

## Mid-Year Wrap from the BGR State and Local Advocacy Team

With more than half of the state legislatures finishing their 2025 sessions, states are adjusting budget outlooks due to changes to federal funding streams while driving transformative policies in education, health care, technology, infrastructure and energy. State actions are increasingly setting precedents that are shaping the national policy landscape. This document provides a mid-year snapshot of the major bills that have crossed the finish line so far.<sup>1</sup>

<i>Sine Die before June 1 (32 states)</i>	AL, AK, AZ, AR, CO, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, ME, MD, MN, MS, MO, MT, ND, NM, OK, SC, SD, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, and WY.
<i>Sessions still in progress (18 states)</i>	CA, CT, DE, LA, MA, MI, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OR, PA, RI, TX, and WI.

### What's Next—Anticipated Special Sessions

- Colorado Governor Polis** to call for property taxes.
- Minnesota Governor Walz** to call for the budget.
- Mississippi Governor Reeves** to call for the budget.
- Missouri Governor Kehoe** to call for the Royals and Chiefs stadium funding.
- New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham** to call for juvenile crime.
- Utah Governor Cox** to call for election changes.
- West Virginia Governor Morrisey** to call for state employee health insurance coverage (PEIA).

### What's New—First in the Nation

- Arkansas** is 1<sup>st</sup> to prohibit PBMs from owning pharmacies.
  - Hawaii** is 1<sup>st</sup> to charge a “green fee” to tourists for the climate by raising hotel and cruise taxes.
  - Idaho** is 1<sup>st</sup> to ban vaccine mandates in public and private sectors.
  - New Hampshire** is 1<sup>st</sup> and **Arizona** is 2<sup>nd</sup> to establish a crypto reserve of public fund investments.
  - North Dakota** is 1<sup>st</sup> state to shield Roundup’s maker, Bayer, from some cancer lawsuits.
  - Utah** is 1<sup>st</sup> and **Florida** is 2<sup>nd</sup> to ban fluoride in public drinking water.
  - Utah** is 1<sup>st</sup> and **Texas** is 2<sup>nd</sup> to require age verification for app downloads.
- Note that **Missouri** is (likely to be) 1<sup>st</sup> to repeal the individual capital gains tax and fully exempt profits from the sale of stocks, real estate, cryptocurrency, and other capital assets from state income tax.*

### What's Fun—Food & Recreation

- Florida** enacts the Boater Freedom Act.
- Georgia** adopts National Sugarcane Syrup Day.
- Indiana & Nebraska** ban imitation, lab-grown, or cell-culture “meat” products.
- Maryland** names the Orange Crush as the official state cocktail.

<sup>1</sup> Issues not included: transgender, abortion, cannabis, vapes, tribe, unions, elections, and executions.

- Massachusetts** protects cats from being declawed.
  - New Jersey** authorizes special alcohol licensing at MetLife Stadium for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
  - Oklahoma** passes the Food Truck Freedom Act.
- Note: **New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham** vetoed a bill making tortillas the state bread.*

## **What Passed—Governors’ Top Priorities**

### Tax Cuts

- **Mississippi Governor Reeves – Income Tax:** Signed legislation to eliminate the individual income tax by phasing out the current rate of 4% to 3% and then adopting a growth trigger to reach 0%; the bill also lowers the grocery tax and raises the gasoline tax.
- **Montana Governor Gianforte – Property & Income Taxes:** Signed his signature bill to reduce homeowner property taxes by 18% while raising taxes on second homes and short-term rentals by 68%; and signed a bill to deliver the largest tax cut in state history with cuts between 4.7-5.65% at every income level.
- **North Dakota Governor Armstrong – Property Tax:** Signed landmark property tax relief and reform package as his No. 1 priority this session to triple the primary residence tax credit to \$1,600 and capping future local property tax increases at 3%.

### Economy

- **Colorado Governor Polis – Housing Reforms:** Signed a trio of priority bills to cut red tape and support residential building stair modernization, build more townhomes through middle market housing, and utilize modular housing to reduce costs with factory-built structures.
- **Georgia Governor Kemp – Tort Reform:** Signed a tort reform bill into law that reins in frivolous and excessive jury awards to stabilize the insurance marketplace and protect consumers.

