



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
HEALTH DATA ORGANIZATIONS

# What is your elevator speech?

## *Tips & Insights for Communicating With Your Legislators*

NAHDO Webinar Series

January 20, 2015

# Webinar Presenters

## **Richard Cauchi**

Program Director, Health Program

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

## **Norman Thurston**

Director, Utah Office of Health Care Statistics

Representative, Utah House of Representatives

# Data Agencies Face Unique Challenges

- ▶ Data systems involve a myriad of complex technical and political issues
- ▶ Return on Investment (ROI) is not immediate and it is difficult to correlate improvements/uses directly to the data
- ▶ Privacy and confidentiality discussions can be politically charged and are not issues easy to explain in sound bites
- ▶ Funding for data competes with other state priorities

# Explaining Importance of Data in Non-technical terms: An Example

- ▶ *A member of the Utah Health Data Committee commented yesterday that to eliminate the \$300,000 general fund support of the OHCS would be akin to buying a luxury automobile but trying to save money by eliminating the speedometer. We spend billions of dollars on healthcare each year in this state. I hope we are willing to spend \$300,000 to monitor how we are doing.*

*Testimony of Clark B. Hinckley, Vice Chair of Health Data Committee,  
Large Business Representative to The Health and Human Services  
Appropriate Committee's Pubic Hearing/Sunset Review, January 10, 2002*

# Are You Prepared?

It's not easy...but, like getting old, consider the alternative.  
The cost of doing nothing is about \$765 billion per year.

*<http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2012/Best-Care-at-Lower-Cost-The-Path-to-Continuously-Learning-Health-Care-in-America.aspx>*

*(IOM - 2009).*

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**Richard Cauchi**

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# Tips & Insights for Working with State Legislators: Your "Elevator Speech" and Beyond



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

*The Forum for America's Ideas*



**NAHDO**

**January 20, 2015**

**Richard Cauchi**

**NCSL Health Program Director**

**Dick.Cauchi@ncsl.org**

**303-856-1367**

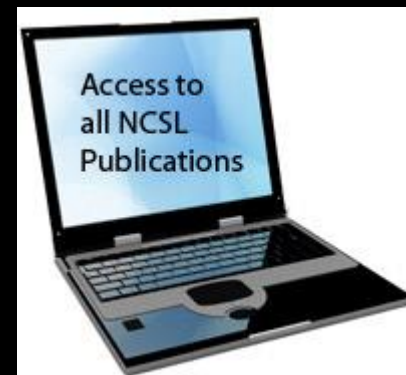
Rev 1/19/15





# National Conference of State Legislatures

- o Works directly for the 50 legislatures in states + territories.
- o Every elected legislator (7,383) is an NCSL member
- o Bi-partisan staff and research functions.  
Health is the largest topic
- o Does not take positions on state laws or legislation.
- o Takes limited positions on federal issues affecting states. (No position on PPACA, Medicaid expansion, exchange)
- o Resources: [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org)





# Presentation Overview

- **Pep talk**
- **State legislative realities and focus**
- **Current challenges and landscape**
- **Crafting your message**
- **Strategies for educating, building, gaining support**



The Miami Herald

Jim Morin, The Miami Herald

# YOUR ROLES

- Expert
- Information resource
- Leader
- Advocate
- Networker
- Behind-the-scenes resource

