



Midwestern Legislative Conference

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

MLC Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee

August 30 – September 2, 2026 | InterContinental Riverfront | Saint Paul, Minnesota

Preliminary Agenda

Sen. Hearcel Craig, Ohio, Co-Chair | Sen. Kathleen Kauth, Nebraska, Co-Chair

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 | COMMITTEE-LED SESSION & MEETING | KELLOGG I & II, LOBBY LEVEL

9:30 – 9:40 a.m. Welcome and Updates on Committee Work

9:40 – 10:40 a.m. Building for the Future: Policies to Increase Housing Production

Over the past five years, the average number of state laws aimed at boosting housing production has nearly doubled. This session will continue the conversation on how states can reduce regulatory barriers to homebuilding and examine how lawmakers can utilize other policy tools and partnerships to bolster housing activity.

Presenters

Nick Erickson, *Executive Director, Housing Affordability Institute*

Second Presenter TBD

10:40 – 11:00 a.m. Legislative Roundtable Discussion & Committee Business

Other Policy Sessions of Interest

MONDAY, AUGUST 31 | POLICY SESSION | GREAT RIVER I & IV, FIRST LEVEL

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Whither U.S.-Canada Trade?

A year-and-a-half into a tumultuous period in U.S.-Canada relations, where does the state of cross-border trade lie (especially in the Midwest) and where is it going? Christopher Sands, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Canadian Studies, will lead a discussion on the current trade relationship and the future of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

Presenter

Dr. Christopher Sands, *Director, Johns Hopkins Center for Canadian Studies*

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 | POLICY SESSIONS | ROOMS BELOW

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Planning for Uncertainty – State Budgets and Fiscal Federalism | State Suite I & II, Lower Level

Participants will get a picture of current and future conditions of state budgets, including how recent changes at the federal level are shifting more responsibilities to states. This session will explore some of the impacts states can expect from recent federal activity and how states are approaching long-term fiscal planning.

Presenters

Shelby Kerns, *Executive Director, National Association of Budget Officers*

Dr. Deborah Carrol, *Director of the Government Finance Research Center, UIC*

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Prediction Markets and Government Oversight | Great River I & IV, First Level

From sports to geopolitical developments to election results to celebrity behaviors, it seems like almost every aspect of modern social life can be wagered upon thanks to the rise of the prediction market industry. States and provinces that allow for online sports betting have created rules to prevent players from exploiting non-public material information, promote support services to people struggling with gambling addiction, and collect revenue to fund public services. This session will explain the reach of prediction markets and explore whether state-level oversight should extend to these exchanges.

Moderator

Asa Craig, *Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Arnold Ventures*

Presenter

Ilya Beylin, *Associate Professor of Law, Seton Hall Law School*

Other Presenters TBD

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 | PLENARY SESSION | MINNESOTA BALLROOM, LOWER LEVEL

3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Data Centers, A Balancing Act

Data centers dominated legislative sessions during 2026, evoking strong feelings about economic development and resource consumption; ratepayer protections; and quality-of-life impacts on local residents and communities. This session will provide ideas for how policymakers can consider balancing these legitimate, competing concerns when crafting legislation and representing their districts.

Presenters

Nicol Turner-Lee, *Director of the Center for Technology Innovation, Brookings Institute*

Brad Tietz, *Director of State Policy, Data Center Coalition*

Learning Labs of Interest

MONDAY, AUGUST 31 | LEARNING LAB PRESENTATION | STATE SUITE I, LOWER LEVEL

7:30 – 8:45 a.m.

Maximizing The Grid – How States are Getting More Energy from Existing Infrastructure

Electricity demand is rising, and states across the Midwest are facing growing pressure to improve grid capacity and reliability without driving up costs for consumers. Hear from state lawmakers and policy and technology experts about innovative, bipartisan solutions being adopted around the country that maximize existing infrastructure to strengthen grid performance. In this session, you'll come away with actionable examples, model policy frameworks, and lessons learned that can be adapted to your state to enhance reliability and affordability.

This Learning Lab is presented by Pew Charitable Trusts

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 | LEARNING LAB PRESENTATION | STATE SUITE I, LOWER LEVEL

7:30 – 8:45 a.m.

Powering the Heartland with Homegrown Energy: An overview of wind, solar, battery storage energy supply & transmission benefits in the Midwest

An overview of the supply of wind, solar and battery energy storage in the Midwest, as well as explore the benefits for the region's electricity and transmission infrastructure.

This Learning Lab is presented by the Clean Grid Association