### Education

- **Arkansas Governor Sanders – Higher Ed:** Signed a signature bill, the Acceleration, Common Sense, Cost, Eligibility, Scholarships, and Standardization (ACCESS) Act, to overhaul the state’s higher education system by realigning the leadership council and offering accelerated high school coursework.
- **Tennessee Governor Lee – School Choice:** Signed a landmark Education Freedom Act to invest \$500 million for 20,000 students to receive \$7,000 each for school choice.
- **Texas Governor Abbott – School Choice:** Signed a historic school voucher bill offering up to \$10,000 per student for school choice capped at \$1 billion in the first year.

### Government

- **Kansas Governor Kelly – Childhood System:** Signed a major bipartisan bill, years in the making, to strengthen the state’s early childhood system and expand childcare access by overhauling programs and making other investments, an effort she wishes to be her legacy.
- **Minnesota Governor Walz – Pension Reform:** Signed a groundbreaking pension bill to invest \$78 million to increase pension and disability benefits for public sector employees, lower retirement ages, and raises cost of living adjustments for police officers, firefighters, and teachers to ensure public servants can retire with economic security.

### Public Safety

- **Alabama Governor Ivey – Back the Blue:** Signed a criminal justice package into law that bans Glock switches, enhanced police recruitment incentives, expanded Back the Blue legal protections, and passed a Second Chance limited sentencing reform bill for nonviolent offenders.
- **Missouri Governor Kehoe –Violent Crime:** Signed an expansive public safety bill that puts St. Louis police under state control and addresses immigration, restitution, child welfare, school safety, and more.

- **New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham – Behavioral Health:** Signed an omnibus public safety package reflecting feedback from the governor’s 15 town halls: criminal competency, weapon conversion devices, shooting threats, fentanyl trafficking, auto theft penalties, and DWI blood testing.

## RESPONSE to TRUMP AGENDA

*17 states*

<u>DOGE</u>	<p><b>California</b> authorizes \$50 million to counter President Trump’s agenda.  <b>Colorado</b> set aside \$4 million for litigation against the Trump Administration.  <b>Connecticut</b> allocates \$3 million to local nonprofits facing a loss of federal funds.  <b>Maryland</b> assists federal workers impacted by mass layoffs with UI assistance.  <b>Texas</b> enacts a DOGE bill, the Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office.</p>
<u>DEI Bans</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> enacts a DEI ban for universities.  <b>Ohio</b> enacts a DEI ban for universities.  <b>Tennessee</b> enacts a DEI ban for universities.  <b>West Virginia</b> enacts a DEI ban for universities.  <b>Wyoming Governor Gordon</b> vetoed a bill and signed a bill to ban DEI.  <i>Note: Arizona Governor Hobbs and Kentucky Governor Beshear vetoed DEI bans.</i></p>
<u>Crypto Reserves</u>	<p><b>Arizona</b> establishes a crypto reserve of public fund investments (2<sup>nd</sup> to do so).  <b>New Hampshire</b> establishes a crypto reserve of public fund investments (1<sup>st</sup> to do so).  <b>Texas</b> establishes a strategic bitcoin reserve that accepts private donations (would be 3<sup>rd</sup> to do so).</p>
<u>Illegal Immigration</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> requires law enforcement to collect fingerprints and DNA from illegal aliens.  <b>Arkansas</b> enhances penalties for illegal aliens that commit crimes.  <b>Florida</b> strengthens state control of immigration enforcement and expedites deportations.  <b>Minnesota</b> closes access to the state health insurance program for undocumented adults.  <b>New Hampshire</b> bans sanctuary cities and requires police to work with federal immigration enforcement.  <b>Tennessee</b> criminalizes hiding illegal aliens.  <b>Vermont</b> requires law enforcement to seek approval before entering into immigration agreements.</p>
<u>Gulf of America</u>	<p><b>Arizona Governor Hobbs</b> vetoed a bill teaching the Gulf of America.  <b>Florida</b> renames the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America.</p>