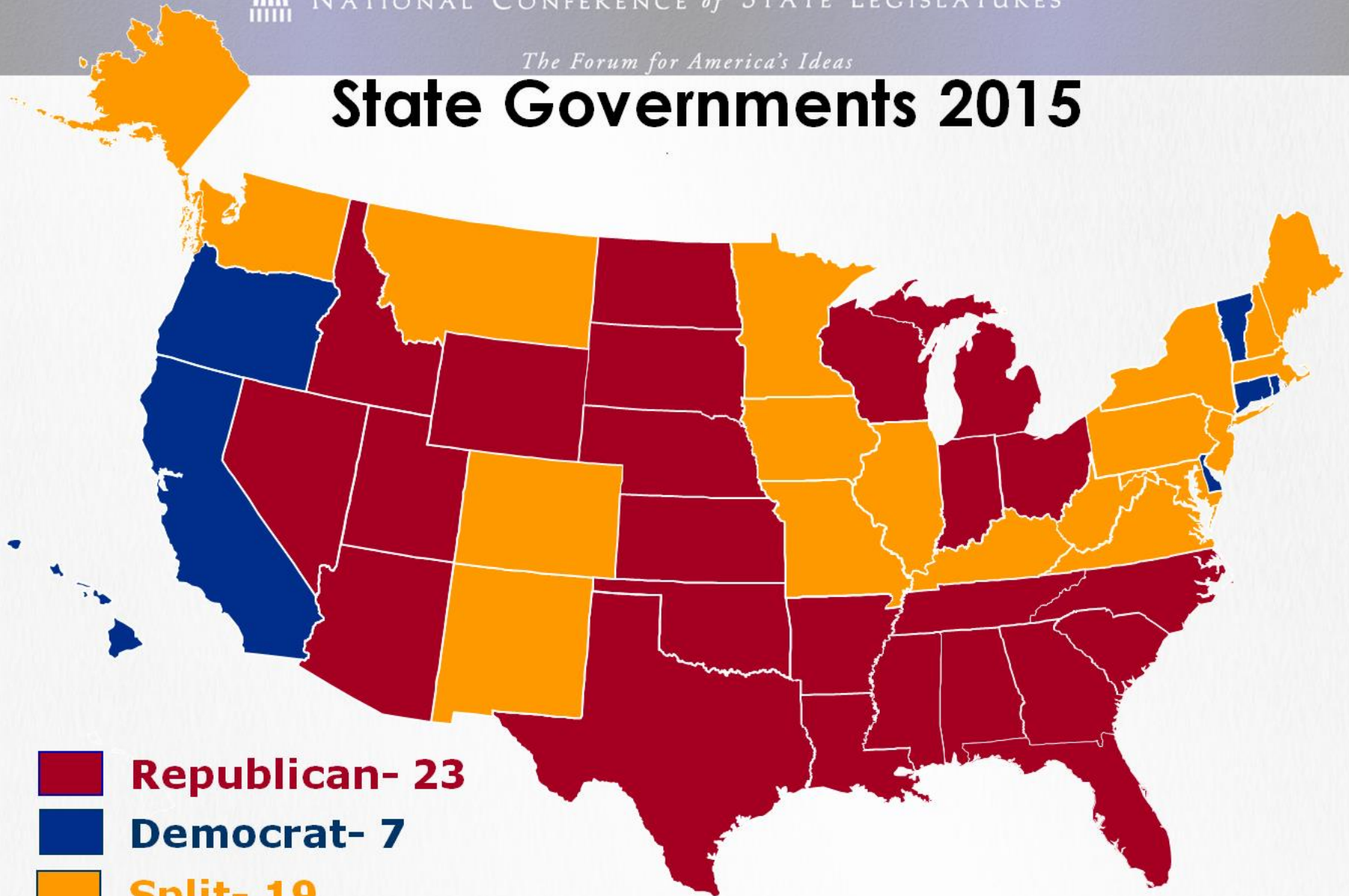
**Public policymaking needs you!**



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# State Governments 2015



**Republican- 23**

**Democrat- 7**

**Split- 19**

**Nonpartisan**

# State Legislatures 2014





# State Legislators Are Generalists

**Dozens of major topics:** • Agriculture

**A to Z**

• Corrections

• Education

• **HEALTH**

**Hundreds of bills**

• Housing

• Human Services

• Labor

**Can't be experts in all**

• Transportation

• Zoning . . .

# Health Issues by the Dozens

- Medicaid
- Insurance/managed care
- Pharmaceuticals
- Long-term care
- Health disparities
- Uninsured populations
- Health professions
- Health facilities
- Environmental health
- Public health
- CHIP
- Health reform/ “Obamacare”
- **Health data resources**
- Nutrition
- Injury prevention
- Mental health
- Disabilities
- Substance abuse
- Emergency services
- “Winnable Battles,” Etc. ...



"Going through all this information we have here is kind of like trying to drink from a fire hydrant."

**-Former CO Rep. Mark Paschall**

"My seatmate told me this was a bad bill. I was going to vote no on it until I realized it was my own bill."

