

Summaries of Governors' 2022 State of the State Addresses

March 31, 2022

Overview

As of March 31st, governors in 46 states have given a State of the State speech or address to the legislature (the governors in MN, MT, NC, and TX have not given an address). This year's speeches marked a change in tone and focus from last year's addresses when states were in the midst of some of the most difficult times in responding to the pandemic. While COVID-19 remains a prominent challenge for states, speeches this year saw greater optimism than last year's more subdued addresses. Many governors noted that the state of the state is strong and getting stronger. Other descriptions of the state of the state included resilient, moving forward, steadfast, unbreakable, enduring, rising, and at a crossroads.

Improved Fiscal Conditions

During their addresses, governors highlighted the improved economic and fiscal outlook of their states. Many governors noted growth in gross domestic product, lower unemployment, job gains, and new business development. Governors also discussed growth in state tax collections, budget surpluses, improved credit ratings, and increased rainy day funds and reserves. A number of them spoke about the unprecedented opportunity to make new investments and positively alter the course of the state moving forward due to increased state tax collections and the impact of federal COVID-19 relief aid.

Federal Fund Uses

In their speeches, governors talked about planned uses for federal COVID-19 relief aid, including from the *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) and the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA). Planned uses for ARPA funds included public health emergency responses, other healthcare needs, workforce development, support for law enforcement and veterans,

housing, unemployment insurance, small business assistance, parks, climate change and resiliency efforts, education including addressing learning loss, broadband, water and sewer, and other infrastructure projects. Initial plans for IIJA funds centered around roads, bridges, water systems, and broadband with governors calling for supporting transformative projects with long-term impacts that will support future generations. When speaking of federal COVID-19 relief aid, governors emphasized the importance of wisely investing the funds, making strategic decisions, and using one-time funds for one-time purposes.

State-Funded Investments

Governors' speeches also focused on planned uses of state funds. Program areas highlighted included early education and K-12, secondary education and workforce training, healthcare and human services, corrections and public safety, and transportation and other infrastructure projects. Specific areas of focus included mental health, substance abuse, agriculture, protecting natural resources, climate change, housing, cybersecurity, broadband, and aid to businesses. More information on specific spending proposals can be found in NASBO's [Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Budget Summaries](#).

Challenges and Opportunities

While the overall message from governors in State of the State addresses was focused on the current strength and improvement in states, several other points of emphasis appeared in their speeches. Governors acknowledged the challenges over the past few years while thanking frontline workers, educators, and others for their efforts in battling the pandemic. They also spoke about their states' responses to COVID-19 including efforts surrounding vaccine distribution, increased testing, keeping schools open, and aiding working

families and businesses. Many governors discussed current workforce challenges while calling for new training programs, preparing workers for the jobs of tomorrow, expanded childcare, housing assistance, and access to behavioral health services and substance use disorder prevention. Several noted the current impact of inflation while discussing proposals to help people lower costs and save money. Governors also spoke about tax relief, with recommendations including both broad-based tax relief such as lowering personal income taxes, and targeted tax relief such as tax rebates, grocery tax cuts, and freezing gas taxes. Another area of emphasis

was on government reform including proposals centered on streamlining programs, modernizing state government, and greater efficiency, as well as initiatives to attract and retain public sector workers. Finally, a number of governors spoke about the need to find bipartisan solutions and work together to address current and future challenges.

On the following pages are state-by-state summaries of State of the State addresses with links to the speeches. If you would like additional information, please contact [Brian Sigritz](#) at 202-624-8439.

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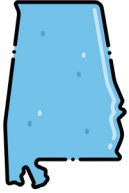
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Alabama

Governor Kay Ivey

Date of Address January 10

Link <https://governor.alabama.gov/assets/2022/01/SOTS-2022-Embargoed-Copy.pdf>



Alabama Governor Kay Ivey stated by coming together over the past four years the state has been able to solve some of its toughest challenges including addressing its prison system and making needed improvements to roads and bridges. The governor said the state of the state is strong, and that the state's best days will be ahead of it if legislators join with her in her bold vision.

The governor then turned to federal issues and said the state will maintain its opposition to federal mandates, while continuing to wisely invest one-time additional federal aid. Regarding *American Rescue Plan Act* funds, she called for directing the funds to some of the state's biggest challenges including statewide broadband connectivity, water and sewer infrastructure, as well as investing in hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care providers. Speaking of the budget, the governor said her proposal will fully fund the state's rainy day accounts, pay down debts, and make robust investments that will pay long-term dividends. Additionally, the governor highlighted economic progress including

the creation of new jobs and private sector investments.

Much of the speech focused on education with the governor calling children's education the most important issue both in Alabama and the nation. The governor spoke of the importance of in-person learning, while also calling for the legislature to implement the Alabama Literacy Act, stating her support for legislation to create a Math Task Force, proposing resources to support grants for failing elementary schools, calling for 4 percent pay raises for teachers, and recommending increased investments in education at all levels.

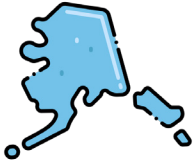
Other topics discussed by the governor included: making efforts to expand outdoor recreation and ensure continued developments in the hospitality industry; continued support of law enforcement; a recommended 4 percent pay raise for state employees; a proposed bonus for retired state employees; and additional investments in mental health.

Alaska

Governor Mike Dunleavy

Date of Address January 25

Link <https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2022/01/26/governor-dunleavy-addresses-alaskans-in-fourth-state-of-the-state/>



Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy said the state of the state is resilient. He noted that the state is moving forward, open for business, and fulfilling its motto of “North to the Future.” Looking forward, the governor said he envisions a state where people feel safer tomorrow than they did yesterday; privacy and freedom of speech are secure; educational outcomes are the best in the nation and not the worst; and parents and children remain at the forefront of every educational decision. He added that he wants to see a state where Alaska is energy independent and a leader in renewable energy; natural gas on the North Slope is utilized; the cost of energy is no longer the second highest in the nation; the oil pipeline operates for at least another 45 years; everyone has broadband access; Alaska is a worldwide leader in technology; its port system is structurally sound and fully utilized; and Alaska is prepared for every opportunity.

Much of the governor’s address focused on recent progress and future goals. Concerning COVID-19, the governor said the state has led on testing and vaccine distribution, and that his administration will continue to defend Alaskans’ right to make their own medical decisions about vaccines. The governor said more must be done to address the shortage of healthcare workers and called for recruiting and retaining more than 600 certified nursing assistants, hiring additional faculty to train and graduate more registered nurses, and adding seats at the Washington School of Medicine to train more doctors.

Turning to economic and fiscal conditions, the governor said the state’s fiscal situation has vastly improved and the state is currently on track for its first budget surplus in a decade. He noted that

his budget proposal will be 7 percent less than 2019, while continuing to fund the core services that Alaskans expect. The governor added that the state is experiencing strong growth in its gross domestic product, lower unemployment, and is beginning to recover jobs lost during the pandemic. Additionally, the governor said protecting Alaskans’ share of its resource wealth will always be a top priority, while calling for support of a Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) plan that protects the PFD in the constitution for future generations and gives people a say in how their PFD is determined.

The governor also spoke about issues related to agriculture and natural resources. He spoke out against several federal environmental policies, while calling for support of his Statehood Defense Initiative that addresses state’s rights and development issues related to oil and gas, mining, and land management. Other topics included efforts to support the salmon industry, creating a Food Security Task Force to help the state become more self-sufficient, and allowing more Alaskans to own property through land reform.

Another area of focus was public safety, which the governor called the number one job of any government. He highlighted recent improvements in public safety while calling for pay increases for public safety personnel, adding criminal prosecutors, and continuing to lessen the time it takes to test sexual assault examination kits. Finally, he discussed his People First initiative that includes five distinct proposals addressing domestic violence and sexual assault; human trafficking; missing and murdered Indigenous people; the foster care system; and homelessness.

Arizona

Governor Doug Ducey

Date of Address January 10

Link <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2022/01/watch-2022-state-state-address>



Arizona Governor Doug Ducey said the state of the state is strong, while highlighting successes over the past eight years. He specifically noted accomplishments over the past year such as liability reform, bipartisan wildfire solutions, modernized tribal gaming compacts, new school choice options, and record investments in infrastructure. The governor added that the economy is rapidly expanding, government is smaller and more efficient, the budget is balanced, the state has a surplus of several billion dollars, revenues are growing faster than projected, and the state will continue to cut taxes. The governor also contrasted many of the state's positions with that of the federal government and said there will be a continued focus in Arizona on freedom, opportunity, and good government.

Looking forward, the governor said he will work to reduce regulations, expand the rainy day fund, pay off debt, increase investments in community colleges, reduce learning loss including through

launching a new summer camp program, expand school choice, add resources for extended family caring for vulnerable children, and increase pay for State Troopers. The governor also outlined a five-step plan focused on the southern border including added resources, enforcing the rule of law, increased enforcement and multistate intelligence sharing, physical barriers, and a call for added support from the federal government. Another area of focus was on water resources with the governor proposing a \$1 billion investment to help pursue desalination technology.

Finally, the governor called for: completion of a wider I-10 between Tucson and Phoenix; a continued focus on citizens' health; increased investments in cyber security; improvements in election security; better broadband connectivity; more efforts to prevent wildfires; maintaining pro-second amendment positions; protecting life in every way possible; and preparing for another Super Bowl.

Arkansas

Governor Asa Hutchinson

Date of Address February 14

Link <https://governor.arkansas.gov/news-media/press-releases/governor-hutchinson-gives-state-of-the-state-address-to-open-2022-fiscal-se>



Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson began his speech reflecting on successes over the past seven years. He said that when he took office, he began with a desire to improve the quality of life in Arkansas by improving education, increasing manufacturing, preserving outdoor heritage, and supporting farmers. The governor noted successes over the past seven years including lower unemployment, new jobs created, business expansions and relocations, and bringing an F-35 pilot training mission to Ebbing Air National Guard Base. Other areas highlighted by the governor included lowering the individual income tax rate from 7.0 percent to 5.5 percent; building a record \$1.2 billion reserve fund; creating a more efficient and responsive state government including reducing the number of departments and state employees; providing teacher pay raises; and increasing funding for education. In addition, the governor spoke about the state's role in addressing the pandemic over the past two years including keeping schools open and supporting businesses, and recognized public servants for their sacrifices.

Turning to the future, the governor called on Arkansas to focus on emerging technologies including advanced mobility. He said this focus

included autonomous vehicles, upward mobility platforms, electric vehicles, and new modes of transportation. To help support advanced mobility, the governor announced the creation of the Arkansas Council on Future Mobility, and called for the expansion of electric vehicle charging stations across the state.

The governor then turned to his budget proposal and said it will leave a healthy surplus while increasing funding for education, health care, and public safety. Regarding public safety, the governor recommended a \$5,000 one-time payment to every local law enforcement officer; additional funding for the Public Safety Equipment Grant Program; increased pay for state troopers; and building a new state prison to help address the back up of state prisoners in county jails.

Finally, the governor discussed the state of the state and said Arkansas is leading, including in computer science education, technology innovation, agriculture, tourism, job creation, and support for veterans and law enforcement. The governor added that he has never been more hopeful and optimistic about the future of the state and called on everyone to work with courage to unite, inspire, and lead with hope.