## TECHNOLOGY & A.I.

*18 states*

<u>Deep Fakes</u>	<p><b>New Jersey</b> criminalizes deepfakes, including producing or sharing for an unlawful purpose.  <b>Kansas</b> adds AI generated content to sexual crimes for deepfakes, revenge porn, and child exploitation.  <b>Nebraska</b> criminalizes A.I.-generated child sexual abuse material and enhances penalties.  <b>Oklahoma</b> prohibits A.I.-generated sexual depictions and sharing revenge pornography.  <b>South Carolina</b> adds new penalties for revenge porn and the use of A.I. to create false intimate images.  <b>South Dakota</b> requires labels on political deepfakes close to an election.  <b>Texas</b> enacts age verification for A.I.-generated sexually explicit content and ban A.I.-generated child sexual abuse material.</p>
<u>Chatbots</u>	<p><b>New York</b> requires platforms to remind users when a chatbot, not a human, is communicating.  <b>Utah</b> requires disclosure for consumers interacting with mental health chatbots prior to engaging and after as well as prohibits targeted advertising.</p>
<u>Social Media</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> allows parents to file civil suits against social media platforms for harm to children and strengthens the state’s blocked social media age verification law by reducing the age to 16.  <b>Nebraska</b> requires social media companies to verify users’ age when they sign up for an account.  <b>New York</b> prohibits the use of social media platforms for debt collection.  <b>Utah</b> requires Apple and Google to verify age before downloading apps, limiting to 18 (1<sup>st</sup> state).  <b>Texas</b> requires age verification for apps (2<sup>nd</sup> state to do so).  <b>Virginia</b> limits minors’ social media use to one hour per day (Utah was 1<sup>st</sup> in 2023).  <i>Note: Colorado Governor Polis vetoed a bill on addressing predatory social media users.</i></p>

<u>Cellphone Bans</u>	<b>Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, and West Virginia</b> enacted cellphone restrictions in K-12 public schools.
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## CHINA & FOREIGN ADVERSARIES

*5 states*

<u>Land</u>	<b>Arkansas</b> adopts the Communist China Defense package to ban foreign adversaries from buying land around critical infrastructure. <i>Note: <b>Texas</b> is likely to ban China and foreign adversaries from buying land.</i>
<u>Health</u>	<b>Oklahoma</b> passes protections for bioscience and research assets from exploitation by hostile foreign governments. <b>Tennessee</b> prohibits organ transplants involving China or foreign adversaries to combat organ harvesting and protects genetic sequencing data by requiring storage in the United States.
<u>Procurement</u>	<b>Arkansas</b> adopts the Communist China Defense package to divest state resources from China. <b>Georgia</b> creates a list of companies and products sold by foreign adversaries to protect state procurement.
<u>Other Business</u>	<b>Arkansas</b> adopts the Communist China Defense package to ban lobbying on behalf of foreign adversaries. <b>Oklahoma</b> prevents foreign adversaries from covertly funding lawsuits by requiring commercial litigation funding agreements be disclosed during litigation proceedings. <b>Wyoming</b> bans foreign adversaries from owning or controlling business entities.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

*23 states*

<u>Officers</u>	<b>Alabama</b> passes a Back the Blue to strengthen legal protections for officers in the field. <b>Colorado</b> funds the recruitment of peace officers with bonuses, tuition assistance, and other incentives <b>Kansas</b> repeals roadblocks for law enforcement to obtain Naloxone for opioid overdoses. <b>Missouri</b> enacts an expansive public safety bill that puts the St. Louis police under state control. <b>Ohio</b> permits law enforcement to charge fees for body camera footage and eliminates local speed cameras.
<u>Crimes</u>	<b>Arizona</b> adopts Emily's Law to establish a turquoise alert system for missing Native Americans. <b>Georgia</b> passes six bills on cybercrimes, domestic terrorism, NextGen 911 technology, and more. <b>New Jersey</b> adopts a slew of measures to crack down on organized retail theft. <b>New Mexico</b> strengthens shooting threats, fentanyl trafficking, and auto theft penalties.
<u>Road Safety</u>	<b>Iowa</b> enacts hands-free driving to ban handheld cell phones while driving (31 <sup>st</sup> state to do so). <b>Ohio</b> allocates \$150 million to study and construct truck parking lots to mitigate fatigued driving. <b>Oregon</b> greenlights wildlife crossings to protect wildlife and reduce deadly collisions with vehicles. <b>Montana</b> imposes tougher penalties on drunk drivers.
<u>Firearms</u>	<b>Colorado</b> passes extensive gun control bills on penalties, training, and possession. <b>Illinois</b> protects domestic violence survivors from gun violence. <b>New Mexico</b> criminalizes Glock switches or conversion devices. <b>New York</b> bans pistol converters and strengthens dealer customer warnings and credit card tracking. <b>Tennessee</b> bans Glock switch devices (27 <sup>th</sup> state to do so). <b>Washington</b> requires anyone purchasing a firearm to obtain a state permit. <b>West Virginia</b> enacts a trio of bills to protect the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Amendment.
<u>Sentencing</u>	<b>Idaho</b> allows the death penalty for child predators. <b>Kentucky</b> enacts multiple domestic violence bills to enhance punishments and help survivors. <b>Montana</b> expands state prison infrastructure. <b>Oklahoma</b> requires accessories to murder to serve 85% of prison sentence before parole eligibility. <b>Virginia</b> allows drug dealers to be charged with involuntary manslaughter for overdose deaths.
<u>Evidence &amp; Pre-Trial</u>	<b>Arizona</b> forces all local law enforcement agencies to use the same rape kit tracking system. <b>Michigan</b> creates a hearsay exception for human trafficking survivors. <b>New Hampshire</b> rolls back prior bail reforms to lengthen detention time and get tough on crime. <b>New Mexico</b> reforms DWI blood testing.