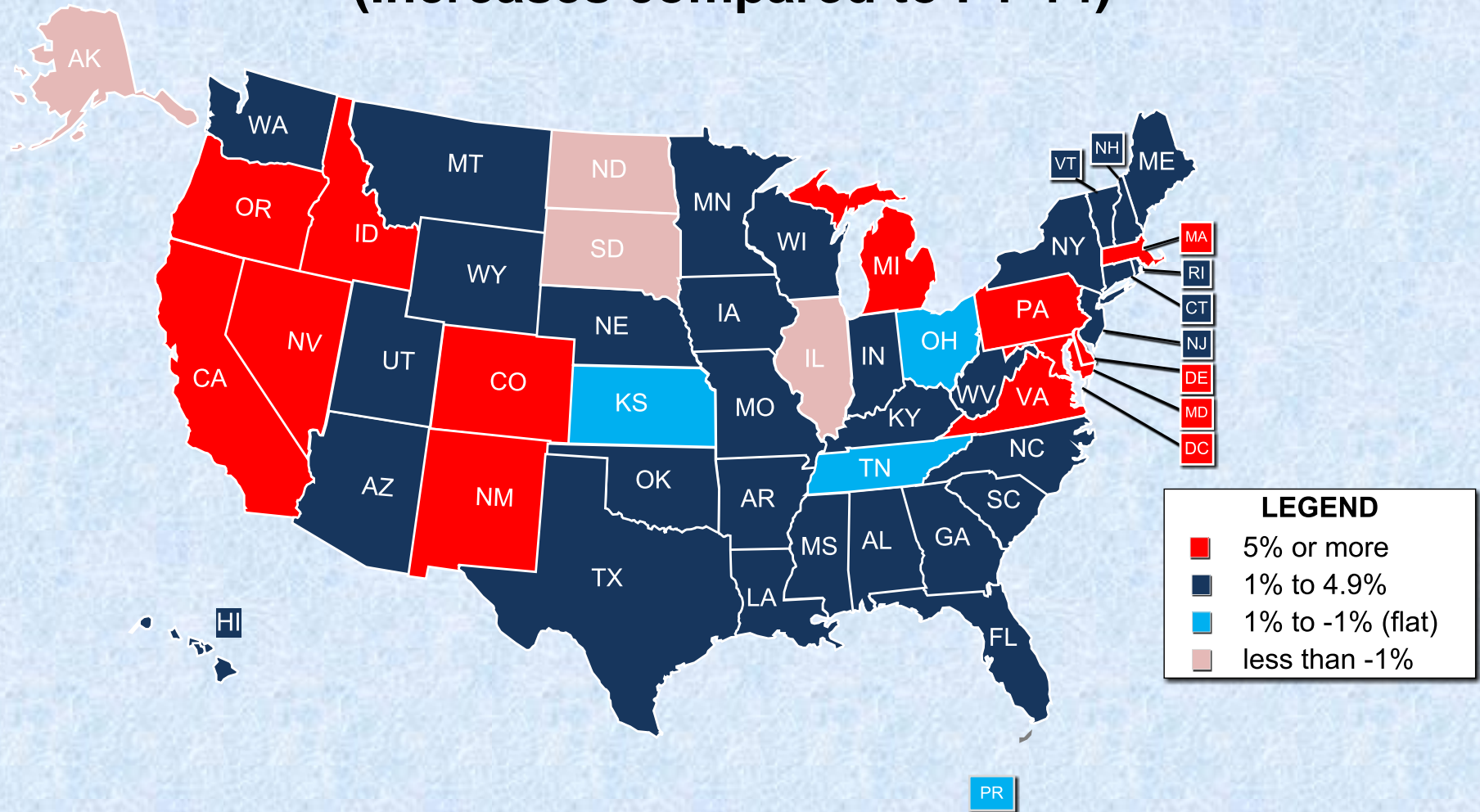
**-Former CO Sen. Ray Powers**

# Overload!!



# State Budgets – The biggest challenge?

## General Fund Revenue FY 15 (Increases compared to FY 14)



# Where Do You Start?

- **What are your goals?**
- **What entity or level of government is involved?**
- **Who are your likely partners?**
- **How much community/media awareness exists?**
- **Can others help (e.g., private sector, faith community)?**
- **Do you have data? Other needed information?**
- **How do you relate it to their interests & what they are focused on?**
- **How do you involve legislators?**
  - **What roles do they play?**
  - **What do they need to know?**

# Your Message

Why should the legislator care?

What can he/she do about it?



- Share your expertise
- KISS ("Keep it Simple, Stupid")
- Keep the budget issues in mind
- Master the "elevator speech"

# 8 Tips for Success with Legislation

- o Build a team of legislative champions early
  - R + D; House + Senate; Urban + Rural
  - Connect with a key health legislative staffer
- o Bring together the stakeholders
- o Powerful and unexpected bed-fellows
  - Patient advocacy groups
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - State Medical Association
  - A former governor; a state treasurer or auditor, mayor
  - Any allies in the U.S. Congress?
- o Role for a contract lobbyist?