California

Governor Gavin Newsom

Date of Address March 8

Link <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/03/08/governor-newsom-delivers-state-of-the-state-address-3-8-22/>



California Governor Gavin Newsom's speech focused on the "California Way" of rejecting old binaries and finding new solutions to big problems. He began by discussing the need to protect democratic institutions and not taking democracy for granted, while highlighting California's diverse backgrounds and ability to settle disagreements with civility and compromise. Turning to the climate, the governor said the state is working to provide relief from high gas prices through pausing the gas tax increase; however, he added the state should not turn to more oil drilling but instead should continue to embrace clean energy technologies.

The governor said the California economy is unmatched and spoke about its GDP growth, the number of new jobs, and new businesses started during the pandemic. He said the California Way can be seen not only in its efforts to help businesses grow, but also through its support of workers including by passing a large tax rebate, raising the minimum wage, increasing paid sick leave, providing more paid family leave, expanding childcare, and

supporting healthcare for all regardless of immigration status.

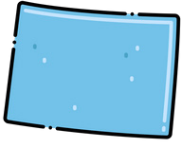
Regarding public health, the governor spoke about the state's efforts to save lives during the pandemic and the recent creation of its SMARTER Plan, designed to help stay a step ahead of future variants and seasonal surges. In the area of housing, the governor talked about recent initiatives to expand housing options and how new efforts to get people off the streets and into housing will make the streets safer for everyone. The governor also said that the state is funding local law enforcement and prosecutors to investigate and solve more crime, while also investing funds into new programs to tackle the root causes of crime and doubling down on violence-prevention programs. Finally, the governor discussed the California Way in education including transitional kindergarten for all, nine hours of enrichment a day, universal before and after school programs, expanded summer school, universal nutritious meals, new child savings accounts, and free community college.

Colorado

Governor Jared Polis

Date of Address January 13

Link <https://www.colorado.gov/governor/news/7081-governor-jared-polis-provides-hope-and-plan-save-coloradans-money-2022-state-state>



Colorado Governor Jared Polis said the state of the state is strong, steadfast, and in spite of everything, boldly moving forward. His speech focused on moving Colorado forward by saving people money, improving affordability, and making the state a better place for everyone. Before discussing specific proposals, the governor asked for a moment of silence for Coloradoans who have lost their lives to COVID, violence, and natural disasters including the recent Boulder County fires. He also expressed gratitude for Coloradans' efforts during the pandemic.

The governor said that last year he described a vision for the state where: every child could get the education they deserve; a multimodal transportation system would meet the needs of a growing population; access to affordable and quality healthcare is a given; public lands and parks are protected by building a clean energy economy; and people and communities are thriving. He outlined a series of success over the past year and said the vision is within reach thanks to the hard work of the legislative body.

Although the state has had many successes over the past year, the governor said urgent action is needed to resolve day-to-day crises Coloradans are currently facing. He discussed the need to do more to help every business and family succeed, including by continuing to cut taxes and fees. The governor outlined a series of

proposals to help people save money including implementing free universal preschool; reducing fees such as the unemployment insurance premium and the Paid Family and Medical Leave premium; making it free for people to start their own business; preventing increases in driver's license fees; and using *American Rescue Plan Act* funds to help provide more affordable housing. Additionally, the governor said the state is saving money by making state government more efficient and effective through reducing office space, implementing best practices in contract negotiations, and improving digital services.

The governor also spoke about a series of other issues including mental health, education, healthcare, crime, homelessness, and the environment. Specifically, the governor proposed creating an effective approach to addressing behavioral health needs; making a historic investment in K-12 including increasing per pupil funding; increasing support for higher education to help keep tuition flat; waiving licensing fees for nurses and mental health care workers; and a three-year plan to make increased investments to stabilize the healthcare workforce. Additionally, the governor discussed plans to help make Colorado one of the safest states in the country, implement known solutions to address homelessness, improve air quality, and secure a sustainable water future.

Connecticut

Governor Ned Lamont

Date of Address February 9

Link <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/Governor-Lamont-2022-State-of-the-State-Address>



Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont said the state of the state is better than it was when he took office three years ago, but that Connecticut still has a long way to go. He noted the state has gone from a budget deficit to three consecutive years of budget surpluses, seen credit rating increases, paid down its unfunded pension liability, and increased the size of its rainy day fund. Additionally, the governor said the improved fiscal conditions has allowed the state to consider tax cuts for working families, make greater investments in education, and hold down the costs of healthcare, childcare, and college tuition.

The governor then outlined upcoming priorities and recommendations. The governor called for increased funding for workforce development, with a focus on trade schools, apprentice programs, and tuition-free certificate programs. He noted the investments will train workers in courses designed by businesses around skills they need. The governor stated that a 21st century workforce needs a 21st century transportation system and said upcoming infrastructure projects will be bolstered by the federal bipartisan infrastructure bill. The governor specifically highlighted infrastructure projects related to rail service, roads and bridges, clean wind energy, broadband expansion, flood control,

strengthening the electric grid, and converting to all-electric buses.

Regarding helping working families and middle-class households, the governor called for a series of tax breaks including expanding eligibility for the property tax credit, reducing car tax bills, and eliminating the income tax on retirement income for most households. The governor also emphasized the importance of public safety while calling for the creation of a special illegal gun unit, hiring and recruiting more police officers, additional funding for new prosecutors and public defenders, and confirming judicial appointments. Additionally, the governor discussed efforts to prevent violence through investments in education, workforce development, and mental health. Other areas of focus in the address included making prescription drugs more affordable; aid for small businesses; help for entrepreneurs with an emphasis on distressed communities; holding public officials accountable; and easing absentee voting requirements.

Finally, the governor discussed COVID-19 while thanking residents for their efforts during the pandemic. Looking forward, the governor called for increased hazard pay, the approval of remaining executive orders regarding COVID-19, and ending the statewide school mandate.

Delaware

Governor John Carney

Date of Address January 20

Link <https://governor.delaware.gov/state-of-the-state/>



Delaware Governor John Carney said the last two years have brought unprecedented challenges for every Delaware family. The governor thanked healthcare workers and others for their efforts during the pandemic. While the pandemic continues, the governor noted he is optimistic about the future and eager for what lies ahead. The governor said that due to the strength and resilience of Delawareans, the state of the state is strong.

The governor said expanding economic opportunity is his highest priority while he highlighted recent successes including job creation, lower unemployment, and businesses relocating to the state. He said support from the federal government will help the state build on its own economic work. Specifically, the governor said federal stimulus dollars will help upgrade libraries, modernize nonprofit buildings, increase resources for gun violence prevention, improve mental health services, support parks, and increase investments in infrastructure including in clean water.

Turning to workforce issues, the governor said building a workforce ready for jobs of the future may be the state's biggest challenge. The governor discussed efforts to support small businesses and raise the minimum wage, while calling for additional support for state employees on the lower end of the wage scale and using federal stimulus funds to strengthen workforce training programs. The governor also spoke about the importance of investing in education

and called for expanding the state's Pathways programs in public middle schools and high schools; making permanent new resources to support low-income students and English learners; ensuring that an accurate Black history curriculum is taught in schools; and finding successful reform programs for Wilmington Public Schools.

Other areas of emphasis included housing, broadband, and substance abuse. The governor said the state has been working hard to address a housing crisis that has been made worse by the pandemic and called for additional investments in affordable housing as well as rental and mortgage assistance. Concerning broadband, he said the state will use federal money to ensure everyone has access to a hardwired connection. The governor also said the state will continue to ensure access to treatment and prevention options for substance abuse.

Finally, the governor discussed his upcoming budget proposal and said managing the state budget is more important than ever. He said the state has been able to build significant new reserves and directed one-time revenue into one-time infrastructure projects, without making painful budget cuts, tax increases, or laying off state employees. Looking forward, the governor said the state will continue to invest in classrooms, use one-time revenue for infrastructure projects, and work to strengthen the economy, expand opportunity, and support families as Delaware emerges from the pandemic.

Florida

Governor Ron DeSantis

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://flgov.com/2022/01/11/governor-ron-desantis-state-of-the-state-address-3/>



Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said that Florida has become the freest state in the United States while protecting the right of citizens to earn a living, providing businesses with the ability to prosper, fighting back against unconstitutional federal mandates, and ensuring children have the opportunity to thrive. The governor stated that it is upon this freedom that Florida's future must be built. Additionally, he highlighted the state's fiscal condition including strong revenue growth, growing reserves, low taxes, strong job creation, and a high number of business creations. The governor also called for a \$1 billion gas tax holiday to help reduce gas prices.

Concerning elementary and secondary education, the governor said the state has worked hard to keep schools open, increase teacher compensation, promote workforce education, and protect the rights of parents. He called for reforms to testing standards, providing teachers with a

\$1,000 bonus, and providing parents with the ability to review the curriculum used in schools. In the area of secondary education, the governor said he will not support any tuition increases, opposes cutting Bright Future scholarships, and emphasized the importance of apprenticeship programs.

Other areas of focus included: the need for continual protection of natural resources; the importance of ensuring safe communities; providing law enforcement with pay increases and bonuses; and the need for strong international borders. The governor also called for the creation of an election integrity unit; enacting protections for data privacy; strengthening protections for Second Amendment rights; providing additional funds for foster parents; and building an appropriate memorial for victims of the collapse of the Champlain Towers South condominium complex.

Georgia

Governor Brian Kemp

Date of Address January 13

Link <https://gov.georgia.gov/press-releases/2022-01-13/governor-brian-p-kemps-2022-state-state-address>



Georgia Governor Brian Kemp said the state has celebrated unprecedented success by working together to build a strong foundation. He noted the state has remained open for business, has seen record levels of jobs and investment, is leading the nation in economic recovery, and has fought to put hardworking Georgians first. The governor then outlined his agenda which prioritizes education, healthcare, and public safety.

In the area of education, the governor said his budget proposal will include a \$2,000 teacher pay raise, which would lead to an overall \$5,000 increase since 2019; he also recommended a one-time pay supplement for school support staff. In addition, the governor called for fully funding schools and completely restoring austerity cuts to education made during the pandemic, as well as protecting students from divisive ideology and passing a parental bill of rights.

Regarding healthcare, the governor spoke about the need to: make continued investments in its Georgia Access healthcare program to help

reduce premiums; expand nursing programs to allow for more graduates; increase residency slots to address rural physician shortages; expand Medicaid coverage for new mothers to a full year; and continue to strengthen the state's foster care and adoption systems.

Finally, concerning public safety, the governor said efforts must be made to ensure every Georgian feels safe and secure in their communities. He spoke of supporting constitutional carry legislation, funding for a new anti-gang unit in the Attorney General's office, and providing necessary resources for courts and prosecutors. Additionally, the governor called for additional staff in the crime lab and medical examiners office to address increased volume; an additional trooper class of 75 cadets; adding law enforcement criminal justice degrees to the Technical College System; free tuition for over 1,000 Georgians to obtain those degrees at technical colleges; a pay raise for law enforcement and other state employees; and bringing forward legislation reforming human trafficking charges.

Hawaii

Governor David Ige

Date of Address January 24

Link <https://governor.hawaii.gov/main/state-of-the-state-address-2022/>



Hawaii Governor David Ige said the state has endured tremendous hardship over the last two years and the fight against the pandemic is far from over. However, he said he is proud of the way Hawaiians have responded to the pandemic and the path the state has taken. The governor stated that he has three goals for this year: to continue steering through the pandemic; to strengthen families and communities; and to move toward full economic recovery.