<u>Second Chances</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> passes a Safe Alabama package, including juvenile accountability and electronic monitoring.</p> <p><b>Maryland</b> expands expungement eligibility and removes barriers to employment, housing, and education.</p> <p><b>New Jersey</b> orders the state to create an online portal to check criminal records and expungement status.</p> <p><b>New Mexico</b> creates a community-based restoration program for nonviolent offenders .</p>
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## STATE BUDGETS

*16 states*

*Note that 18 states enacted budgets for FY2026 thus far; most will do so by July 1, start of the fiscal year for most states.*

<u>Surplus</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> increases spending by 10% with a \$3 billion surplus (\$2.7 billion in the education trust fund and \$351 million in the GF).</p> <p><b>Georgia</b> generates a record \$16.5 billion surplus, delivering \$1 billion in one-time surplus tax refunds up to \$500 per household and funding the budget with cash—no new debt.</p> <p><b>New Mexico</b> sets a \$10.8 billion budget, representing a 6% spending increase following a significant surplus also used to pay down capital outlay projects and reduce borrowing.</p> <p><b>North Dakota</b> enacts a \$19.89 billion budget with a \$125 million positive ending fund balance by using line-item veto authority to reduce spending.</p> <p><b>Vermont</b> passes \$9.1 billion budget after facing a \$67 million surplus, increasing spending by \$360 million and providing \$77.2 million in property tax relief.</p> <p><b>Virginia</b> uses the line-item veto to retain \$900 million from the surplus, mainly by cutting one-time capital projects at higher education institutions and redirects funds to protect against potential risks.</p>
<u>Deficit</u>	<p><b>Colorado</b> passes a \$44 billion budget with \$1.2 billion in cuts and adjustments to state funds.</p> <p><b>Indiana</b> enacts a \$4 billion budget cutting \$2 billion in spending due to revenue shortfalls, reducing public health funding by 60% and higher education by 5%.</p> <p><b>Kansas</b> runs a \$930 million deficit, a historically large deficit projected to FY29, raising red flags.</p> <p><b>Maine</b> signs a \$11.3 billion budget addressing a \$450 million deficit and MaineCare funding gap with programmatic cuts and potential tax increases.</p> <p><b>Nebraska</b> adopts a \$11 billion biennial budget with a \$432 million shortfall addressed through spending cuts, cash fund transfers, and withdrawals from the state’s rainy day cash reserves.</p> <p><b>South Dakota</b> passes a \$7.29 billion budget, making \$20 million in cuts after facing a small shortfall due to lower sales tax collections and depletion of federal pandemic era funds.</p>
<u>Both Surplus &amp; Deficit</u>	<p><b>Maryland</b> shifts a \$3 billion projected deficit to a cash surplus by cutting \$2 billion, the largest spending reduction in 16 years, and increasing taxes and fees over \$1.6 billion to balance the budget.</p> <p><b>New York</b> signs a \$254 billion budget having ended the year with a surplus—however, the state tapped into record high reserves to tackle an \$8 billion unemployment insurance deficit.</p> <p><b>Washington</b> generates a surplus through increased business and tobacco taxes but reduced \$300 million in spending through a one-day furlough for state employees to address the deficit.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> line-item vetoes \$110 million from surplus funds and redirects the savings to address a \$400 million budget deficit created by using one-time funds for ongoing expenses, like Medicaid.</p>

## TAX RELIEF

*10 states*

<u>Income Tax</u>	<u>Property Tax</u>	<u>Grocery Tax</u>	<u>Business Tax</u>	<u>Combination</u>
<b>Kentucky</b> lowers income tax rate from 4% to 3.5%	<b>North Dakota</b> triples the property tax credit to \$1,600	<b>Alabama</b> lowers grocery tax from 3% to 2%	<b>Montana</b> lowers UI taxes and reforms property taxes	<b>Idaho</b> cuts \$400 million in property and grocery taxes
<b>Mississippi</b> phases out the individual income tax	<b>South Dakota</b> caps property tax assessments at 3%	<b>Arkansas</b> eliminates the grocery tax	<b>Iowa</b> cuts taxable wage and lowers UI taxes	<b>Vermont</b> cuts taxes for vulnerable groups