## 8 Tips, *continued*

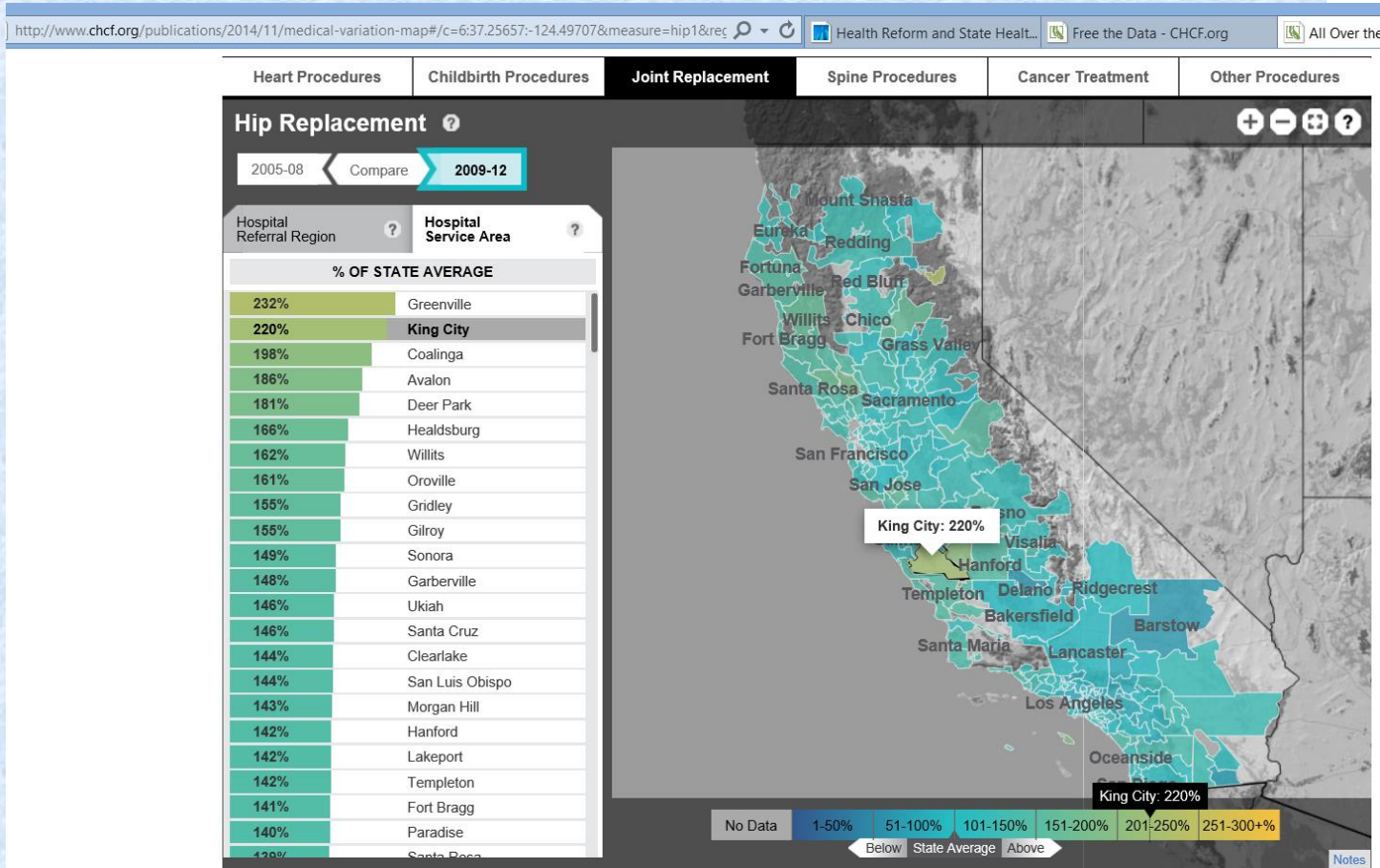
- o Show off the states with success records
  - Nearby or “resonating” locations
- o Show really interesting, compelling local data
  - Make the story human; “Hot-spotting”
  - “This can save money”
  - Create (or plan) an irresistible consumer-friendly tool
  - Make it come alive! (see *California 2014*)
- o Clarify connection, or distance from, healthcare.gov
  - “We are not building an exchange”
- o Timing: “Go public” at the right moment
  - Announce a “break-through” compromise?
  - Success can take time...





*Example of data that individual legislators may actually use*

# Hip Replacements in California





# Conclusions

- Know what type of information policymakers need
- For legislators:
  - Do your homework—get your facts.
  - Be accurate, brief & concise
  - Be vigilant
  - Follow-up if they need more
  - Offer to help
  - Stick with it!

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Comments? Questions?  
[dlove@nahdo.org](mailto:dlove@nahdo.org)