The governor began by discussing efforts to protect health. He said that despite previous efforts to improve the state's healthcare system, the virus has exposed gaps in the healthcare infrastructure. To address these issues, he called for the expansion of the University of Hawaii's doctor residency program; funding to strengthen the university's nursing program and add more clinical instructors at community colleges; and strengthening medical facilities in prisons including building a consolidated healthcare unit. The governor said that while the state works to maintain health, work must also be done to strengthen communities. He highlighted current efforts to help the unemployed, support access to childcare, provide emergency rent and mortgage assistance, and increase the inventory of affordable homes. In addition, he said current revenue projections will allow for a tax refund check for every taxpayer and dependent.

The governor then turned to education and asked the legislature to restore spending cuts made during the pandemic. He also called for the expansion of Hawaii's virtual learning

network, using federal funds to address learning loss, reimagining the use of public libraries, and working together to create a universal preschool system. Additionally, the governor focused on the need to protect natural resources. He called for retiring the state's last coal plant; establishing a rebate for working families to buy electric cars; expanding the State-to-Farm program to support local farmers; moving forward with the Royal Kunia Agricultural Park to encourage food self-sufficiency; and finding a long-term solution for the Navy's Red Hill facility.

Finally, the governor spoke about economic recovery and the budget. The governor discussed ongoing programs to support small businesses while calling for support of Hawaii's Tourism Authority and Convention Center; Small Business Innovation Research projects; business accelerator programs and manufacturing assistance grants; a State Small Business Credit Initiative; and replacing the state's accounting system to increase government efficiency. In addition, the governor spoke about leveraging new federal infrastructure funds to further boost transportation, clean energy, and internet capacity. Regarding the budget, the governor said that increased tax collections will allow the state to restore painful cuts, repay outstanding loans, and replenish various state funds including the Unemployment Trust Fund and the state's rainy day fund. The governor added that for the first time in a long time the state has the resources to address both immediate and long-term needs, while specifically calling for the development of an all-inclusive broadband infrastructure.

Idaho

Governor Brad Little

Date of Address January 10

Link <https://gov.idaho.gov/pressrelease/gov-little-highlights-plan-for-education-investments-tax-relief-in-2022-state-of-the-state-and-budget-address/>



Idaho Governor Brad Little said that while the last few years have presented incredible challenges, the state currently has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. He noted Idaho has a stronger economy than ever, more jobs than before the pandemic, a balanced budget, and robust reserves. Regarding his budget proposal, the governor said it holds the line on spending, pays off state building debt, puts the state on a path to pay off deferred maintenance needs, and increases rainy day funds to a record level. The governor also contrasted the state's fiscal condition and policy positions with that of the federal government.

The governor then detailed his plan called Leading Idaho which focuses on continued tax relief and strategic investments aimed at making the biggest difference in people's daily lives. He called for \$1 billion in income tax relief over the next five years, including \$350 million in immediate rebates and \$250 million in ongoing

income tax relief. Additionally, the governor proposed locking in lower unemployment insurance rates for Idaho businesses.

The governor next turned to his top funding priorities. He said his budget adds \$1.1 billion over the next five years to improve Idaho education including adding ongoing funding to literacy programs and new Empowering Parents grants. In the area of public safety, the governor recommended additional spending to address needs within the Idaho State Police, State Veterans Homes, and doubling investments in scholarships for the Idaho National Guard. The governor also called for increased election integrity efforts including establishing a new Cyber Response and Defense Fund, improving behavioral healthcare, and adding investments in transportation including ongoing funding to address maintenance needs and one-time funding for deficient bridges.

Illinois

Governor J.B. Pritzker

Date of Address February 2

Link <https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24471.html>



Illinois Governor JB Pritzker said the state of the state is strong, unbreakable, and enduring. He added that it is sustained every day by the kindness of its people, hopes of its leaders, and its common commitment to face an uncertain tomorrow with the strength built by surviving yesterdays. The governor highlighted recent successes including modernizing infrastructure, addressing climate change, providing reliable healthcare, expanding freedoms, and working to deliver real living wages.

In his address, the governor noted COVID-19 has presented challenges not seen in generations. He said that no one has borne a greater burden than first responders, while thanking them for their efforts. The governor said the state has combatted the pandemic through vaccination efforts, keeping schools safe and open, and aiding working families and small businesses.

Turning to current economic and fiscal conditions, the governor said the state has seen job gains, growth in GDP, and increased wages. He also highlighted improvements in the budget including two credit rating upgrades, a current fiscal year surplus, paying down debt early, and a reduced bill backlog. Looking forward, the governor called for making an additional pension payment beyond the minimum payment, increasing the size of the rainy day fund, consolidating long-term leases, reducing government office space, and paying off a prior unfunded state liability in a college tuition program.

The governor next spoke about current priorities. In the area of education, he said his budget proposal includes increases in early education,

K-12, and higher education, and asked the legislature to broaden the use of scholarship programs for career training programs. Concerning health and human services, the governor recommended creating a new program to remove barriers for the recruitment and training of health care workers; investing new resources in nursing scholarships and loan forgiveness programs; eliminating licensure fees; hiring more child welfare workers; streamlining behavioral health services; and expanding Alzheimer's support.

Other areas of focus included public safety, and greater support for communities and families. The governor said tackling crime requires both short-term and long-term investments. He called for increasing the number of forensic scientists and evidence technicians, added funding to hire more state police, authorizing a Gang Crime Witness Protection program, and investing in data-driven and community-driven violence prevention efforts. To help communities and small businesses, the governor recommended extending the Rebuild Downtowns and Main Streets program, suspending license fees for restaurants and bars, and renewing the Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) tax credit program. Finally, the governor proposed an Illinois Family Relief plan to help families fight inflation. The plan includes freezing the gas tax in fiscal 2023; suspending the state tax on groceries and have the state make up any lost revenue to localities; and immediate property tax relief funded by the state surplus.

Indiana

Governor Eric Holcomb

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://www.in.gov/gov/newsroom/2022-state-of-the-state-address/>



Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb began his speech by saying there has never been a more opportune time to realize the state's potential than right now. He went on to detail what his administration is doing for the economy, people, and communities.

First, the governor spoke about the state's fiscal condition and said Indiana has had nine straight balanced budgets since 2005, reduced its debt by 24 percent, maintained a Triple A credit rating, and recorded record revenues and reserves. Concerning the economy, he said the state has its lowest unemployment rate in 21 years, led the region in GDP growth, experienced consistent population growth, and has seen wage growth and the expansion of businesses. The governor said one of the state's most pressing challenges is ensuring there are enough qualified workers to fill current job openings.

One way the governor is working on filling job openings is through education. He noted the state has made record contributions to K-12 education, invested more in early education, taken steps to address learning loss, seen an increase in teacher salaries, and is working to make school performance data more readily available. The governor also discussed recent steps taken to align the state's K-12, higher

education, workforce, and economic development efforts. Turning to healthcare, the governor said the state must increase its efforts to reach more people with substance use disorders, promote a comprehensive strategy to support mental health, continue to reduce infant mortality, and begin examining ways to modernize and strengthen the state's public health system overall.

The governor then spoke of steps Indiana has taken to invest in communities. He highlighted infrastructure efforts including deploying \$60 billion over 20 years to expand and enhance roads and bridges, partnering with the federal government and local partners on commuter rail projects, investing \$150 million for trail improvements, increasing broadband, and committing \$420 million towards wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater projects. Looking forward, the governor said more funding will be needed in 2023 to help communities throughout the state accelerate their economic growth and improve quality of life.

Finally, the governor closed his address by thanking people for their help in welcoming Afghanistan refugees, continuing to get vaccinated and boosted, and for their efforts in battling against COVID-19.

Iowa

Governor Kim Reynolds

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://governor.iowa.gov/press-release/gov-reynolds-delivers-2022-condition-of-the-state>



Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds said the condition of the state is strong due to Iowa being guided by the principles of common sense, fairness, and freedom. She added that the state's strong fiscal position, including a \$1.2 billion surplus and nearly \$1 billion cash reserves, has allowed for greater tax cuts while detailing her plans for tax reform including setting a flat personal income tax rate of 4 percent and eliminating the taxation of retirement income.

The governor focused much of her speech on addressing worker shortages. She said while the state has already taken several steps to address worker shortages such as expanding apprenticeship programs, incorporating work-based learning, and integrating computer science into the curriculum, more needs to be done. The governor called for: continuing implementation of the Governor's Childcare Task Force recommendations; expanding the number of childcare openings through the Childcare Challenge program; reducing the length of unemployment benefits; creating a separate re-employment division within the state;

eliminating unnecessary licensing requirements; putting reasonable caps on non-economic damages for trucking accidents and medical malpractice; and expanding loan forgiveness programs for healthcare professionals.

The governor then turned to education and said the state will soon launch the first teacher registered apprenticeship program in the country. She also called for using federal ESSER funds to award a \$1,000 retention bonus to teachers who worked during the pandemic, encouraging greater transparency on what schools are teaching, and allowing students with an individualized educational plan to receive a portion of annual per pupil state funds to move to an education system of their choice.

Other issues highlighted by the governor included honoring members of the armed forces and public safety workforce, using federal *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds to give law enforcement and corrections workers a \$1,000 retention bonus, continuing to support renewable fuel at the federal level, and upgrading the state's fuel infrastructure to promote higher blends.

Kansas

Governor Laura Kelly

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://governor.kansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/EMBARGOED-2022-SOTS-address.pdf>



Kansas Governor Laura Kelly said that although the state has faced unique challenges in recent years, Kansas is turning the corner and paving the way for a more prosperous future. She noted while people continue to step up during the pandemic, threats related to COVID-19 remain and she asked the legislature to work collaboratively to help nursing homes and hospitals. The governor also spoke about the state's improving fiscal condition, citing its economic growth, balanced budget, largest surplus in forty years, growing rainy day fund, lower debt levels, and ability to give taxpayers a rebate on their taxes. Additionally, the governor said the state can now afford to eliminate the grocery tax and called on the legislature to pass a bill approving the tax cut.

The governor then detailed various items in her budget proposal including: a freeze on college tuition increases; increased support for the agriculture industry; full funding for the State Water Plan for the first time in 15 years; programs aimed at rebuilding the rural economy; and the continued expansion of broadband. The

governor also emphasized the need to make sure money meant for roads and bridges is used for that purpose, and again called for expanding Medicaid.

Regarding elementary and secondary education, the governor stated public schools will be fully funded for the fourth straight year, thanked parents and teachers for their work during the pandemic, and discussed a bipartisan agreement to allocate additional funds for learning loss. Other areas discussed in the address included providing historic levels of funding for law enforcement, a pay increase for state highway patrol, increased funding for evidence-based juvenile delinquency programs, improvements in the foster care system, and additional aid to help provide mental health services closer to home. Finally, the governor asked the legislature to continue to work together and said Kansans want government to focus on the day-to-day needs that most citizens can agree on, and not on ideological issues or cultural wars that cause division.

Kentucky

Governor Andy Beshear

Date of Address January 5

Link https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20220105_State-of-the-Commonwealth-Address.pdf



Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear said in many ways his third State of the Commonwealth address is both the toughest and most exciting. He noted that on one hand the state has a booming economy, while on the other hand it has dealt with a year of unprecedented natural disasters and a continuing pandemic. The governor said the state of the commonwealth is strong, and it is strong because its people are strong.

In his speech, the governor first addressed recent challenges and tragedies affecting Kentucky, including ice storms and historic flooding in January and February, and a deadly tornado outbreak in December. Regarding the tornadoes, he spoke of the courage and compassion Kentuckians have shown for one another, while also acknowledging federal aid and support. The governor said he is working with the legislature on fast-track legislation that would direct \$150 million to help communities rebuild, and another \$50 million to help the region's schools recover.