*Note: Washington enacted the largest tax increase in state history to raise \$9 billion over four years (business & occupation, property, sales, and gas taxes).*

## REGULATORY CLIMATE

*20 states*

<u>Liability &amp; Tort Reforms</u>	<p><b>Michigan</b> removes gaps in insurance coverage for people using peer-to-peer car sharing programs.</p> <p><b>Missouri</b> limits frivolous class action lawsuits and predatory legal practices.</p> <p><b>Montana</b> enacted anti-SLAPP legislation to protect against frivolous suits (37<sup>th</sup> state to do so).</p> <p><b>Nevada</b> prevents ridesharing companies from certain suits due to acts committed by drivers.</p> <p><b>South Carolina</b> eases liquor liability for restaurants and joint and several liability to lower insurance costs.</p> <p><b>Texas</b> codifies the business judgment rule and reforms the derivative claims process.</p>
<u>Permitting Reform</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> enacts the Generating Arkansas Jobs Act to modernize the state’s regulatory framework for energy infrastructure projects.</p> <p><b>Montana</b> revises environmental policy laws to reduce climate litigation and improve permitting.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> enacts a one-stop shop permitting process to support data centers.</p>
<u>Other Regulatory Reforms</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> allows raw milk sales at farmers’ markets.</p> <p><b>Delaware</b> strengthens the state’s corporate governance framework to ensure the state’s premier status as a hub for business incorporations.</p> <p><b>Illinois</b> phases out the subminimum wage for disabled workers.</p> <p><b>Maryland</b> enacts procurement reform to expand small business opportunities.</p> <p><b>Minnesota</b> reforms the pension system to ensure public servants can retire with economic security.</p> <p><b>Vermont</b> advances regulatory reforms for the insurance industry, including captive insurers.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> adopts universal professional and occupational licensure.</p>
<u>Private Equity</u>	<p><b>Massachusetts</b> increased oversight of healthcare companies owned by private equity firms and imposed financial disclosure obligations on firms and hedge funds.</p> <p><b>New York</b> disincentivized large private equity entities that own 10+ single- and two-family homes with various regulations, e.g. waiting periods and prohibitions on depreciation or interest tax deductions.</p> <p><i>Note: <b>Pennsylvania Governor Shapiro</b> recently demanded the legislature pass healthcare private equity legislation to ban sale-leaseback schemes and give the attorney general authority to block bad deals threatening access to healthcare.</i></p>
<u>Consumer Protections</u>	<p><b>Massachusetts</b> adopts consumer protections for money transmissions, like Venmo and PayPal.</p> <p><b>Kentucky</b> passes the Bitcoin Rights bill to protect crypto users and ban local zoning discrimination.</p> <p><b>Nebraska</b> combats fraud and protects consumers of cryptocurrency kiosks, ATMs, and terminals.</p> <p><b>New Hampshire</b> requires utilities to inform certain customers of costs to avoid surprise spikes in billing.</p> <p><b>Oregon</b> makes all lottery winners anonymous unless they otherwise consent.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> requires utility companies to notify customers of outages.</p>

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*13 states*

<u>Data Centers</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> expands tax exemptions and abatements for data centers and removes purpose requirements for cryptomining or blockchain.</p> <p><b>Kansas</b> creates a 20-year sales tax exemption for data centers investing \$250 million within five years.</p> <p><b>Maryland</b> enacts the Next Generation Act to rein in data centers’ impacts on the energy grid by creating a new rate to control consumer costs (1<sup>st</sup> of its kind).</p> <p><b>Michigan</b> adopts tax exemption for large data centers as an incentive against climate concerns.</p> <p><b>North Dakota</b> streamlines siting of on-site backup power generation at data centers in off-grid operations.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> enacts the sweeping Power Generation and Consumption Act to incentivize data centers and microgrids, addressing local control, statewide certification, and a high-impact data center program.</p>
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	<i>Note: <b>Virginia Governor Youngkin</b> vetoed a bill requiring data center site assessments and environmental transparency provisions.</i>
<u>Tourism</u>	<b>Alaska</b> funds a new \$135 million passenger dock and cruise ship terminal in Seward to boost tourism. <b>Colorado</b> offers tax incentives for the iconic Sundance Film Festival in 2027. <b>Kentucky</b> creates the Kentucky Film Office to attract the movie industry.
<u>Other Incentives</u>	<b>Alaska</b> grants the Alaska Railroad Corporation the ability to issue \$135 million in revenue bonds. <b>Indiana</b> creates new online agricultural portal for farmers. <b>Maryland</b> enacts the Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act for water quality, agriculture, and economic growth. <b>Michigan</b> passes five bills to establish an innovation fund, R&D tax credit, and other incentives to attract more investment to the state. <b>Ohio</b> supports the creation of a new Division of Advanced Air Mobility. <b>Tennessee</b> creates a permanent conservation easement and grant fund to support farmers and farmland. <b>Utah</b> strengthens the state’s Inland Port with flexibility for projects and long-term strategic growth.

