

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



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas



NAHDO

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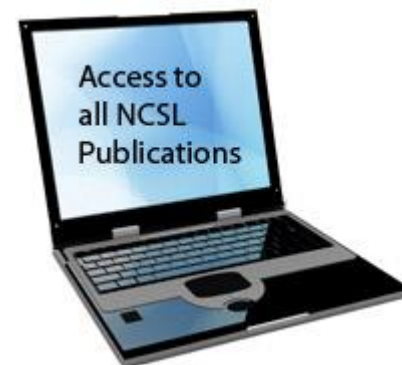
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Rev 1/19/15



National Conference of State Legislatures

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







YOUR ROLES

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

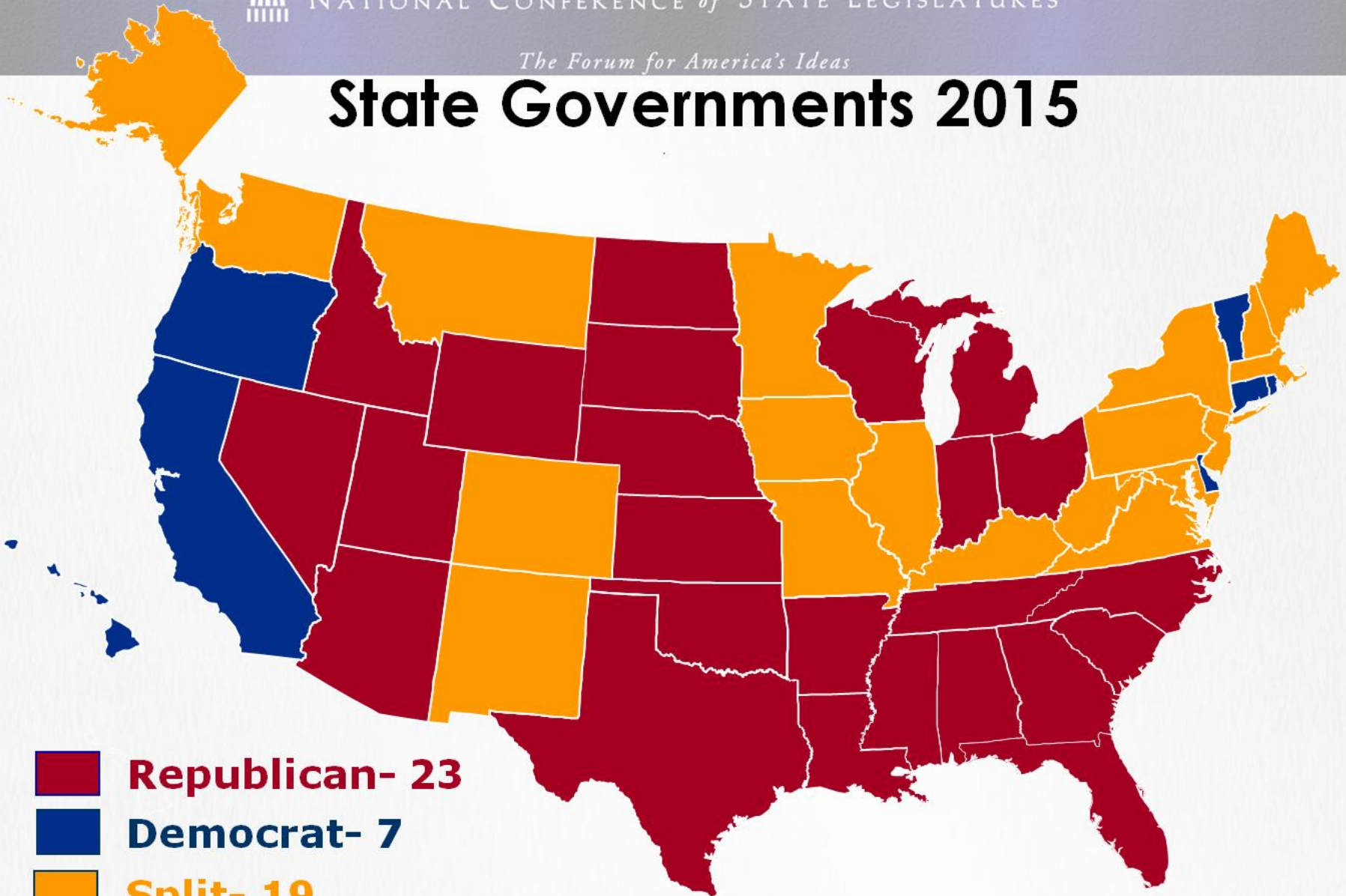
Public policymaking needs you!