In discussing COVID-19, the governor said his administration's response will continue to be

based on saving lives and doing what is necessary and right. He also highlighted the state's successes in vaccine distribution, testing, and returning to in-person instruction in every school district, while encouraging residents to get their booster shot.

The governor then turned to recent economic successes including record private sector investments, while pledging that all regions will share in the coming prosperity. Finally, the governor discussed his priorities for the upcoming year stating that the role of government should not be to move the state right or left, but to move it forward. The governor said his upcoming budget will reflect the Kentucky values of family, faith, community, and a deep compassion for their neighbors. Specifically, he noted his recommended budget will make historic investments in education, create a fund for investing in development sites, invest in essential workers, ensure Kentucky remains a leader in agriculture technology, build on its pharmaceutical footprint, continue to invest in infrastructure, and include a raise for all state workers.

Louisiana

Governor John Bel Edwards

Date of Address March 14

Link <https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/3588>



Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards said the state is in a much better place today than two years ago due to the efforts of healthcare workers and the wide-spread availability of effective vaccines, therapeutic treatments, and high-quality masks. The governor also said the state is in a much better fiscal position now than six years ago, noting the state has gone from budget deficits to budget surpluses and has received billions in federal funding through the *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) and the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA). He added that Louisiana currently has a historic opportunity to make long-term transformations through investments in education, infrastructure, pay raises for public workers, and addressing climate change.

The governor then spoke about his budget proposal, highlighting both recurring expenditures and one-time spending from one-time funds. In the area of recurring expenditures, the governor called for additional funding for teacher pay raises, education at all levels, financial aid programs for higher education, faculty pay raises, support for direct service workers, and pay increases for first responders including law enforcement officers and firefighters. Concerning one-time spending from one-time funds, he recommended investing in infrastructure projects

throughout the state including roads, bridges, ports, railways, water and sewage systems, orphan wells, and broadband. Additionally, the governor called for using ARPA funds to help replenish Louisiana's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

The governor closed his speech by talking about efforts to transform the future for the people of Louisiana. He spoke of the need to ensure that citizens are fairly represented and called for passing legislation to establish an independent redistricting commission. The governor also discussed his support for law enforcement while at the same time calling for the passage of bills to help hold law enforcement officers responsible if they have committed an offense. Additionally, the governor discussed the impact of natural disasters and climate change. He said he is supporting legislation that strengthens tenant protection in the aftermath of a disaster and called for passing legislation that holds insurance companies more accountable following a natural disaster. The governor discussed steps to mitigate the impact of climate change including a goal of net zero by 2050, working in conjunction with oil and gas companies to help promote clean energy, and supporting wind energy development. Finally, the governor called for raising the minimum wage and passing legislation to enact pay transparency to help reduce the gender pay gap.

Maine

Governor Janet Mills

Date of Address February 10

Link <https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/governor-mills-maine-strong-and-growing-stronger-2022-02-10>



Maine Governor Janet Mills said the state of the state is strong and growing stronger, and that Maine has recommitted to progress, recovery, and moving forward towards normalcy. The governor noted the state has been through difficult and dangerous times the past two years due to the impact of the pandemic. However, she added the state has seen successes in vaccination efforts and saving lives and will remain committed to keeping children safe in schools; working in partnership with the health care systems; ensuring critical care for those who need it; and keeping businesses open and thriving and the economy moving forward. Despite current challenges, the state's recovery can be seen through Gross Domestic Product surpassing pre-pandemic projections; a falling unemployment rate; growth in sales; increases in international exports; and strong gains in the tourism industry. The governor added that the state has seen improvements in its fiscal condition including increased rainy day funds, a record budget surplus, and returning money to taxpayers. To help people deal with rising costs, the governor recommended returning half of the budget surplus to taxpayers in the form of \$500 rebates.

The governor said the largest impediment to sustained growth is Maine's workforce shortage. To help address the shortage, the governor said the state has adopted a comprehensive approach to childcare, housing, broadband, and healthcare through the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan. In addition to prior childcare efforts, the governor recommended investing federal funds to help renovate or build new childcare facilities and expand early education programs, as well as including funds in her supplemental budget proposal to increase pay for childcare workers. To address housing, the governor spoke about efforts to increase the number of energy-efficient,

affordable homes. Concerning broadband, the governor said everyone in the state will have access to high-speed internet by 2024 through efforts of state and federal funds.

The governor said that in addition to reliable childcare, affordable housing, and high-speed internet, more must be done to get people ready for work and careers.. She discussed current education efforts in expanding Pre-K and increasing teacher salaries, and called for establishing an Education Stabilization Fund, fully funding universal free meals in schools, and creating a new initiative to help children get outdoors during the summer. Regarding higher education, the governor called for expanding the Maine Career Exploration program; using funding to prevent tuition hikes; covering the last dollar of tuition for a one-year certificate or two-year associate degree; and overhauling the Opportunity Maine Tax Credit to provide debt relief.

Other areas of focus included healthcare and seniors. The governor spoke about efforts to bolster the healthcare workforce and called for sending additional state and federal funds to help sustain hospitals and nursing homes. She also called for the creation of a Silver Cabinet, mirroring the state's Children's Cabinet, to address long-term care issues and ensure that every person in Maine may age safely and affordably in a way that best serves their needs. Finally, the governor said the state will continue to make progress on the opioid epidemic; improving the child welfare system; combatting climate change; bringing down the cost of electricity and curbing reliance on fossil fuels to cut energy costs; and addressing the devastating impacts of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on people's health and livelihoods.

Maryland

Governor Larry Hogan

Date of Address February 2

Link <https://governor.maryland.gov/2022/02/02/2022-state-of-the-state/>



Maryland Governor Larry Hogan said the state of the state is strong due to the caliber and character of its people. During his address he highlighted accomplishments over the past seven years, while also asking the legislature to finish the work they started together.

The governor noted that the state of the state is stronger and better than it was seven years ago due to a series of bipartisan efforts. Specifically, he mentioned successes such as easing the tax burden; record investments in education; protecting health care coverage; historic funding for Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts and land preservation; and record investments in roads, bridges, and transit systems. He added that the state's fiscal health and economy are stronger than they have been in decades, noting a long-term structurally balanced budget, the largest surplus in state history, a growing rainy day fund, declining unemployment rate, and improved business conditions.

The governor stated that Maryland has been able to achieve these accomplishments despite unforeseen challenges related to COVID-19. He

highlighted efforts by government, public health, public safety, and other individuals in addressing the pandemic. While stating that Maryland's long-term public health response will continue, the governor said it is time to learn to live with the virus, not to live in fear of it.

Turning to remaining tasks, the governor called for further tax reform efforts. Specific proposals include passing the Retirement Tax Elimination Act; more tax cuts for working families; eliminating fees and red tape for small businesses; and incentives for new businesses growth. The governor then addressed public safety while calling for continued support of law enforcement through efforts such as the Re-Fund the Police Initiative, and enacting legislation to address violent crime including passage of the Violent Firearms Offender Act. Finally, the governor spoke about the need to eliminate gerrymandering, and to come together on the remaining hard work left to be done.

Massachusetts

Governor Charlie Baker

Date of Address January 25

Link <https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-baker-delivers-2022-state-of-the-commonwealth-address>



Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker began his speech by highlighting accomplishments over the past seven years and improved budget conditions. He noted that by working together Massachusetts has increased broadband service; improved healthcare conditions; made progress in the fight against opioid addiction; expanded offshore wind; increased school funding; enacted criminal justice reform; and modernized public transit systems. In addition, the state cut taxes for working families, balanced the budget, and increased the size of the rainy day fund. Although the state has faced challenges due to COVID-19, the governor said the state created the largest small business grant program in the country, established an eviction diversion program, created food insecurity programs, started a COVID testing program in schools, and has seen over 80 percent of the eligible population become fully vaccinated. As a result of recent efforts, the governor said the state of the commonwealth remains strong.

The governor then spoke about opportunities to expand on the collaborative work over the past seven years. He called for closing two loopholes related to public safety including a loophole that allows those charged with violent crimes to walk free before trial, and a loophole that leaves many residents with little recourse when an ex-partner attempts to violate them. Regarding

mental health, the governor called for passing a health care reform bill that would improve access to mental health services. The governor also discussed a climate proposal which includes the creation of a Clean Energy Innovation Fund.

Other areas of focus included the use of federal funds and tax reform. The governor said the state is working to put *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds to use in areas such as housing, health care, skills training, cultural investments, small business support, water and sewer improvements, and port development. In addition, he said his administration will soon file a transportation bond bill to ensure Massachusetts gets the full benefit of the federal bipartisan infrastructure law. The governor then spoke about tax fairness and proposed doubling the tax break for children and dependents; eliminating income taxes for the lowest paid taxpayers; providing renters a bigger tax break on their monthly payments; providing property tax relief for seniors; and making the estate tax more competitive with the rest of the country. The governor closed his speech by thanking individuals for their service over the course of the pandemic, and called for trust and collaboration in order to achieve further progress over the next twelve months.

Michigan

Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Date of Address January 26

Link <https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90487-576354--,00.html>



Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer said the state of the state is strong and getting stronger every day. She noted Michigan currently has a once-in-a-generation opportunity on their hands and asked the legislature to remain focused on the items that unite everyone such as wanting a good-paying job, great schools, clean water, safe communities, thriving small businesses, a chance to get ahead, and hope for the future.

Before turning to new proposals, the governor spoke about recent events and accomplishments. The governor remembered lives lost in a recent school shooting, as well as those lost to COVID-19. She said the state has made progress against COVID-19 thanks to science and vaccines. The governor also spoke about successes from the past year including building and repairing roads and bridges, small business relief, expanding access to high-quality childcare, additional investments in public safety, criminal justice reform, building a new veteran's home, helping individuals get new skills and better-

paying jobs, and new business investments.

Concerning education, the governor said last year the state made its largest education investment ever, will increase funding further in fiscal 2023, and will continue to invest in teacher recruitment and retention.

The governor then discussed proposals focused on cutting taxes and lowering costs. In order to cut taxes for seniors and working families, the governor recommended repealing the retirement tax and increasing the Michigan Earned Income Tax Credit. To help lower costs, the governor called for approving legislation to cap the cost of insulin at \$50 a month, and a \$2,500 rebate for electric vehicles including \$2,000 for the car and \$500 for in-home charging equipment. Finally, the governor spoke about mental health and called for expanding Michigan's Loan Repayment Program for mental health professionals and helping schools hire more nurses, counselors, and social workers.

Mississippi

Governor Tate Reeves

Date of Address January 25

Link [https://us11.campaign-archive.com/?e=\[UNIQUEID\]&u=08cb3e52aa1308600f84d49ea&id=bea2fc2552](https://us11.campaign-archive.com/?e=[UNIQUEID]&u=08cb3e52aa1308600f84d49ea&id=bea2fc2552)



Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves said that although the state has weathered great storms over the last two years, it stood tall due to people working together. He noted the state of the state is not only strong, but stronger than it has ever been. The governor asked the legislature to not let this moment of great resources pass without achieving something big and called for making investments to help individuals and unleash Mississippi's economy.

The governor began by discussing education, including highlighting recent reforms and improvements in national rankings, the efforts of parents, and the hard work of teachers. The governor said his number one priority is to provide a significant pay raise to teachers. He also talked about other education related issues including the need for investing in math coaches to help improve results, the importance of keeping students in school during the pandemic, and reforming history standards in schools.