## ENERGY

*10 states*

<u>Utilities</u>	<b>Arizona</b> authorizes securitization to allow utility companies to transfer debt into low-interest bonds to recoup funding from aging or inefficient assets. <b>Indiana</b> requires utilities to report on advanced transmission technologies (ATTs) and directs a study on the statewide benefits of ATT deployment for the grid (12 <sup>th</sup> state to do so). <b>Maryland</b> establishes a procurement framework to advance nuclear energy and deliver meaningful relief to ratepayers, including a \$200 million electricity bill credit. <b>Missouri</b> enacts “watt for watt” to replace capacity before closing power plants; lowers financing costs for utility construction; extends utility disconnection grace period to 72 hours; permits utility rate programs for special populations; offers choice in time-based utility rate plans or advanced metering systems; tightens limitations on deferred cost recovery; and allows utilities to recoup depreciation expenses from new natural gas facilities. <b>Nebraska</b> establishes requirements for currency mining operations to help preserve electrical service to customers, providing guardrails to ensure the grid can handle increased demand. <b>Utah</b> requires electric utilities to evaluate the deployment of advanced transmission technologies (ATTs) and approve recovery costs for ATT investments (11 <sup>th</sup> state to do so).
<u>New Generation</u>	<b>Indiana</b> expedites the approval process for large-load customers, letting utilities recover costs incurred for projects required to serve big users, addresses the closure of large coal-fired plants, and creates a tax credit for small modular nuclear reactor manufacturing expenses. <b>Ohio</b> encourages new natural gas plants by cutting local property tax assessments to 25% for newly built electric distribution assets or pipelines and 7% for new electric generation property to meet growing demand from data centers and others. <b>South Carolina</b> enacts a wide-ranging energy bill to allow utilities to pursue annual rate increases, streamline permitting for new power plants, and authorize a natural gas plant partnership to meet growing energy demand. <b>Virginia</b> codifies incentives to advanced manufacturing companies of semiconductors and lithium-ion battery separators to help acquire the first commercial nuclear fusion plant. <b>West Virginia</b> supports microgrid development to utilize coal and natural gas resources, attract data centers to the state, and provide tax relief.

## ENVIRONMENT

*16 states*

<u>Water</u>	<b>Kansas</b> establishes a task force to tackle the state’s water challenges. <b>New Mexico</b> establishes a strategic water grant program, aquifer mapping, and addresses PFAS chemicals. <b>Texas</b> creates the Central Texas Water Alliance to address supply and environmental issues.
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	<b>West Virginia</b> orders faster plugging of abandoned wells to protect the environment.
<u>Landfills</u>	<b>Hawaii</b> bans new landfills and allocates \$10 million for invasive species management. <b>New Hampshire</b> adopts a 1-year moratorium on new landfills.
<u>Climate</u>	<b>Colorado</b> simplifies compliance standards for building decarbonization measures to work towards the state's 2030 carbon emission reduction targets. <b>Maryland</b> establishes a comprehensive framework for Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility and reduces direct greenhouse gas emissions from certain multifamily residential buildings. <b>New York</b> holds fossil fuel companies accountable for 2000-2024 emissions as part of the previous 2000-2018 Climate Change Superfund Act (2 <sup>nd</sup> state to do so after Vermont). <b>South Dakota</b> prohibits carbon pipeline companies from using eminent domain to protect property rights.
<u>Flooding</u>	<b>Iowa</b> \$13.6 million for disaster recovery housing, mitigation, and nuisance property. <b>Kentucky</b> passes \$100 million for the SAFE Act for emergency funds for families impacted by flooding. <b>Maine</b> offers residents \$15,000 to protect homes against severe weather events. <b>North Carolina</b> delivers \$524 million in aid to western North Carolina following Hurricane Helene.
<u>Wildfires</u>	<b>California</b> invests \$170 million to prevent catastrophic wildfires. <b>Hawaii</b> allows for a liability cap for the Hawaiian Electric Company for future catastrophic wildfires. <b>Wyoming</b> requires utility companies to identify wildfire risks around infrastructure to mitigate risk.