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State Governments 2015

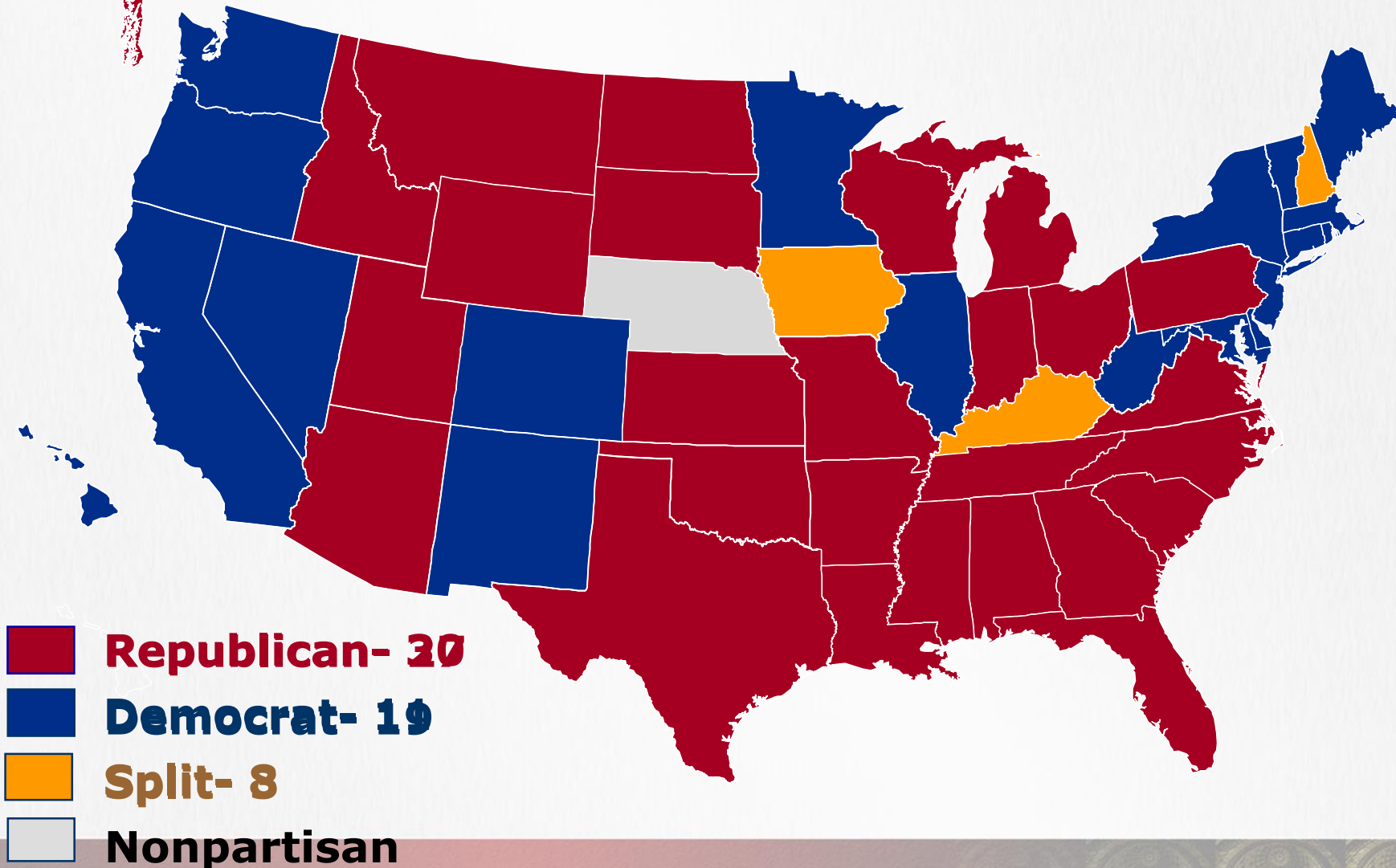


-  **Republican- 23**
-  **Democrat- 7**
-  **Split- 19**
-  **Nonpartisan**





State Legislatures 2014





State Legislators Are Generalists

- Dozens of major topics:**
- A to Z**
- **Agriculture**
 - **Corrections**
 - **Education**
 - **HEALTH**
 - **Housing**
 - **Human Services**
 - **Labor**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Zoning . . .**
- Hundreds of bills**
- Can't be experts in all**





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.”