Turning to economic and fiscal conditions, the governor said the state is in the best fiscal and financial shape in its history. The governor stated that one of his top priorities is to continue

investing in workforce and skills training, while highlighting recent workforce development legislation. He added that his budget proposal calls for allocating *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds towards workforce development. The governor also called on directing federal funds towards transformative infrastructure projects which will have a long-term impact. In addition, the governor recommended eliminating the state's income tax to help the state grow in the future.

Other areas of focus in the governor's address included protecting life and public safety. The governor highlighted the state's recent abortion case in front of the U.S. Supreme Court and said that moving forward, more will be done to further protect mothers and make it easier to adopt a child. Concerning public safety, the governor called for increased workforce training for inmates; additional funding for re-entry programs; expanding the Capitol Police; targeted prosecution and conviction of violent felons; hazard pay for local law enforcement; and appropriating additional money towards the Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters Death Benefits Trust Fund.

Missouri

Governor Michael Parson

Date of Address January 19

Link [https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MOGOV/2022/01/19/file_attachments/2051948/2022 SOTS Address - Governor Mike Parson.pdf](https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MOGOV/2022/01/19/file_attachments/2051948/2022%20SOTS%20Address%20Governor%20Mike%20Parson.pdf)



Missouri Governor Michael L. Parson said the state is strong today and will be even stronger tomorrow. The governor noted challenges the state has faced due to COVID-19, while stating it has made progress using common sense and a balanced approach to the pandemic. Additionally, the governor said the economy has nearly fully recovered while highlighting the state's low unemployment rate, job creation, increased business investments, and a historic budget surplus. The governor said due to the state's economic performance, the personal income tax rate will be lowered to 5.3 percent; he also called for setting aside an additional 2.5 percent of general revenue to help prepare for future downturns.

In his address, the governor focused on increased investments in several areas to help create greater opportunities in the future including workforce and education, infrastructure, agriculture, community investments, healthcare, and public safety. Concerning workforce and education, the governor called for continued support of the state's Fast Track program, a cost-of-living adjustment for all state employees, fully funding the K-12 foundation formula, raising teacher pay, increased funding for colleges and universities through MO Excels projects, and expanded career and technical education programs.

The governor said for the state to be successful it must invest in both workforce development and infrastructure. To that end, the governor recommended making additional dollars available for localities to improve drinking water and wastewater treatment, added funds to enhance storm water systems, continued support of the state's program to repair or

replace bridges, additional road repairs, further increasing broadband, and upgrading cell towers to expand wireless networks. The governor also said infrastructure improvements are important for the state's number one industry, agriculture. For Missouri agriculture to remain strong, the governor proposed extending agricultural tax credits and increased funding to expand agriculture innovation and workforce programs.

Another area of focus was on creating more opportunities for communities. The governor recommended setting aside funds for a statewide revitalization grant program to spur local economic development, as well as starting construction on the Rock Island trail to help expand tourism.

The governor said one of the lessons of the pandemic is the need to strengthen health care networks across the state. He recommended added investments to increase access to telehealth and telemedicine services, create a new multi-agency state health laboratory, and double the capacity of Missouri autism centers.

Finally, the governor discussed public safety including addressing violent crime. The governor said the state should ensure consistent requirements and appropriate penalties to hold violent criminals accountable, continue to support second amendment rights, provide more scholarships for law enforcement officers, and provide upgrades to the law enforcement training academy at Lincoln University. In addition, the governor called for increased funding at health centers to ensure those with behavioral health and substance use disorders receive needed treatment.

Nebraska

Governor Pete Ricketts

Date of Address January 13

Link <https://governor.nebraska.gov/press/gov-ricketts-state-state-address-2>



Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts said the state of the state is strong despite unprecedented challenges such as weathering floods, fires, and a global pandemic. He added while COVID-19 has changed the way citizens do business, educate, learn, and go about their daily lives, the state continues to move forward. The governor highlighted recent successes including: the lowest unemployment rate in the history of the nation; a growing manufacturing sector; a historic level of tax relief; limiting state spending to only 2.4 percent growth; increasing enrollment in law enforcement training and apprenticeship programs; combatting human trafficking; and the hard work of healthcare professionals during the pandemic.

The governor said he is focused on four priorities this legislative session: putting money back into the pockets of hardworking Nebraskans; protecting public safety; securing access to natural resources; and investing in one-time projects that will enhance the state. The governor began by discussing tax relief and said that due to recent growth in the state's Cash Reserve Fund, more money should be returned to taxpayers. Specific proposals included accelerating the phase-in of Social Security tax exemptions, building upon previous property tax relief efforts, and reducing the

top individual tax rate by one percent.

Concerning public safety, the governor asked for a continuation of pay increases for public safety workers, increased funding for the state crime lab, expanding the Law Enforcement Training Center, and fully funding the replacement of the Nebraska State Penitentiary. He also called for pursuing policies that aim to reduce crime and recidivism.

The governor then spoke about ways to secure water resources for generations to come. His recommendations included: constructing a canal and reservoir system from the South Platte River; increased funding for water projects which will help to grow tourism and recreation; restoring and protecting drinking water systems in rural areas; and added funding for other water infrastructure projects.

Finally, the governor discussed his recommendations for spending \$1.04 billion from the *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA). The governor said ARPA funds are one-time funds and must be spent as such. The governor's recommended uses of ARPA funds included \$200 million for public health emergency response, \$500 million to assist those experiencing negative economic impacts from COVID-19, and \$284 million for water and sewer projects.

Nevada

Governor Steve Sisolak

Date of Address February 23

Link https://gov.nv.gov/News/Press/2022/2022-02-23_StatePlan/



Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak said the state of the state is resilient and getting stronger every day, adding that Nevada is on the move. He said the state has faced many challenges during the pandemic, but due to the work of healthcare professionals, teachers and support staff, the National Guard, small business owners, and families that were able to adapt, the state's progress never stopped. The governor noted the state's economy is currently one of the fastest growing in the country, tourism is up, unemployment is down, wages are growing, gaming revenues are at an all-time high, and all classrooms are in-person.

The governor then spoke about work that can be done to help make individuals' lives better. To help families deal with inflation, the governor said he would continue to hold the line on taxes, called for greater investments in childcare and early education, and announced the creation of the Home Means Nevada initiative to help lower the cost of housing. In order to deal with rising healthcare costs, the governor stated Nevada will join the Northwest Prescription Drug Consortium along with Oregon and Washington to allow for joint negotiations with drug companies, and created a Healthcare Workforce Committee to build on lessons learned over the past two years. Regarding education, the governor spoke about recent efforts to improve performance, invest

in teacher recruitment, and help students get caught up after the pandemic. He also said the state would invest federal dollars so schools can provide a free lunch for all students next school year. Concerning public safety, the governor spoke about the need to ensure that communities are safe and police have the support they need, while calling for a salary increase for state police.

The governor closed his speech by discussing ways to build a stronger and more diverse economic foundation for Nevada, and to help create an economy that works for everyone. The governor said a resilient, clean energy economy is part of a diversified economy, and that the state will continue to fight against climate change and create good jobs in the process. To help small businesses, the governor announced the creation of a bipartisan task force to further reduce occupational licensing barriers as well as the creation of the Nevada Small Business Accelerator Program to help startups get off the ground and expand. Additionally, the governor noted the state will invest funds from the bipartisan infrastructure bill to upgrade roads, bridges, water systems, and broadband infrastructure. Finally, to help ensure no Nevadan gets left behind, the governor directed the Workforce Development Committee to explore ways to make community college or other apprentice and training programs free for more Nevadans by 2025.

New Hampshire

Governor Chris Sununu

Date of Address February 23

Link <https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-and-media/2022-state-state-remarks>



New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu said the state of New Hampshire is strong and resilient, adding they are putting systems and policies in place to help capitalize on the state's potential. He highlighted strong national rankings which he said were achieved through smart management, prioritizing individuals over government, and delivering results while properly managing citizens' tax dollars. The governor also spoke about recent tax cutting efforts, increasing the size of the rainy day fund, and providing additional financial flexibility for localities.

Turning to COVID-19, the governor discussed successes in addressing the pandemic including a fast initial vaccine roll-out, delivering free rapid tests to households across the state, keeping schools open, cutting red tape, and strategically deploying federal dollars. The governor thanked healthcare workers and the National Guard for their efforts in battling COVID-19.

The governor said the state had a great year last year including passing paid family medical leave, expanding educational opportunities, and prioritizing cutting taxes and attracting businesses. However, he added, there remains work to be done. One area of focus was mental health services, with the governor discussing efforts to increase capacity in community-based

services, stating his support for legislation to include the phone number for the suicide prevention lifeline on every student ID card, and announcing a public-private partnership to increase the number of crisis beds for those most in need.

The governor said that one of the state's biggest challenges is the availability of housing for working families. He called for the legislature to pass a bill to create regulatory incentives for workforce housing across the state; asked the federal government for flexibility with housing relief funds; and proposed the creation of the InvestNH Housing Incentive Fund using *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funding. The governor said that while housing is critical to the success of communities, so is the safety of neighborhoods. He discussed the need to pass legislation that ensures violent criminals do not automatically walk free on bail and put forward a proposal to create a settlement fund to compensate prior abuse victims at a state youth detention facility.

Other areas of focus in the governor's speech included continued efforts to battle opioid addiction; the expansion of broadband; addressing PFAS contamination in water systems; supporting offshore wind energy; and creating an all-encompassing veterans' campus.

New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562022/approved/20220111e.shtml>



New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy said the state of the state is resilient and ready to keep moving forward. The governor stated that in order to move forward there must continue to be a coordinated response against COVID-19 guided by facts and science. He also remembered lives lost during the pandemic and acknowledged the hard work of front-line workers.

The governor said that by working together much has been accomplished over the past four years, even with the pandemic's impact the past two years. He noted the state has been able to increase access to affordable healthcare, have greater tax fairness, slow the rate of property tax growth, experience population growth, and have a growing economy. Specifically, the governor said the state has moved from 47th to fourth in the nation for economic growth. He also said New Jersey is ranked as the best state to live for its safe communities, education

system, healthcare, and quality of life.

The governor stated that while much has been accomplished, there remains unfinished business, such as the need for comprehensive gun safety reforms. He discussed plans for making health care more accessible and affordable, including an effort to address prescription drug affordability. The governor also highlighted a new public-private partnership aimed at supporting the next generation of technology startup businesses.

Looking forward, the governor said the state will continue to focus on making New Jersey more affordable for everyone, tax fairness without any tax increases, and lowering property taxes. He called on everyone to work together in good faith and with a common purpose. The governor added that the task ahead is to take the next giant leap forward, and to turn positive changes into long-lasting and tangible progress for working class families and seniors.

New Mexico

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham

Date of Address January 18

Link <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2022/01/18/governor-lujan-grisham-delivers-fourth-state-of-the-state-address/>



New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham said the needs of this moment remain great, while acknowledging the grief, loss, and volatility brought on by the pandemic. However, the governor said the state of the state is ready to move forward and rise. She added that New Mexico currently has the financial resources available to fulfill its destiny as a genuine homestead of the American Dream, where people can grow and thrive in peace and prosperity, and where people have the resources they need to support themselves and their families. The governor asked that the legislature come together over the next thirty days to help set the stage for the state's future, where everything is possible.

In her address, the governor highlighted successes over the past three years, including raising the minimum wage, guaranteed paid sick leave, greater investments in early education, and allowing thousands of residents to attend college for free. Additionally, she discussed recent economic progress including strong job growth, an increased number of businesses relocating to the state,

and cutting red tape for businesses.

