State of the States: How will today’s tax and budget choices affect states’ futures?

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Speaker Biographies

Howard Gleckman is a senior fellow at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center and editor of its fiscal policy blog TaxVox. He is also affiliated with the Urban Institute’s Program on Retirement Policy. He is a former media fellow at the Kaiser Family Foundation, visiting fellow at the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, and senior correspondent in the Washington bureau of Business Week, where he was a National Magazine Award finalist.

Joseph Henchman is vice president of the Tax Foundation, where he analyzes state tax trends, constitutional issues, and tax law developments. He has testified or presented to officials in 31 states, testified before Congress six times, and has written over 75 major studies on tax policy. Before coming to Washington, DC, he organized rallies against wasteful spending and the curfew law in his native San Diego County, and he worked in the historic 2003 California recall election as press and policy aide to gubernatorial candidate Peter Ueberroth. He holds a bachelor’s degree in political science with a minor in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley and a law degree from George Washington University.

Nick Johnson is senior vice president for State Fiscal Policy at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a Washington, DC-based research and policy institute. He directs the center’s State Fiscal Project, which publishes reports on how state budget and tax decisions affect families and communities, and he develops policies to enhance fiscal responsibility, equity, and accountability. He came to the center in 1996 from the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry. Johnson’s analysis and commentary have been featured in national, regional, and local newspapers, and he is a frequent television and radio commentator on state fiscal issues. He is a regular contributor to the center’s blog, “Off the Charts” and speaks regularly at conferences around the country. He also serves as an adviser to the members of the State Priorities Partnership, a network of independent state-level policy organizations. In 2004, Johnson was awarded an Ian Axford Fellowship in Public Policy and served as an adviser to the New Zealand Treasury and the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, analyzing the country’s tax relief programs and cash assistance for low-income families. In 2014, Johnson was named to the Nonprofit Times’s Power & Influence Top 50. In 2010, State Tax Notes named Johnson to its “All-Decade State Tax Team.” Johnson holds an undergraduate degree from Yale University and a graduate degree from Duke University’s Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy.
Ryan King is a senior fellow in the Justice Policy Center at the Urban Institute. He works on sentencing and corrections issues with a focus on reducing correctional control. Before joining the Urban Institute, he was the research director of Pew's Public Safety Performance Project (PSPP). As lead researcher, King oversaw a team of investigators producing original and groundbreaking analyses exploring the ways criminal justice policies affect recidivism, public safety, and states’ fiscal health. This work helped shape PSPP’s state sentencing and corrections technical assistance. Before joining PSPP, King was a policy analyst at the Sentencing Project for eight years, where he authored dozens of publications on sentencing and corrections policy.

David Quam is the deputy director of the National Governors Association (NGA). He has extensive experience developing policy solutions and effectively advocating positions before Congress on governors’ collective policy priorities. Quam is an expert on intellectual property rights, telecommunications, electronic commerce, international trade, federal budgeting and tax, the constitution, unfunded mandates, securities regulation, regulatory reform, and ethics and lobbying reform. Quam oversees all of the NGA’s lobbying activity and is primarily responsible for issues related to the budget and taxes. He works closely with governors’ Washington, DC, representatives and the NGA’s standing committees to advance the association’s legislative priorities; he also provides leadership in association management, including the development of association priorities.

Kim Rueben is a senior fellow at the Urban Institute and director of the State and Local Finance Initiative at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center (TPC). Her work examines state and local public finance issues, state budget and tax issues, intergovernmental relations, fiscal institutions, and the economics of education, including federal and state financing of both K–12 and postsecondary education. In addition to her position at TPC, Rueben is an adjunct fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, serves on the council of economic advisors for the Controller of the State of California, and is a former member of the Washington, DC, Tax Revision Commission. Rueben received a BA from Brown University, an MA from the London School of Economics, and a PhD in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.