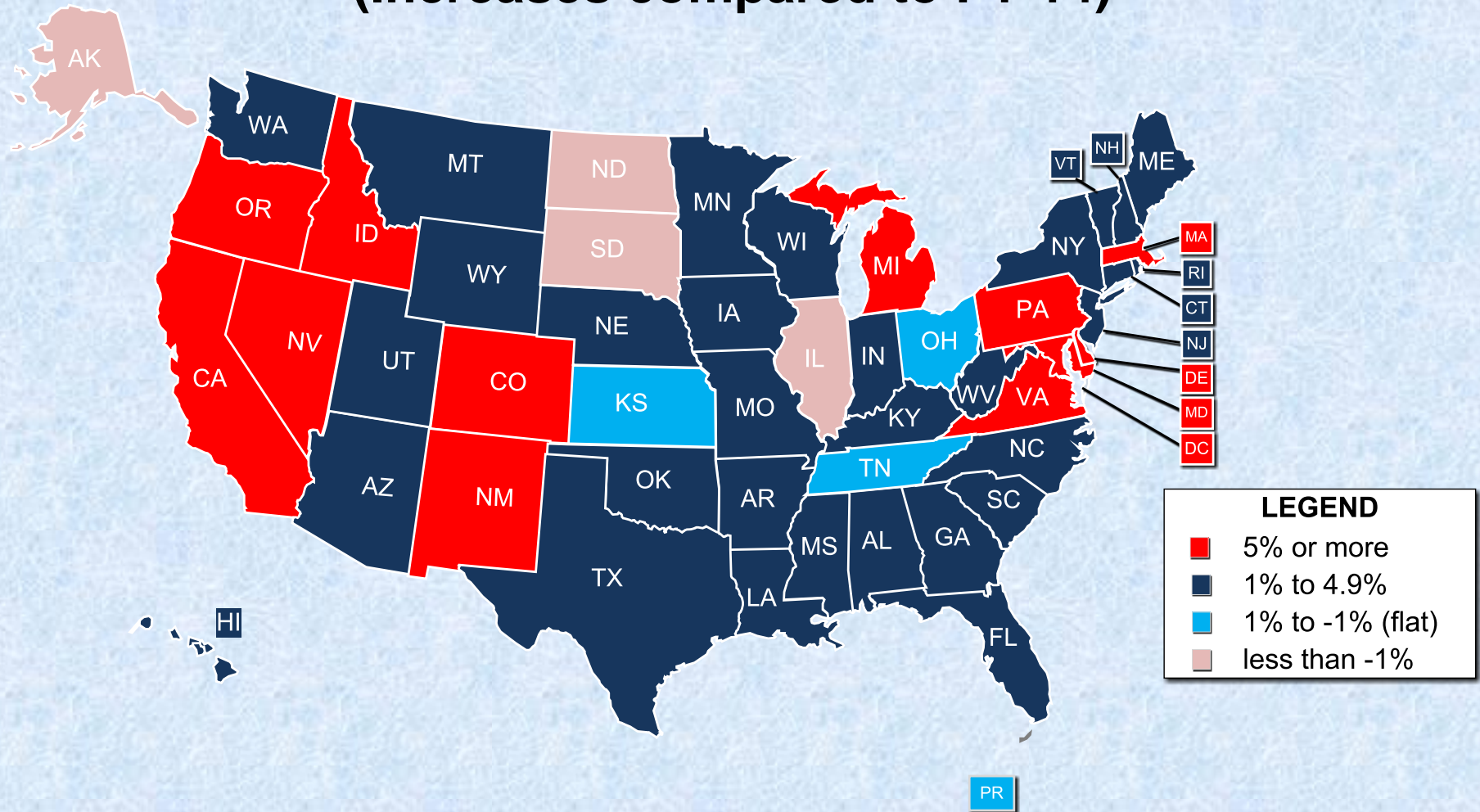
-Former CO Sen. Ray Powers

Overload!!



State Budgets – The biggest challenge?

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



LEGEND

- 5% or more
- 1% to 4.9%
- 1% to -1% (flat)
- less than -1%

Source: NCSL survey of state legislative fiscal offices, summer 2014.



Where Do You Start?

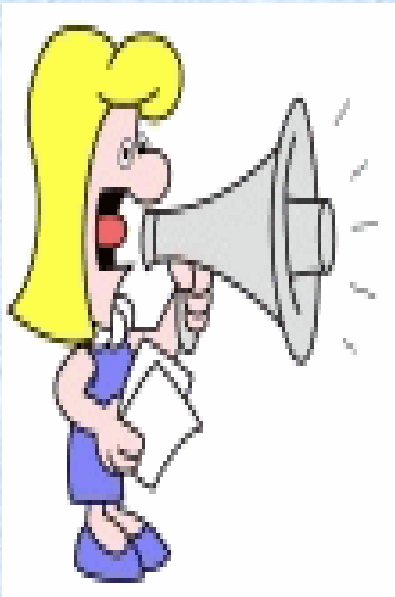
- What are your goals?
- What entity or level of government is involved?
- Who are your likely partners?
- How much community/media awareness exists?
- Can others help (e.g., private sector, faith community)?
- Do you have data? Other needed information?
- How do you relate it to their interests & what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