The governor also detailed a series of proposals in her speech. She called for significant pay raises for all teachers this year and raising the starting salary for every tier of educator. Concerning public safety, the governor said that while she supports rehabilitation, the state needs to get crime under control and should increase penalties for the worst offenders. She also called for pay raises for state police officers and increased funding for public safety to help fund new crime fighting strategies and allow for additional hiring. In the area of healthcare, the governor proposed a new Rural Health Care Delivery Fund, increased funding for behavioral health services, expanded access to treatment for substance abuse and suicide prevention, efforts to increase the number of nurses, and the creation of a "New Mexi-Care" program to help support caregivers. Other areas of emphasis included building a new veterans home, increased funding for affordable housing, and expanding voter protections. Finally, the governor called for tax reform including cutting the sales tax and eliminating the tax on Social Security benefits.

New York

Governor Kathy Hochul

Date of Address January 5

Link <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/remarks-prepared-governor-hochul-delivers-2022-state-state>



New York Governor Kathy Hochul's speech focused on her plan for a new era for New York that is better, fairer, and more inclusive and will lead to a brighter future. She began by acknowledging successes since taking office, including signing more than 400 bills into law since September, and said every single future initiative will be filtered through the lens of how it helps New Yorkers.

The governor then outlined nine key components of her agenda including: rebuilding the healthcare economy; protecting public safety and taking strong action against gun violence; investing in New York's people; investing in New York's communities; making New York's housing system more affordable, equitable and stable; making New York a national leader in climate action and green jobs; rebuilding New York's teacher workforce and reimagining higher education; advancing New York's place as a national equity model; and making critical reforms to restore New Yorkers' faith in their government.

Some of the governor's specific proposals included: investing \$10 billion in the healthcare

sector; a three-part plan to reduce gun violence and violent crimes; tax relief for small businesses and middle-class New Yorkers; overhauling workforce development programs; a new re-entry initiative; an expansion of transit service; aid to small businesses; and a \$1 billion broadband initiative.

Other proposals included: an initiative to end homelessness; a 5-year housing plan to create and preserve 100,000 affordable homes; achieving 2 million climate-friendly homes by 2030; a \$500 million investment in offshore wind; an emphasis on recruiting and retaining teachers; increased access to childcare and better pay for childcare workers; revitalizing the state's higher education system and making it a global leader on research and innovation; creating a new equity agenda; limiting statewide office holders to two terms and banning outside income; and creating a new, independent ethics agency.

North Dakota

Governor Doug Burgum

Date of Address February 16

Link <https://www.governor.nd.gov/news/burgum-outlines-efforts-address-workforce-grow-economy-2022-state-state-address>



North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum said the state of the state is strong and growing stronger due to the unlimited potential of North Dakota and its people. The governor said in 2021 the state was ranked in the top five for the best state to live, the best state for families, and the best state for business friendliness. He added the state has registered 30,000 new businesses in the past two years and the successes are due to ongoing efforts to build a stable tax and regulatory environment, as well as a business-friendly North Dakota. In addition, the governor highlighted the state's strong fiscal position noting reserve funds are in better shape than they have ever been, and the state's Legacy Fund is forecasted to have tripled in value over the past eight years.

During his address, the governor focused on both challenges facing the state, and recent successes. He stated last year North Dakota continued to be impacted by the pandemic, experienced the worst drought conditions in state history, fought intense wildfires, and faced state-sponsored cyberattacks. The governor thanked healthcare workers, first responders, teachers, and state employees for their efforts in addressing the various challenges. The governor also highlighted recent efforts to partner with the state's tribal partners.

The governor said despite economic successes and improvements in physical infrastructure, the time has come to direct resources to infrastructure that supports strong families and

strong communities. The governor spoke of workforce challenges facing the state and said people need support to increase flexibility and workforce mobility, citizens deserve high-quality education for all ages, families need affordable and reliable childcare, and communities need behavioral health resources for all generations. Specific proposals included increased investments in career academies across the state; partnering with Western Governors University to allow for streamlined access to online college courses; expanding the state's automation tax credit to provide additional support to businesses; and expanded eligibility for childcare assistance as well as other efforts to address childcare needs.

The governor also focused on agriculture and natural resources in his address. He highlighted the current productivity of farmers and ranchers in the state while also discussing new efforts in autonomous agriculture technology. The governor said the state continues to have a goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, noting it will be done through innovation not regulation, including increased efforts in carbon capture.

A final area of focus was on tax relief. The governor spoke about recent efforts to provide tax relief including a two-year income tax credit, while calling for holding the line on property taxes and bringing forward additional tax reform proposals in next year's legislative session.

Ohio

Governor Mike DeWine

Date of Address March 23

Link <https://governor.ohio.gov/media/news-and-media/2022-SOTS-Remarks>



Ohio Governor Mike DeWine said the state of the state is strong. He noted that what unites the state is stronger than what divides it, citing deep love for Ohio and the belief that every Ohioan deserves the chance to succeed. The governor added the state currently has opportunities that come along once in a lifetime and must seize them.

The governor's speech focused on significant investments that have already been made, and work that remains to be done. He spoke about recent investments in services for mothers and newborn children, childcare, the child welfare system, helping seniors stay in their homes, increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, behavioral health services, and telehealth. The governor also discussed steps Ohio has taken to preserve its water and make it more accessible through its H2Ohio program, replace lead pipes, clean up hazardous properties, close the digital divide, expand workforce development programs, increase support for law enforcement, and address the COVID-19 pandemic. The governor said the investments have led to an economy that is surging, a budget on firm footing, the state's highest bond rating since 1979, near historic lows in unemployment,

and a flourishing manufacturing industry, specifically highlighting tech manufacturing including a recently announced investment by the Intel Corporation.

The governor then talked about work that remains to be done, beginning with mental health. He said that while the state has expanded its efforts in addressing mental health issues, more needs to be done and called for growing the behavioral health workforce and developing specific proposals to create opportunities for people with mental illness or addiction to build needed skills. Other areas of emphasis included reinvesting in state parks; creating an investment program to revitalize and rebuild economies in the Appalachian region; helping children that need mentors through establishing a combined scholarship and mentorship program; and passing legislation to help decrease distracted driving. Finally, the governor spoke about public safety and called for creating a permanent funding source for ongoing training for law enforcement; passing legislation to help standardize oversight of law enforcement professionals and increase transparency within the system; and strengthening laws to go after violent offenders.

Oklahoma

Governor Kevin Stitt

Date of Address February 7

Link <https://oklahoma.gov/governor/newsroom/newsroom/2022/february2022/governor-stitt-delivers-2022-state-of-the-state-address.html>



Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt said the state is experiencing a turnaround, highlighting record investments in education, a growing economy, lower taxes, a higher credit rating, increasing budget reserves, aligning state agencies with a common vision, and a renewed sense of pride amongst Oklahomans. The governor added the state is well on its way of becoming a Top Ten state, but the state of the state is at a crossroads. He specifically noted challenges ensuring equal protection under the law on Indian reservations following the U.S. Supreme Court's McGirt decision. The governor said his legislative agenda will be focused on four main pillars: driving hope for all Oklahomans; protecting Oklahomans and the state's way of life; making Oklahoma the most business friendly state in the country; and delivering taxpayers more for their money.

The governor began by discussing driving hope for all Oklahomans and said that over the next two years every state employee will be trained on how to apply the science of hope to their agencies. The governor said the state can also drive hope for all Oklahomans through education. He said that while initial investments were a good first step for Oklahoma's education turnaround, there remains much more to be done and called for expanded school choice for parents, modernizing the school transportation formula, matching funds to increase salaries for the best teachers, and having unions be opt-in instead of opt-out.

The governor next spoke about protecting Oklahomans and the state's way of life through better regulation of the medical marijuana industry and cracking down on the black market. The governor said the state's medical marijuana petition was misleading and has led to a much more rapid expansion of commercial

licenses than other states. He called for reforms to the medical marijuana system and ensuring law enforcement is able to address the black market. The governor also discussed the state's support for law enforcement and said now is the time to transform and modernize the state's law enforcement system. He specifically called for tackling four critical areas: the recruitment, retention, health, and training of troopers, agents, and investigators.

Turning to making Oklahoma the most business friendly state in the nation, the governor called for continued efforts to help businesses find the workers they need and align the entire education system to meet future workforce challenges. Among other reforms, the governor proposed increasing apprenticeships in high schools and rewarding universities for producing graduates in critical areas. The governor also spoke about efforts to modernize the tax code and help working families including through eliminating the grocery tax, responsibly lowering income taxes according to state revenue, and getting rid of the income tax on military retirement benefits.

Finally, the governor discussed delivering taxpayers more for their money. He said this requires strategic investments in modernizing government agencies, transparency, building the state's savings account, and infrastructure. Recommendations by the governor include reforming the state's drivers' licenses and vehicle registration system; launching a new budgeting process called Transparent Oklahoma Performance; raising the cap on the state's savings account to continue protecting the future; and a \$13 billion investment in transportation over the next ten years to help make travel easier and lead to more economic development across the state.

Oregon

Governor Kate Brown

Date of Address February 3

Link <https://www.oregon.gov/newsroom/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?newsid=64835>



Oregon Governor Kate Brown said that over the past seven years the state has faced some of its most challenging times including a global pandemic, historic weather patterns brought on by climate change, and growing divisions across the country. Despite these challenges, she said the state has been able to come together and collaborate to produce a growing economy; greater equity; increased graduation rates; additional education investments; less children in foster care; strengthened tribal relations; the state's largest transportation package; greater health care coverage; comprehensive reproductive health legislation; and passage of an automatic voter registration bill. Additionally, she said the "Oregon Way" of coming together and finding common ground has helped the state during the pandemic to address critical issues such as helping businesses, providing rent relief, and balancing the state budget.

The governor then discussed work left to be done. She said that to make transformational change, the economic recovery needs to reach

minority populations, people with low incomes, and those living in rural areas. The governor said she is dedicated to building a stronger workforce including through her Future Ready Oregon program which invests in job training in health care, tech and manufacturing, and construction. Additionally, in order to help working families and remove barriers to work, she called for increased childcare access, additional investments in affordable housing and reducing homelessness, and expanded access to behavioral health services and substance use disorder prevention.

A final area of focus in the governor's address was climate change, stating that it threatens Oregon's very way of life. She said that while she is proud of previous efforts to address climate change which have been done through an equity lens, the state must continue to act decisively to lower carbon emissions, transition to clean energy sources, and ensure a just transition for historically underserved communities.

Pennsylvania

Governor Tom Wolf

Date of Address February 8

Link <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/governor-tom-wolf-2022-budget-address-as-prepared/>



Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf began his budget address by highlighting how far the state has come over the past seven years including additional investments in education, creating a bipartisan public school Fair Funding Formula, lowering the uninsured rate, cutting the prison population while cutting the crime rate, reducing the carbon footprint, and reforming the pension system. He also discussed improvements in the state's fiscal condition including turning a budget deficit into a surplus, increasing the size of the rainy day fund, not raising taxes, and ensuring the state's bills are paid. The governor called on taking advantage of current opportunities to address challenges residents face such as supporting a family, paying for college education, and keeping up with rising costs.

During his address, the governor discussed opportunities before the state due to improved economic and fiscal conditions. He called for fulfilling the commitment of the Fair Funding Formula to make a historic investment in schools. The governor also recommended

increasing the state's minimum wage to help individuals contribute to the economic life of their communities and reduce reliance on public benefits. In addition, the governor said the state's budget surplus is not an excuse for a spending spree but is a chance to make more investments that can open the doors to opportunity for more Pennsylvanian families. He specifically recommended increased investments in job training and small business assistance to help people find a career they are passionate about; clean energy and infrastructure to lay the foundation for another generation of economic success; and health care to fight the opioid epidemic and improve mental health. The governor noted that the state will be able to make these additional investments without needing to raise taxes.

