



**Bowhay Institute *for***  
**Legislative Leadership Development**  
 MIDWESTERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



*30th Annual*

**BOWHAY INSTITUTE *for* LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**  
 AUGUST 22-26, 2025 | MADISON, WISCONSIN

*Application deadline: April 14, 2025*



MLC Members:

Illinois | Indiana | Iowa | Kansas | Michigan | Minnesota | Nebraska | North Dakota | Ohio | Saskatchewan | South Dakota | Wisconsin

*MLC Affiliate Members: Alberta | Manitoba | Ontario*



**Midwestern  
 Legislative  
 Conference**

*presented by*

**The Council of State Governments  
 Midwestern Legislative Conference**

“You will leave better informed and better prepared to make a true impact on your chamber, your legislative body, and your community.”

- **Sen. Elgie Sims Jr.**, Illinois  
Class of 2014



“This is a jam-packed fellowship training with many opportunities to grow as a leader.”

- **Rep. Donovan McKinney**, Michigan  
Class of 2023



“It’s a powerful mix of leadership development and tools to become a better and collaborative legislator. It really takes your leadership to the next level and exposes you to other leaders you can brainstorm problems and solutions with.”

- **Rep. Munira Abdullahi**, Ohio  
Class of 2024



## WHY APPLY FOR A BILLD FELLOWSHIP?

### DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

BILLD is the only leadership institute designed exclusively for Midwestern legislators. Through a series of interactive workshops, the Bowhay Institute provides training to develop and sharpen the skills you need to be a more effective legislative leader.

### IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF KEY REGIONAL PUBLIC POLICIES

By focusing on the most important issues that state policymakers face today, scholars from Midwestern institutions and outside experts provide a context for you to effectively analyze policies and programs, evaluate information that you receive, and communicate successfully with constituents and colleagues.

### NETWORK WITH THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST

As a BILLD Fellow, you will be joined by some of the most promising new legislators from across the region. You will have the chance to share your knowledge, learn from one another’s experiences, and forge relationships that will last long beyond your time in Madison.



## WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Midwestern legislators in their first four years of legislative service are eligible to apply. Fellowships are awarded based on an applicant’s ability to demonstrate leadership potential, dedication to public service, and commitment to the legislative process and institution. Through a competitive application process, fellowships are awarded annually to Midwestern lawmakers from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

“Great opportunity to connect with other legislators & learn tangible skills to become a more effective legislator.”

- **Sen. John Fredrickson**, Nebraska  
Class of 2023

“I came empty and stuck. I left fully inspired, encouraged, and equipped with new ideas and knowing that I am not alone in navigating these political waters. A game-changer!”

- **Rep. Peri Pourier**, South Dakota  
Class of 2021

“A rare and powerful opportunity to learn with other political leaders. A time that challenges you, but also enriches you. Also, a place where partisanship is absent.”

- **Rep. Spencer Igo**, Minnesota  
Class of 2023





## HOW TO APPLY FOR A BILLD FELLOWSHIP

In addition to the application form contained in this packet, each applicant must submit two letters of recommendation, a current resumé, and a written essay. Please follow the guidelines in the “Application Components” section when completing and submitting the required materials.

All application materials must be received by CSG Midwest no later than April 14, 2025. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered. You will receive confirmation of the receipt of your application materials via email.

Visit [csgmidwest.org](http://csgmidwest.org) to apply online.

## ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

- Midwestern legislators are awarded Fellowships through a competitive, nonpartisan process by the BILLD Steering Committee – a bipartisan group of legislators from each state in the region.
- Each BILLD Fellowship covers the cost of tuition, lodging, and meals.
- CSG Midwest offers financial assistance for travel to and from Madison, Wis. All Fellows will be eligible for a stipend that covers a portion of their travel costs.
- Attendance at BILLD is limited to BILLD Fellows, BILLD staff, and invited guests.
- Applicants will be notified of the Steering Committee’s decisions by the end of May.
- In order to maintain the integrity of the program, and as a professional courtesy to colleagues, individuals awarded Fellowships must confirm their attendance for the entire BILLD program. BILLD Fellows are expected to arrive by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, August 22, and stay through the program’s closing event on the evening of August 26. The BILLD Steering Committee reserves the right to withdraw the Fellowship of any participant unable to commit to being present for the entire program.

## LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Visit the CSG Midwest website ([csgmidwest.org](http://csgmidwest.org)) for more information about the Bowhay Institute, including lists of past Fellows and a sample agenda.

Mitch Arvidson | Senior Program Manager | tel 630.925.1922 | [marvidson@csg.org](mailto:marvidson@csg.org)

“It is more than just a conference. It’s a program where you grow and that will make you challenge yourself.”