## HOUSING

*12 states*

<u>Zoning &amp; Construction</u>	<b>Arizona</b> preempts how counties can regulate backyard casitas or accessory dwelling units. <b>Colorado</b> adopts residential building stair modernization, addresses construction defects and middle market housing, and utilizes regional building codes for factory-built structures. <b>Montana</b> limits local government zoning powers to boost construction. <b>Washington</b> allows counties to authorize multi-family housing on single-family parcels in certain urban and rural areas.
<u>Insurance &amp; Financing</u>	<b>Hawaii</b> stabilizes the state's property insurance crisis to address skyrocketing or lost coverage. <b>New Hampshire</b> eases apartment financing and building with energy-efficiency systems, known as C-PACER (40 <sup>th</sup> state to do so).
<u>Tenants</u>	<b>Maryland</b> expedites hearings for active-duty services members to reclaim housing. <b>Michigan</b> bars landlords of 5+ rental units from discriminating against tenants based on source of income. <b>Minnesota</b> prohibits landlords from discriminating against tenants training service dogs.
<u>Homelessness</u>	<b>Idaho</b> bans public camping in larger cities with more than 100,000 residents, including Boise. <b>Massachusetts</b> assigns \$425 million to an emergency shelter system that ran out of money. <b>Utah</b> adopts new rules for homeless shelters to maintain zero-tolerance drug policies and other enforcement measures. <i>Note: <b>Arizona Governor Hobbs</b> vetoed a bill to require hotels to notify patrons about homeless guests.</i>

## EDUCATION & SCHOOLS

*21 states*

<u>Workforce Readiness</u>	<b>Arkansas</b> passes the ACCESS Act to overhaul higher ed and accelerate high school coursework. <b>Colorado</b> realigns workforce readiness for high schoolers to obtain credits and credentials. <b>Georgia</b> expands the MATCH program to match high school seniors with college or tech schools. <b>Oklahoma</b> expands workforce development through high-demand career pathways and K-12 readiness. <b>Utah</b> creates industry-recognized credentials for K-12 and enhances portals between students and employers.
<u>Teachers</u>	<b>Maryland</b> starts a Grow Your Own Educators program to address the teacher shortage. <b>Montana</b> invests \$100 million to boost starting pay for teachers. <b>New Mexico</b> raises base teacher pay by \$5,000. <b>Tennessee</b> allows school districts to offer merit-based pay for high-performing teachers. <b>West Virginia</b> creates a Troops to Teachers program for veterans to help with the teacher shortage.

<u>School Safety</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> enacts the FOCUS Act to ban cell phone in schools and require internet safety policies.</p> <p><b>New Mexico</b> protects students’ right to wear tribal regalia at school events (20<sup>th</sup> state to do so).</p> <p><b>Washington</b> improves school security systems by adding panic buttons and live feeds for law enforcement.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> authorizes school discipline procedures for violent and threatening behavior in class.</p>
<u>Special Needs</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> passes the RISE Act to support students with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Connecticut</b> appropriates \$40 million for special education.</p> <p><b>Oklahoma</b> streamlines scholarships for special needs students.</p>
<u>Curriculum</u>	<p><b>Colorado</b> requires students to take financial literacy coursework before graduating high school.</p> <p><b>Iowa</b> strengthens K-12 math instruction, teacher training, and professional development.</p> <p><b>Michigan</b> mandates public high schools offer a computer science course.</p> <p><b>Oregon</b> funds \$35 million in summer learning to close achievement gaps in literacy.</p> <p><b>Utah</b> boosts civics curriculum in K-12 and expands CTE catalyst centers.</p>
<u>School Choice</u>	<p><b>Idaho</b> spends \$50 million on private school tax credits.</p> <p><b>North Dakota</b> creates a framework for establishing public charter schools.</p> <p><b>South Carolina</b> expands the Education Scholarship Trust Fund voucher program.</p> <p><b>Texas</b> adopts a school voucher program up to \$10,000 per student for school choice.</p> <p><b>Utah</b> enhances charter school credits.</p> <p><b>Wyoming</b> enacts a universal school voucher bill giving \$7,000 to families for school choice.</p>