Finally, the governor discussed the state's political system. He said the future belongs to the coalition-builders and the consensus-seekers and called on working together to do truly important things for the people of Pennsylvania.

Rhode Island

Governor Dan McKee

Date of Address January 18

Link <https://governor.ri.gov/press-releases/governor-daniel-j-mckees-state-state-address>



Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee said the state has a once-in-a-lifetime chance to strengthen its economic recovery and propel the state into the next decade with strength. He added that there is an opportunity to chart a more prosperous way forward for all Rhode Islanders if everyone works together.

Before turning to his vision for the state, the governor discussed the impact of COVID-19. He noted that while the pandemic has challenged the state's resolve, patience, and strength, progress has been made in addressing COVID-19 through measures such as increased vaccinations and testing. The governor said the state has made economic progress including job growth and increases in key sectors of the economy such as construction and manufacturing.

The governor then discussed his plan to build a stronger tomorrow, including increasing per capita income for individuals and families across the state. He highlighted a recent process called Rhode Island 2030, which involved speaking to various stakeholders across the state which resulted in a listing of dozens of priorities for Rhode Island over the next decade. The governor also discussed the positive impact from federal COVID-19 relief aid and said the state will continue to invest the funds wisely. The governor specifically noted his administration would soon release a plan announcing over 100 infrastructure projects that have been accelerated due to federal infrastructure funds.

In his address, the governor highlighted a series of proposals to both sustain recent economic

momentum and invest for the long-term. The governor said his upcoming budget proposal would be fiscally responsible and contain no broad-based tax increases. He stated that Rhode Island must address the availability and quality of housing, while calling for increased funds for affordable housing and providing down payment assistance to households that need it most. To help families, the governor called for expanding the income eligibility threshold for families to access the Child Care Assistance Program and proposed covering all children in Medicaid. Concerning education, the governor recommended fully funding the state's K-12 school system, increasing funding for school facilities, and launching a Higher Ed Academy to help Rhode Islanders gain needed skills to obtain a credential or degree.

Other areas of emphasis included small business assistance and the environment. The governor called for more funding for small business grants; student loan debt relief; the continuation of the Real Jobs Rhode Island program aimed at helping individuals get back to work; the creation of a Minority Business Support Initiative; and a series of governmental reforms to help small businesses. Finally, the governor said his budget would include funding for climate change related investments and announced a series of proposals to help the state's blue economy including developing ocean technology, supporting offshore wind, and investing in aquaculture.

South Carolina

Governor Henry McMaster

Date of Address January 19

Link <https://governor.sc.gov/news/2022-01/governor-henry-mcmasters-2022-state-state-address>



South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster said the state currently stands in a moment brimming with opportunity and promise. He called for seizing the moment by thinking big, being bold and confident, and by making transformative investments in the areas of education, infrastructure, workforce, and economic development. The governor added that there is an opportunity to set the state on a course that will provide it with prosperity, success, and happiness for generations of South Carolinians.

The governor began his address by recognizing those in uniform who were lost in the line of duty. He then discussed both challenges and opportunities facing the state. The governor said the economy is booming, citing increases in gross domestic product and job growth, lower unemployment, and new capital investments. In addition, he said state government is in its strongest fiscal condition ever including its largest budget surplus, largest rainy day fund, and lowest debt. The governor said the state has been able to address COVID-19 without crippling the economy through its measured approach and through the work of the AccelerateSC task force. However, the governor said the state faces challenges from federal policy decisions around immigration, abortion, Medicaid work requirements, and vaccine mandates.

The governor then talked about ways to help the state grow and become more competitive. He called for increasing the size of the rainy day fund, cutting personal income taxes by a 1 percent rate over five years, reexamining civil litigation laws, using a combination of state and *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds to improve roads and bridges throughout the state, and appropriating federal funds for broadband

expansion. In the area of elementary and secondary education, the governor recommended ensuring there is a law enforcement school resource officer in every school; expanding mental health services for children; reforming the state's K-12 funding system; raising teacher pay; providing additional support for charter schools; and creating education savings accounts.

Another area of focus was on workforce challenges and secondary education. The governor discussed the labor shortages currently facing the country and called for support of the SC Future Makers program designed to connect students with career opportunities; expanding the Workforce Scholarships for the Future program; freezing college tuition to make higher education more accessible; enhancing scholarships for college tuition programs; and providing a grant for the cost of tuition for any resident who qualifies for a Pell Grant. Concerning natural resources, the governor recommended using federal funds to transform water, sewer, and stormwater systems, appropriating federal funds for resiliency efforts, and making infrastructure improvements to the Port of Charleston. Other proposals by the governor included: added funding for law enforcement recruitment and retention pay raises; grants to law enforcement for body cameras and bulletproof vests; eliminating the state income tax on retirement pay for veterans and law enforcement officers; merit-based pay raises for state employees; transitioning from a defined benefit to a defined contribution retirement plan; creating a new Election Integrity and Compliance Audit Program; and expanding the authority of the State Ethics Commission and the Office of the Inspector General.

South Dakota

Governor Kristi Noem

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://news.sd.gov/newsitem.aspx?id=28835>



South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem said the state of the state is stronger than it has ever been in its 133-year history. She stated it is stronger because of its people, and not because of what government did, but what government did not do. The governor noted the state is leading with a talented workforce, strong schools, growing businesses, freedom, limited government, fiscal responsibility, and a commitment to defending the values that have made America great. Additionally, the governor said the state has prospered because it made the decision not to compromise its values when addressing COVID-19. In her address, the governor outlined how the state can continue to grow stronger by focusing on the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The governor said government's most fundamental role is to defend the lives and safety of its people. She discussed steps to expand access to adoption and foster care and protect unborn lives. The governor also talked about the importance of expanding healthcare access and called for expanded telehealth, increasing efforts to recruit more volunteer firefighters and emergency responders, providing free at-home COVID tests, launching a statewide behavioral health campaign, creating regional behavioral crisis centers, and continuing to fight methamphetamine use.

The governor then turned to liberty and called for continuing to support small businesses

and economic freedom, cutting regulations, eliminating barriers to employment, and allowing a moment of silence at the beginning of each school day. The governor also said that to defend liberty government must remain limited, and part of that is through the budget process. She noted her budget will not use one-time money for ongoing expenses or new programs. Additionally, the governor announced several proposals to cut taxes including eliminating fees associated with starting or renewing a business, eliminating fees on concealed carry permits, and eliminating a state bingo tax. The governor also discussed protecting people's right to a medical or religious exemption from COVID vaccines; continuing to protect natural resources; supporting pheasant habitats; expanding campsites at Custer State Park; and ensuring fairness in sports.

Next the governor said action must be taken now to preserve the pursuit of happiness for future generations. Specifically, the governor proposed updating social studies standards, expanding a program aimed at helping students who are at risk not to graduate, and additional investments in skilled training including in cybersecurity. Other areas of focus in her address included: recruiting law enforcement officers; honoring veterans; and allowing businesses the tools to grow and innovate.

Tennessee

Governor Bill Lee

Date of Address January 31

Link <https://www.tn.gov/governor/sots/2022-state-of-the-state-address.html>



Tennessee Governor Bill Lee said the state of the state is strong, and he looks forward to working with the legislature to make it stronger yet. He noted his budget proposal is bold, balanced, does not raise taxes, and makes investments in areas such as education, infrastructure, economic development, and health care. On Tennessee's 225th anniversary of statehood, the governor said the state embodies its slogan, America at Its Best, and will continue to reinforce policies surrounding freedom, innovation, exceptionalism, and optimism.

The governor began by discussing policies concerning freedom, including making government smarter and smaller. He said that one way to show discipline and regard for our freedoms is through a small government that contributes to a safe and well-ordered society. The governor highlighted a number of proposals concerning public safety including adding Highway Patrol Troopers and supporting personnel; providing funding to create safer neighborhoods through the violent crime intervention grant fund; establishing a new law enforcement training academy; fighting the flow of fentanyl through deploying National Guard soldiers to the southern border; continued investments in anti-human trafficking efforts; creating a plan to provide safety training for houses of worship; and increasing job opportunities for inmates.

The governor next spoke about innovation efforts, including investing in the future of Tennessee. He said the state's strong fiscal position allows it to make smart and strategic investments in areas such as education, health care, infrastructure, and economic development. The governor noted the state has prioritized efficiency, has reduced

employee headcounts without making layoffs, and will increase the rainy day fund to its highest level ever. Regarding elementary and secondary education, the governor called for a teacher pay raise; updating the K-12 funding system to set aside dollars for each student to be used in whatever public school they attend; an increase in recurring education spending; one-time funding to expand middle school and high school career and technical opportunities; one-time funding to ensure no student attends school in a flood zone; and ensuring parents know what students are learning and what materials are available to students in libraries. The governor also spoke about workforce and higher education proposals such as increasing the investment in the Future Workforce Initiative; added funding for applied technologies training; greater investments in higher education's outcome-based funding formula; and added funding for research and capital projects at colleges and universities. Other proposals concerning innovation included continuing to support nuclear power and added investments to improve roads and bridges throughout the state.

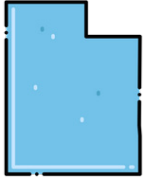
Finally, the governor discussed issues related to exceptionalism and optimism. He called for ensuring that the state teaches unbiased and non-political American history and proposed establishing the Institute of American Civics at the University of Tennessee. Other items included supporting pro-life efforts; placing a greater emphasis on maternal health; additional support for foster care; new investments in rural health care; expanded dental care for TennCare recipients; additional funding for the Medicaid Pathways to Independence program; and increased support for addiction recovery.

Utah

Governor Spencer Cox

Date of Address January 20

Link <https://governor.utah.gov/2022/01/20/watch-live-gov-cox-gives-2022-state-of-the-state-address/>



Utah Governor Spencer Cox discussed many critical issues facing the state, which he said will require hard work and working together. The governor began by discussing the pandemic while thanking healthcare workers, teachers, and others for their efforts over the past two years. He also said that while there will continue to be disagreements on how best to respond to the pandemic, it is important to remain strong for the children and ensure they can continue to attend school in-person. Also, on the subject of education, the governor called for increasing education funding with a focus on at-risk and disadvantaged students, eliminating all school fees for basic coursework, and supporting legislation making sure every student has a strong reading foundation.

The governor then highlighted a number of other issues in his address. He said the state is in its strongest fiscal condition ever and has its largest rainy day fund, lowest unemployment, and largest budget surplus. Due to the large surplus, the governor called for an additional \$160 million grocery tax credit. Regarding the environment, the governor said he supports efforts to prioritize

water storage, improve water conservation, and help save the Great Salt Lake. He added that while water is the greatest limiting factor to the state's growth, issues such as air quality, housing affordability, transportation, and infrastructure must also be addressed. The governor discussed his support for removing government regulations that needlessly increase housing prices; investing in infrastructure projects that will support future generations; overhauling previous economic incentives; encouraging sustainable energy development; and promoting the Utah Sustainable Health Collaborative, designed to lower the cost of healthcare and improve health outcomes.