– Rep. Tory Marie Blew, Kansas  
Class of 2019

“An enriching, must-do experience for any new legislator.”

– Sen. Don Harmon, Illinois  
Class of 2005

“Participating in the BILLD program is a tremendous asset for legislators across the Midwest who want to better state government.”

– Rep. Susan Manchester, Ohio  
Class of 2022



## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Completed BILLD applications must be received by CSG Midwest no later than April 14.

Please make sure that you have submitted each of the following components of your application. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered. You will receive confirmation of the receipt of your application materials via email message.

**(1) APPLICATION FORM** Complete the application form contained in this packet or apply online at [csgmidwest.org](http://csgmidwest.org).

**(2) WRITTEN ESSAY** Describe your qualifications for receiving a BILLD Fellowship by answering all of the following questions. Your essay must be limited to two typed pages.

- a. What is the policy area of greatest interest to you? Describe the role you play or expect to play in addressing this policy area.
- b. Describe how your profession/work or community service outside of the legislature has influenced your work as a lawmaker or approach to legislative service.
- c. There are a number of ways to exercise leadership. How would you describe your personal leadership style, and how do you effectively demonstrate leadership in the legislature?
- d. What do you hope to gain from participating in the BILLD program?

**(3) CURRENT RESUMÉ** Your resumé must be limited to two typed pages and include the following information, as applicable.

Legislative background (first elected/appointed; number of years of legislative service)

Legislative committees on which you currently serve  
Current and/or previous leadership roles in the legislature

Prior elected office(s)

Community service/volunteer activities

Occupational and educational background

## **(4) TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

Submit two personalized letters of recommendation written by state legislative colleagues and/or graduates of the Bowhay Institute. Please note that members of the BILLD Steering Committee are not permitted to write letters of recommendation.

Please instruct those writing letters to address your qualifications in the following areas:

Leadership potential

Dedication to public service

Commitment to civility and collaborative solutions

Commitment to the legislative process

Desire to strengthen the legislative institution





## APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Representative

Senator

Month and year first elected/appointed to state legislature\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* List the month and year that the general election was held or that the appointment was made. Indicate if you were elected in a special election.

Elected

Appointed

Preferred mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Home address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Capitol phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate/staff email address \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST: DUE APRIL 15

Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered

To be considered for a BILLD Fellowship, make sure your application includes the following materials. See the "Application Components" section for complete details and instructions.

Application form

Written essay

Résumé/biographical information

Two letters of recommendation (please list names and titles)

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW TO APPLY

### MAIL

BILLD Steering Committee  
CSG Midwest  
701 East 22nd Street, Suite 110  
Lombard, Illinois 60148

### ONLINE

[csgmidwest.org/billd](https://csgmidwest.org/billd)

### EMAIL

[billd@csg.org](mailto:billd@csg.org)

## THE BOWHAY INSTITUTE *for* LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (BILLD)

Entering its fourth decade, BILLD continues to be one of the only sources of training designed specifically for legislators early on in their legislative careers. The Institute offers newer legislators the opportunity for advanced instruction to develop their leadership skills and to effectively manage policy issues in a time of growing challenges in state government. By helping lawmakers refine their policy analysis skills and heighten their leadership skills, the Bowhay Institute helps ensure that future legislative leaders are prepared to meet the challenges they will face.

This summer, 39 legislators from the Midwest will gather in Madison, Wis., for the 30th annual Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD). The Midwestern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments is pleased to invite you to apply for a 2025 BILLD Fellowship. By applying, you will have the chance to learn with the best and brightest new legislators from across the region and join the ranks of more than 975 regional legislators who have successfully completed this program since 1995. If you strive to be an effective leader, an informed decision maker, and an astute policy analyst, BILLD is the program for you.

## THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS – MIDWESTERN OFFICE

For more than 90 years, The Council of State Governments, the nation's only nonpartisan association for all three branches of state government, has served officials in all 50 states and the U.S. territories. CSG is a regionally based national organization that promotes excellence in state government. CSG fosters the interstate exchange of information and ideas to help state officials advance public policy, and it offers unparalleled regional, national, and international opportunities for leadership development, collaboration, and interstate problem-solving.

CSG Midwest focuses on serving legislators and other state officials from the nation's heartland. Through our publications, online resources, networking opportunities, and leadership training, we provide policymakers with the tools they need to be effective state leaders.



**BILLD**



**MLC**

**BOWHAY INSTITUTE *for* LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

MIDWESTERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE | THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

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