- **Build a team of legislative champions early**
 - R + D; House + Senate; Urban + Rural
 - Connect with a key health legislative staffer
- **Bring together the stakeholders**
- **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?
- **Role for a contract lobbyist?**





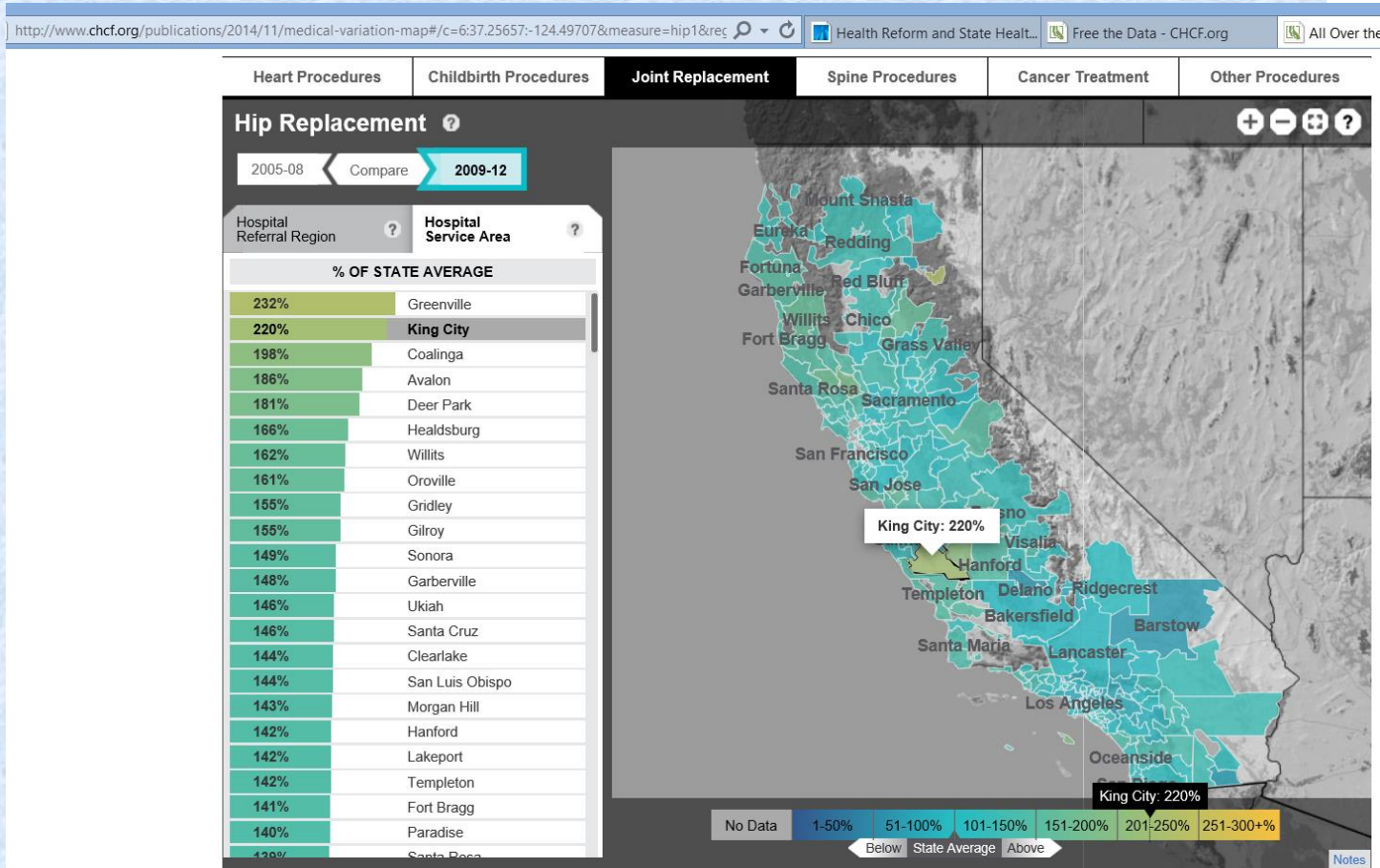
8 Tips, *continued*

- **Show off the states with success records**
 - Nearby or “resonating” locations
- **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*)
- **Clarify connection, or distance from, healthcare.gov**
 - “We are not building an exchange”
- **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!