1:45 PM	-	3:00 PM
General Session	3:00 PM	-	4:30 PM
Networking Break	4:30 PM	-	4:45 PM
Life Insurance & Financial Planning Committee	4:45 PM	-	6:00 PM
CIP Member & Sponsor Reception	6:30 PM	-	7:30 PM

### SATURDAY, APRIL 18th

Property & Casualty Insurance Committee	9:00 AM	-	10:45 AM
Networking Break	10:45 AM	-	11:00 AM
General Session	11:00 AM	-	12:30 PM
Luncheon with Keynote Address	12:30 PM	-	2:00 PM
Joint State-Federal Relations & International Insurance Issues Committee	2:00 PM	-	3:30 PM
Women's Caucus Reception <i>***Open to All Women Attendees***</i>	4:00 PM	-	5:00 PM

### SUNDAY, APRIL 19th

The Institutes Griffith Foundation Legislator Breakfast	8:00 AM	-	9:00 AM
Financial Services & Multi-Lines Issues Committee	9:00 AM	-	10:45 AM
Executive Committee	10:45 AM	-	11:15 AM