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES

*9 states*

<u>Paid Leave</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> enacts eight weeks of paid parental leave for state employees.</p> <p><b>Iowa</b> enacts four weeks of paid parental leave for state employees.</p> <p><b>Michigan</b> expands paid sick leave and increases minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2027.</p>
<u>Foster Care</u>	<p><b>Idaho</b> \$23 million foster care investment and \$14 million bill for childcare access.</p> <p><b>Illinois</b> prioritizes child placement with relatives for foster children.</p> <p><b>West Virginia</b> enacts an omnibus foster care bill, including oversight, funding, and accountability.</p>
<u>Child Welfare</u>	<p><b>New Jersey</b> enables social workers to practice across state lines; exempts nursing moms from jury duty.</p> <p><b>New Mexico</b> passes a bundle of child welfare provisions, including care for drug-exposed infants.</p> <p><b>Oklahoma</b> strengthens court protections for children at risk of abduction.</p>

## HEALTHCARE

*19 states*

<u>Medicaid</u>	<p><b>Idaho</b> reels in Medicaid spending and seek work requirements.</p> <p><b>Iowa</b> codifies Medicaid work requirements and requests HHS approval for a hub and spoke partnership.</p> <p><b>Montana</b> reauthorizes Medicaid expansion to lift the 2025 sunset established in 2015.</p> <p><b>New Jersey</b> establishes guidelines for step therapy protocols for Medicaid and state health benefits.</p> <p><i>Note: <b>Mississippi Governor Reeves</b> vetoed a bill that arguably expanded Medicaid.</i></p>
<u>Prescription Drugs</u>	<p><b>Arkansas</b> prohibits PBMs from owning pharmacies and engaging in anticompetitive practices.</p> <p><b>Maryland</b> expands the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) to set upper payment limits.</p> <p><b>Nebraska</b> passes a 340B contract pharmacy protection bill to safeguard benefits.</p> <p><b>North Dakota</b> requires insurance companies to count copayment assistance towards deductibles, lowering costs for cancer and rare disease patients (22<sup>nd</sup> state to do so).</p> <p><b>Virginia</b> creates a single PBM for the state’s Medicaid program to lower costs; <i>Note that Governor Youngkin vetoed a bill to establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB).</i></p> <p><b>Wisconsin</b> continues the electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (ePDMP) to combat the opioid epidemic and prescription drug misuse.</p>
<u>Medical Practice</u>	<p><b>Alabama</b> bans contractual or gag clauses that prevent physician-patient communication.</p> <p><b>Delaware</b> legalizes medical aid for terminally ill adults (12<sup>th</sup> state to do so).</p> <p><b>Kansas</b> expands certified registered nurse anesthetics’ roles to address healthcare workforce shortage.</p>

	<p><b>South Dakota</b> removes mandatory practice agreements for physician’s assistants.</p> <p><b>Tennessee</b> adopts a medical ethics defense bill to allow doctors to refuse service against their beliefs.</p>
<u>Hospitals</u>	<p><b>Indiana</b> requires certain hospitals to lower prices or forfeit nonprofit status.</p> <p><b>Iowa</b> increases funding and strengthens rural healthcare workforce.</p> <p><b>Vermont</b> requires hospitals to develop security plans to prevent workplace violence against staff.</p>
<u>Government</u>	<p><b>Arizona</b> fills a \$122 million hole for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (60,000 people).</p> <p><b>South Carolina</b> merges three health related agencies into the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, combining mental health, disabilities and special needs, and addiction.</p>

## MAHA & PUBLIC HEALTH

*6 states*

<u>Food</u>	<p><b>Arizona</b> prohibits schools from serving or selling ultra-processed foods.</p> <p><b>Idaho</b> passes a bill requiring the state seek a USDA SNAP waiver to ban candy and soda.</p> <p><b>Utah</b> expands eligibility for 40,000 students to receive no-cost school lunches.</p>
<u>Water</u>	<p><b>Florida</b> bans fluoride in public drinking water (2<sup>nd</sup> state to do so).</p> <p><b>Missouri</b> removes lead from drinking water in schools.</p> <p><b>Utah</b> bans fluoride in public drinking water (1<sup>st</sup> state).</p>
<u>Disease</u>	<p><b>Idaho</b> prohibits vaccine and medical intervention requirements for employees and students.</p> <p><b>Pennsylvania</b> updates poultry technician licensure laws to stop spread of the avian or bird flu.</p>

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