Other areas of emphasis included creating a new office to singularly focus on the needs of Utah parents and children, and promoting election integrity while making sure that efforts do not make it harder for legal voters to vote. Finally, the governor discussed the need to continue to support "the Utah Way" through working together and ensuring that Utah is truly a place for liberty and justice for all.

Vermont

Governor Phil Scott

Date of Address January 5

Link <https://governor.vermont.gov/press-release/governor-phil-scott-delivers-2022-state-state-address>



Vermont Governor Phil Scott began his speech discussing difficulties the state has faced over the past 21 months, while also saying there have been silver linings. The governor highlighted additional federal aid the state has received which has allowed it to fund significant needs, make necessary investments, help reverse economic inequity, and create more opportunities.

The governor said the state of the state is strong and growing stronger every day. However, while progress has been made, the state continues to face challenges, with the largest being a workforce shortage that predated the pandemic. He said many of the state's other challenges are intertwined with its workforce trends. To address its challenges, the governor called on legislators to work together and to serve all Vermonters. The governor then listed a series of proposals to help address workforce related issues including: a greater focus on trades training; added funding for affordable housing; a tax relief package focused on retirees, middle income families and young workers; expanding the Capital Investment Grant Program; working to attract new businesses from Canada; changes to the Childcare Financial

Assistance Program; and expanded afterschool and summer programs.

The governor then turned to the impact COVID-19 has had on the state while discussing the importance of keeping students in the classroom, and using recovery dollars to address social, emotional, and educational gaps. The governor also said that COVID-19 is not the state's only serious public health challenge, while calling for increasing the number of mental health beds, expanding the state's mobile crisis pilot and suicide prevention model, and expanding drug prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts.

Other issues highlighted by the governor included: ensuring the state has the tools and people necessary to serve and protect communities; added investments in infrastructure including through federal aid; continued expansion of broadband; regulatory reform; programs aimed at helping people relocate to the state; eliminating the tax on military pensions; and the need to welcome refugees. The governor closed by stating that while there remains a big job ahead, a brighter future is within its grasp if everyone reaches out together and takes hold.

Virginia

Governor Glenn Youngkin

Date of Address January 17

Link <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2022/january/name-919739-en.html>



Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin, in his address to the Joint Assembly, said he wants to address the priorities of the people and form a government that works for ordinary citizens. He said that due to revenue surpluses the state can lower the tax burden on Virginia families, make crucial investments, and create a state government that works for Virginians. The governor added that in addition to signing 11 executive actions on his first day in office, he would work with legislators to introduce 59 pieces of legislation and would submit a package of 25 budget amendments to reflect bipartisan priorities.

The governor first spoke of education, stating that it is the key to opportunity. The governor said he hopes to raise education standards; create 20 new charter schools; build partnerships with universities to establish lab schools of excellence; ensure a teacher pay raise in the budget; give parents greater involvement in school curriculum; put a school resource officer on every campus; and involve local law enforcement agencies in the approval of school safety audits.

The governor then turned to COVID-19 and said Virginia will move forward on the principle of protecting lives and livelihoods. The governor discussed allowing parents to opt out of mask mandates in schools, opposing President Biden's vaccine mandate for health workers, keeping Virginia open for business, and encouraging people to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

In the area of economic development, the governor said he would work to repeal needless

regulations, invest in job training, support significant investments in mega-sites, make rural broadband a priority, and ensure that key infrastructure projects are completed. Additionally, the governor said he would oppose any bill that creates forced unionization and called for passing a bill that makes it easier for workers to get health care. Concerning taxation, the governor called for suspending the recent gas tax increase for a year, fully eliminating the grocery tax immediately, doubling the standard deduction for personal income taxes, and eliminating the personal income tax on the first \$40,000 in military retirement pay.

Other areas of focus by the governor included public safety, the environment, and making state government more efficient. Regarding public safety, the governor called for pay raises for public safety personnel; dedicating *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds to a training and equipment grant program for law enforcement; providing capital funding for a new state police training facility; and dedicating funds for community violence intervention. In discussing government efficiency, the governor proposed reforming the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Virginia Employment Commission as well as using federal transportation funds to address growth and gridlock. Finally, the governor highlighted the need to protect natural resources and called for efforts to protect soil and water, finish cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay, and create a Coastal Virginia Resiliency Authority to address rising sea levels.

Washington

Governor Jay Inslee

Date of Address January 11

Link <https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/news-media/speeches/2022-state-state>



Washington Governor Jay Inslee said the state of the state is very simply – we need action. He added that while the session is only 60 days, action must be taken every day. The governor thanked frontline workers, educators, childcare providers, and state employees for all they have done the last two years. The governor outlined steps the state has taken to address the pandemic and said everyone still needs to contribute to the fight against COVID-19. He also highlighted successes over the past few years including paid family leave, significant new education funding, environmental justice legislation, childcare protection, and creating more career pathways.

Despite these successes, the governor said the state needs to take action to fight the homeless crisis; reverse social and economic disparities; educate children and serve those in foster care; fund the transportation system; protect salmon and orca; and fight the threat of climate change. Specific proposals included: additional investments in safe housing for those experiencing homelessness and to create more options for those struggling with housing availability; passing legislation to remove barriers to middle housing options; increased behavioral

health services; improved wrap-around services; and creating a reinvestment fund to address economic and social disparities.

Concerning education, the governor said they are committed to keeping schools open, expressed a need to address learning loss, and called for more school counselors, nurses, psychologists, and social workers. The governor also proposed increased foster care support and paying providers more. The governor then turned to the environment and said immediate action is needed. He called for increased funding to address climate change, reducing emissions, modernizing regulations, incentivizing industry to ensure clean energy projects, improving conditions for developers to grow clean energy resources, and added funds for salmon recovery. The governor also proposed investments in clean transportation programs, while also discussing the need to preserve current infrastructure and improve ferry service reliability. Other areas of focus in the address included the need to invest in financial stability by increasing the size of reserves, and to discourage efforts by politicians to knowingly spread lies about elections.

West Virginia

Governor Jim Justice

Date of Address January 12

Link <https://governor.wv.gov/News/press-releases/2022/Pages/Gov.-Justice-delivers-2022-State-of-the-State-message-to-Legislature.aspx>



West Virginia Governor Jim Justice began his speech by apologizing for having to deliver written remarks due to testing positive for COVID-19 the night before his scheduled address. The governor added that he is thankful he was vaccinated and hopes to be able to give a full address in person after his recovery.

In his written remarks, the governor said the state of the state has never been stronger. He spoke about the state's strong economic position including record revenue growth, the best employment numbers in state history, and a growing tourism industry. Additionally, the governor discussed job recruitment efforts through the newly created Department of Economic Development and highlighted recent business expansions. The governor also spoke about his budget proposal and said it would recommend essentially flat spending growth for the fourth year in a row, include a pay raise for state employees to help counter inflation, and would not dip into the state's rainy day fund.

Turning to COVID-19, the governor said West Virginia continues to lead in its response to the

pandemic. While strongly supporting vaccines, the governor said he believes people should not be required to be vaccinated. Instead, he highlighted the state's efforts to encourage vaccination such as through its vaccine incentive programs. The governor also said West Virginia was recently the first state to ask the FDA and CDC for the ability to begin offering a fourth dose of the vaccine to certain at-risk citizens.

Looking forward, the governor said the state will continue to build on its current momentum using the same responsible and conservative approach it has utilized in recent years. Specifically, the governor said the state will continue to feed investment in its food banks to fight food insecurity; make education a centerpiece by investing in children; fund the state's Communities in Schools program; fund much-needed road repairs and infrastructure projects; and keep supporting the Jobs and Hope program that helps people battle addiction and re-enter society.

Wisconsin

Governor Tony Evers

Date of Address February 15

Link <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/30a4cd9>



Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers said the state of the state is stronger and better than it has been in recent years. He noted that during the pandemic the state has invested \$1 billion into supporting small businesses, farmers, tourism, lodging and entertainment industries; worked to keep all transportation projects on track; expanded access to high-speed internet; invested in long-term solutions to workforce challenges; and provided tax relief. The governor also said the state has seen a declining unemployment rate, currently has a \$1.7 billion rainy day fund, and is projected to have a \$3.8 billion budget surplus.

The governor said his plan for the surplus is to help address rising costs and gas prices, reduce barriers to work, and invest in education at every level. Specific recommendations included sending every resident a \$150 surplus refund; providing tax relief through child and caregiver tax credits; additional funds to improve schools and outcomes; and funding to hold the line on property taxes across the state. He added that under his surplus plan the state would have more than \$2 billion left over.

The governor then turned his attention to issues related to the National Guard and veterans. He thanked the National Guard for their service during the pandemic while calling for expanded access to the National Guard's comprehensive wellness office and their services. The governor

said he would soon sign an executive order creating a Blue-Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity to develop new, innovative initiatives to support veterans in the state.

In the area of healthcare, the governor spoke about recent efforts to expand access to telehealth services, protect healthcare for those with pre-existing conditions, and reduce the cost of prescription drug prices. However, the governor said more needs to be done for emergency services and responders in rural communities. He called for additional support for emergency medical services providers across the state, new investments in medical services for rural areas, and increasing reimbursement rates for providers.

A final area of focus was education with the governor highlighting recent successes such as historic investments in education at every level, increased special education funding, and providing local property tax relief. The governor said the pandemic has affected students in numerous ways and announced a new initiative to provide additional mental health services in schools. Additionally, to help deal with rising costs and other pressures, the governor proposed additional funding for the University of Wisconsin System to use for a tuition freeze for in-state students for the next two years.

Wyoming

Governor Mark Gordon

Date of Address February 14

Link <https://governor.wyo.gov/media/news-releases/2022-news-releases/governor-calls-for-wyoming-to-seize-new-opportunities-in-state-of-the-state>



Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon said that despite tremendous challenges, Wyoming is strong and getting stronger. He noted the state is strong because of its character, resilient because of its nature, and optimistic because Wyoming people are doers. The governor added there is currently an undeniable momentum in Wyoming, and the state is better equipped to tackle new challenges and seize fresh opportunities.

The governor began his speech by recognizing both members of the armed forces and Wyoming tribes. The governor thanked veterans and current members of the National Guard for their service and called for using *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) funds to help prevent suicide in veterans. Regarding the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes, the governor thanked them for working together on difficult issues including raising the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons.

Turning to the budget, the governor said his recommendation keeps state government operating effectively and efficiently, and ensures Wyoming continues to live within its means. He added his budget proposal places an additional \$400 million in savings and calls for salary adjustments for state employees to ensure the state can retain its workforce and counter federal policies impacting inflation. The governor also spoke against federal energy policies and called for an all-of-the above energy strategy including

wind, solar, gas, coal, and nuclear power.

Additionally, the governor recommended using \$100 million as matching funds for Wyoming energy projects.

Other areas of focus in the governor's address included agriculture and tourism, healthcare, education, and economic development. The governor spoke of the importance of protecting water and water rights in the state and called for additional funding for the State Engineer and Attorney General. He said the tourism industry has been a bright spot for the state and proposed using one-time revenue to fill the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust. In the area of healthcare, the governor thanked healthcare workers for their work during the pandemic, and recommended funding to standardize emergency medical dispatch. Concerning education, the governor praised all involved for their help in keeping schools open, and said education needs to be one of the state's top priorities. He discussed the creation of an advisory group to examine Wyoming's primary and secondary education system and make recommendations to elevate it. Finally, the governor highlighted efforts to advance Wyoming and diversify its economy, including the establishment of the Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP), a collaboration between education, economic development organizations, and industry to identify opportunities and local needs, build curriculum, and measure performance.